

LOCAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO PLANNING CONSULTATION

Planning Application:	103414/FUL/21	Response No.:	01
Location:	Extension and sub-division of existing Homebase store (Unit 1) to create two new retail units (Use Class E(a)) comprising a retail warehouse unit and associated garden centre (Unit 1) and a discount convenience foodstore (Unit 1A), together with associated revised car parking arrangement, landscaping and formation of an additional site egress.		
Description:	Unit 1 Altrincham Retail Park George Richards Way Altrincham WA14 5GR		
Planning Officer:	Bethany Brown		
Date of Receipt:	25/02/2021	Date of Response:	11/03/2021
Extract of Adopted Highway	<p>© Crown copyright and database right 2020. Ordnance Survey 100023172.</p> 		

1 Latest 5-year planning history

98127/FUL/19	Extension, refurbishment, and subdivision of the existing Homebase store to provide a downsized unit for Homebase and a new Class A1 food retail unit. The application also proposes the relocation of the Homebase garden centre, the reconfiguration of the existing car park and associated landscaping, and the creation of a new egress from the site.
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2 Appeal

21/00006/REF	Planning Appeal against refusal of planning permission for extension, refurbishment, and subdivision of the existing Homebase store to provide a downsized unit for Homebase and a new Class A1 food retail unit. The application also proposes the relocation of the Homebase garden centre, the reconfiguration of the existing car park and associated landscaping, and the creation of a new egress from the site.
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3 The Proposals

3.1 Previous Planning Application 98127/FUL/19

The LHA has submitted a number of previous responses for planning application 98127/FUL/19 which cover several elements of the submitted application, including the results of traffic modelling, and ANPR survey data for the car park.

Determination for Planning Application 98127/FUL/19 was made on 17 June 2020. In October/November 2020, after determination and prior to the submission of 103414/FUL/21 additional information was provided by the developer, including video evidence which was provided by SCP (it is unclear if SCP took the videos or an independent contractor). LinSig modelled scenarios have also been submitted and these have since been checked by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), and accepted by the LHA and TfGM.

For information, it is observed that the video evidence demonstrates vehicle lane change manoeuvres at the location of the previously proposed egress, in addition to the presence of on-road cyclists. The videos also show vehicles encroaching on or straddling the lane lines, and the centre hatched road markings.

It is further noted that the new submission provides swept path analysis including vehicle tracking speeds, and an amended design which proposes carriageway realignment to achieve wider lanes, a left-turn only egress located further away from the George Richards Way signalised junction with the A56 weaving area and stop lines, a reduced egress gradient, and a standard traffic island design (not the previously submitted 'dog bone' shaped island) that is shorter in length and which, no longer stops immediately adjacent to the junction pedestrian crossing area, or results in an unnecessarily long length of pedestrian guardrail.

3.2 Our Understanding of the Proposals

It is the understanding of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) that the application seeks approval for the extension, refurbishment, and subdivision of the existing Homebase store to provide a downsized unit for Homebase and a new Class A1 food retail unit. The application also proposes the relocation of the

Homebase garden centre, the reconfiguration of the existing car park and associated landscaping, and the creation of a new egress from the site

3.3 Vehicle Access

It is proposed to utilise the existing access arrangements to the retail park and the associated western and eastern car parks. With regards to egress, future customers will be able to utilise the existing retail park egress arrangements, for which it has been demonstrated that the proposed increase in traffic volume will not have a significant detrimental impact to traffic flows and queuing at the existing signals.

It is further proposed to provide a separate left-turn egress only from the eastern car park onto George Richards Way. The egress, whilst similar in design at its junction with George Richards Way to a previous application, is located further away from the weaving (lane changing) area for the junction with the A56 Manchester Road, and closer to the main retail park entrance/exit at the signalised junction with Davenport Lane. The ramp has also been redesigned to provide a maximum gradient of 1:20 (5%).

Whilst a visibility splay of 2.4m x 43m is achievable, as noted in the supporting information and observed previously by the LHA, the splay bisects the existing boundary treatment which, as indicated by the submitted landscaping proposals would see additional planting of trees. The existing trees have the potential to impact visibility to and from the location of the proposed egress and as such the LHA would request that the proposals are amended to ensure the boundary treatment does not reduce either the visibility splay from the egress or forward visibility to it, with particular regard for vehicles approaching from the main exit of the retail park. It is suggested that all planting is removed, and a grass verge area is provided instead.

3.3.1 Proposed Left-Turn Only Egress Swept Path Analysis

The swept path analysis indicates a box van would need to take a convoluted route around the eastern car park in order to use the egress, including the need to 'cut across' an internal give way (two-way traffic). Whilst the internal path vehicles would take to access the egress are not expected to have any impact on the adopted highway, the LHA is concerned that the analysis indicates a 7.5t box van could strike the kerb at (a) the top of the egress potentially leading to tyre damage and an incident at this location or a delayed incident further along the highway, and (b) at the junction with George Richards Way and the same location where pedestrians would wait to cross. It is further noted that upon entering the adopted highway the vehicle would need to straddle two-lanes in order to make the turn. Whilst the vehicle speed used for tracking has been given (16 kph/10 mph) the assumed level of driver accuracy is unknown, but it is considered that the driver of a vehicle of this size would need to be precise when navigating the egress, with little room for driver error. Therefore, in the interest of road safety the LHA would request the type and size of vehicle using the egress is restricted and would request a height restriction barrier is installed across the top and bottom of the egress. The LHA would accept this amendment being secured by condition to any subsequent approval of planning permission.

