

Local Planning Authority Application
Reference: 105905/OUT/21

Planning Inspectorate Reference:
APP/Q4245/W/22/3306715

World of Pets, Thorley Lane, Timperley

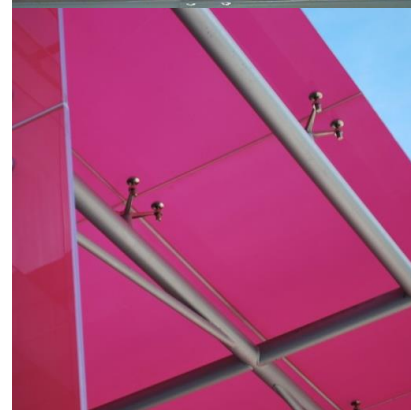
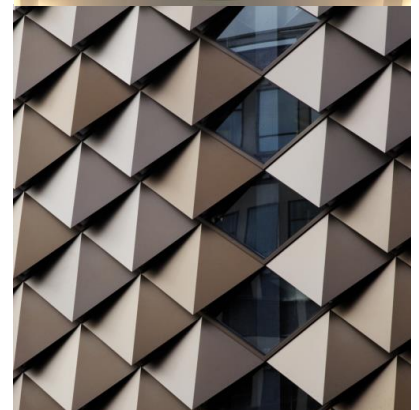
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Proof of Evidence

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Appendix AT005 –	Response to Interested Party Comments

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This document is a Proof of Evidence covering highways matters to support the appeal against the refusal of outline planning permission (105905/OUT/21) by the Local Planning Authority (Trafford Council) for residential development as summarised below in the planning description of development.

'Outline planning application for up to 116no. residential dwellings with all matters reserved aside from access, for which detailed consent is sought.'

- 1.1.2 In respect of highways and transportation, it is noted from the Council's Committee Report of 10 March 2022 that the Local Highway Authority (LHA), National Highways and Transport for Greater Manchester were all consulted as part of the planning application with their response summarised as follows;

'Local Highway Authority (LHA) – No objections in principle, further information requested prior to determination of this application included a traffic speed survey of Thorley Lane and amendments to the junction turning radii. The LHA have also listed the information that they would expect to see included as part of any future reserved matters applications. Further comments are discussed in the Observations section of this report.

National Highways – No objections

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) – No objections. Advice provided regarding trip distribution and junction assessments and mitigation; traffic regulation orders in the area; site accessibility and measures to encourage sustainable forms of transport. Comments discussed in more detail in the Observations section of the report.'

- 1.1.3 The Council's position on Access, Highways and Car Parking matters is summarised at paragraph 112 of the Committee Report which concludes;

'It is concluded that the development would have an acceptable highways impact with reference to Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the NPPF.'

- 1.1.4 Notwithstanding the above position, the application was recommended for refusal by Officers at Planning Committee on 10 March 2022. The Decision Notice published by Trafford Council on 11 March 2020 states the following single reason for the decision to refuse outline planning permission;

'The proposed development is located within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. The proposed development provides for the erection of new buildings, but is not considered to be one of the exceptions listed in Paragraph 149 of the NPPF. Moreover, the proposed development would harm the openness of the Green Belt and would fail to safeguard against

encroachment into the Green Belt, contrary to the purposes of including land within it. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that there are any very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm. The development is also contrary to the spatial strategy of the development plan which seeks to direct new development to sustainable locations within the urban area. As such the development is contrary to the Policies L1 and R4 of the Trafford Core Strategy and Policy C4 of the Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.'

- 1.1.5 It will be seen that the second limb of the reason for refusal concerns the locational sustainability of the appeal site.

- 1.1.6 The Local Planning Authority has subsequently expanded of the reason for refusal within their Statement of Case (CD-B14). In regard to the location of the Appeal Site, the Local Planning Authority states at paragraph 5.11;

"The Council will demonstrate that the appeal site is in an unsustainable location poorly served by public transport and dependent on car borne journeys with limited offer at the nearby Neighbourhood Shopping Centres on Wood Lane/Green Lane. The site is an acceptable location for development in as part of emerging Policy JP Allocation 3.2 but not in isolation. The emerging policy would allow for improvements to the highway network, provision of new public transport modes (Metrolink station and rapid bus network) and infrastructure as well as a new Local Centre. It will be demonstrated that this site can only sustainably be developed as part of a coordinated whole. This is not a prematurity case, it doesn't threaten the allocation, but is not sustainable development without all of the elements of the allocation. The site is in an unsustainable location and it will remain so unless and until the development is delivered as part of the wider Timperley Wedge allocation which includes the provision of the new spine road; rapid bus service between Altrincham and Manchester Airport with priority public transport lanes; new and enhanced cycle and pedestrian routes; HS2 and Northern Powerhouse railway station and new Metrolink stations in association with the western leg extension."

- 1.1.7 This Proof considers the highway matters raised above in relation to the proposals for up to 116 dwellings on land at Thorley Lane in Timperley only. It should be read with the Planning Evidence prepared by Mr Harper on behalf of the Appellant.

- 1.1.8 A Highway Statement (CD-B9) was prepared by Curtins and submitted as part of the initial Appeal. This document contains significant background and supporting highways / transportation evidence including a record of engagement with the Local Highway and Planning Authority and a detailed appraisal of the accessibility of the Appeal site by sustainable modes of transport. I do not intend to revisit all aspects of the Highway Statement; however, key elements are included within my Evidence for ease of reference.

1.1.9 Based on the information set out above I intend to cover the following matters in this Proof of Evidence:

- **Section 2** of my evidence provides a summary of my experience and qualifications.
- **Section 3** considers the site location and site context.
- **Section 4** provides a summary of the project background with regard to traffic and transport.
- **Section 5** of my evidence provides an overview of the transport planning policy that is relevant to the appeal scheme and my interpretation of this.
- **Section 6** briefly considers the highway impact.
- **Section 7** provides a more detail analysis of the sustainability of the Appeal site.
- **Section 8** provides a review of the Timperley Wedge Allocation.
- **Section 9** considers interested party comments.
- **Section 10** presents my summary and conclusions.

2.0 Experience and Qualifications

2.1 Qualifications

- 2.1.1 My name is Aaron Paul Tilley. I am an Associate Transport Planner at Curtins.
- 2.1.2 I have been employed by Curtins since 2012 and I am based in Manchester.
- 2.1.3 I have an HNC in Civil Engineering and I am a Chartered Member of the Institute of Logistics and Transport and a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation.
- 2.1.4 I have