3.3.2 Internal Conflict (observation only)

Whilst not part of the adopted highway the LHA has concerns that the proposed internal layout could exacerbate conflict between vehicles manoeuvring around the car park and those attempting to turn onto the proposed new egress. The applicant may wish to reconsider undertaking a safety assessment and amending the internal car park layout.

3.3.3 Proposed amendment to location of egress (observation only)

In addition to comments submitted in section 3.3.2 above, and subject to further investigation by the applicant, the LHA considers it would be possible to relocate the egress slightly further west and closer to the exit. It would not be expected that vehicles exiting the signals will seek to change lanes immediately and drivers will likely assess their position before making their moving. It is further considered that visibility to the right for drivers exiting the development via the egress could be achieved.

3.3.4 Proposed Traffic Island

It is proposed to provide a traffic island on George Richards Way, however, in comparison to the previously submitted designs under planning application 98127/FUL/19 the island is shorter and the proposed 'dog bone' shape is replaced with a standard configuration.

The width of the proposed traffic island shown on drawing number SCP/190052/SK08 Revision C is 0.9m. There is a requirement for all vertical street furniture to be set back a minimum distance of 0.450m from the edge of the carriageway. Other than the width of the island, at this stage no detail is provided for the proposed keep left bollards and pedestrian guardrail and the LHA is concerned the required set-back will not be achievable. Nevertheless, it is also considered that this concern could be addressed during the design process; for example, the proposals already seek to realign the carriageway and altering the extent of the realignment maybe sufficient to remediate the issue.

It is considered relevant to note in this response that previous discussions for the development and the proposed left-turn only egress have also included reducing George Richards Way to one-lane between its signalised junctions with Davenport Lane and the A56 (excluding the three-lane junction approach to the A56), to also include the provision of an advisory on-road cycle lane. Whilst no designs have been seen, traffic modelling has already been completed and submitted and it has been stated that in principle, this option would be acceptable to the LHA.

Section 278 Agreement

The developer will be required to enter into a S278 agreement for all proposed highway works. The S278 agreement process will include an LHA technical design check of all submitted highway design drawings for which an administration fee will apply.

3.4 Pedestrian Access

The proposals include carriageway widening which will necessitate the realignment of the footway; however, it is also noted that a 2m wide footway will still be provided (refer to section 3.3.4 above and drawing number SCP/190052/SK08 Revision C).

3.5 Servicing Arrangements

It is proposed to utilise the existing service yard located to the north of the site. The proposed arrangements comprise two to three deliveries a day, outside peak traffic hours. It is noted that the delivery vehicles will also be used to remove waste from the site, negating the need for additional service vehicles.

3.6 Car Parking Arrangements

The proposals would result in a loss of 96 car parking spaces; however, data provided for the two busiest days of the week shows a maximum occupancy level of 47% across the western and eastern car parks. It is suggested that the proposed supermarket will generate the need for circa 84 spaces, taking the maximum car park occupancy level to 60%. As such, and as per the previous application, the LHA accepts a proposed car parking provision of 694 for the retail park (western and eastern car parks).

3.7 Accessibility Car Parking

Information seen states 48 accessibility spaces are currently provided and it is proposed to provide an additional four spaces. Whilst the number of accessibility spaces is below the minimum, it is also noted that disabled Blue Badge holders will also be able to use the proposed parent and child parking spaces (it is proposed to provide ten additional parent and child spaces), thus they will have access to 16 spaces overall. Both the accessibility and parent and child spaces will be located close to the store entrance.

3.8 Motorcycle Parking

The Transport Statement provided does not provide an allocation for motorcycle parking spaces in the list of existing spaces, and there is no mention of proposed motorcycle parking spaces. It is therefore assumed based information seen for this application that no provision is currently provided and there is no intention to change this within the proposals.

3.9 Cycle Parking and Storage Arrangements

There are currently 11 Sheffield stands provided within the application site and it is proposed to increase the number of stands to 12, eight of which will be provided for the proposed new store. Overall, 16 cycle parking spaces will be provided within the site, which slightly exceeds the minimum number of spaces required under SPD3.

4 Public Rights of Way

Not applicable

5 Requests for Planning Conditions

The LHA would request the following conditions are added to any future grant of planning permission.

5.1 Construction Method Statement

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until such time as a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- a) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- b) deliveries to site;
- c) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- d) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- e) the erection and maintenance of security hoardings including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- f) wheel washing facilities and any other relevant measures for keeping the highway clean during demolition and construction works, and
- g) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt;
- h) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
- i) days and hours of construction activity on site (in accordance with Trafford Council's recommended hours of operation for construction works), and
- j) contact details of site manager to be advertised at the site in case of issues arising.

5.2 Egress

Detailed design for the proposed egress as largely shown on submitted drawing number SCP/190052/SK08 Revision C, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA before development commences, and thereafter constructed before the development hereby approved is brought into use (comprising Unit 1A or Unit 1, whichever is the sooner)

5.3 Vehicle Restrictions for the Proposed Egress

The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use (comprising Unit 1A or Unit 1, whichever is the sooner) until such time as a height restriction barrier has been installed across the top and bottom

of the egress, to include clear information signage within the car park for approaching vehicles, in advance of the egress.

5.4 Boundary Treatment and Maintenance Plan

The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use (comprising Unit 1A or Unit 1, whichever is the sooner) until a boundary treatment (landscaping) and maintenance plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

5.5 Travel Plan

A full Travel Plan (TP) the development hereby approved shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for review and approval in writing within 6 (six)-months of the first date of operation:

- A firm commitment to targets detailed within the TP is expected, as such measures indicated in the TP shall not be primarily concerned with providing information e.g. timetables for public transport etc, a map of the local area etc.;
- The TP shall include realistic and quantifiable targets, and
- The TP shall include effective objectives and incentives to reduce car travel and increase use of non-car modes for staff
- TP targets shall be reviewed and monitored against the baseline which will be established within 3-months of the first date of operation;
- Employee travel survey shall be completed every 12 (twelve)-months from the date of first operation, and for a minimum period of ten years (i.e. minimum 12 (twelve) no. surveys excluding baseline surveys);
- The TP shall be implemented for a period of not less than 10 (ten) years from the first date of operation.

6 Informative

6.1 Works on the Public Highway (Section 278)

The development hereby approved includes the carrying out of work on the adopted highway. You are advised that before undertaking work on the adopted highway you must enter into a highway agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, which would specify the works and the terms and conditions under which they are to be carried out. Sufficient time shall be provided for the preparation and signing of the Agreement.

Planning permission is not permission to work in the highway. A Highway Agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 must be completed, the bond secured, and the Highway Authority's technical approval and inspection fees paid before any drawings will be considered and approved.

7 Summary

7.1 Outcome

There are no objections on highway grounds to the proposals subject the requested conditions being added to any subsequent approval of planning permission, with particular regard to the proposed works along the adopted highway and construction of the proposed egress. The LHA is not submitting a refusal for this application based on:

- I. the amended location of the egress, this being further away from the junction with the A56 and namely the left-turn diverge, the weaving (vehicle lane changing) area, and the signal stop lines;
- II. a reduced egress gradient;
- III. the provision of scheme designs which reflect the layout of George Richards Way at this location (i.e. two lanes – conflicting adopted highway layouts were provided for planning application 98127/FUL/19 which despite requests from the LHA, were not amended);
- IV. an amended design which proposes carriageway realignment and widening to achieve wider lanes, and
- V. lanes widths are clearly illustrated on the plan (confirmation of unobstructed lane widths was requested by the LHA for planning application 98127/FUL/19, but not provided)
- VI. the provision of a standard design traffic island which, is also shorter in length, likewise there is no longer an intention to provide an unnecessarily long length of pedestrian guardrail or to take the island into the pedestrian crossing area at the junction with the A56 (reference should be made to our earlier responses for the previously proposed non-standard traffic island for planning application 98127/FUL/19)
- VII. the provision of swept path analysis including vehicle tracking speeds (requested by the LHA for planning application 98127/FUL/19, but not provided)
- VIII. provision of personal injury collision analysis (requested by the LHA for planning application 98127/FUL/19, but not provided)
- IX. the provision of video evidence for vehicle movements/manoeuvres at this location (the LHA previously asked the developer to substantiate their claim that lane changing along George Richards Way would not be negatively impacted by the proposed egress under planning application 98127/FUL/19, and demonstrate the proposals would not have a severe impact to road safety)
- X. the provision of LinSig modelled scenarios (previously requested for planning application 98127/FUL/19, but not provided)

7.2 Comments and Observations for Information

Whilst not a consideration to planning, based on information seen the LHA would not agree that a capacity issue has been demonstrated for the proposed development that would necessitate the need for a new left turn only egress at this location.

Whilst it has been demonstrated that the left-turn only egress proposed by planning application 103414/FUL/21 (this application) would not be expected to have a **severe** detrimental impact to road safety along the public highway at this location (and as such a refusal could not be justified in accordance with the NPPF), the LHA would state that it remains concerned that the introduction of the proposed new egress will still have a negative influence, with the potential for a collision to occur as a direct result of vehicles using it (with or without an injury being sustained). The proposals will result in the provision of an egress where no access or egress currently exists, as such the risk of an incident occurring is increased.

Whilst not part of the adopted highway the LHA has concerns that the proposed internal layout for the amended egress could exacerbate conflict between vehicles manoeuvring around the car park and those attempting to turn onto the proposed new egress. The applicant may wish to reconsider undertaking a safety assessment and amending the internal car park layout.

It is therefore relevant to mention that whilst no objections are raised to the proposals, for reasons noted above, the LHA does not fully support the provision of the proposed left-turn only egress at this location.

Elaine Hendren, 11 March 2021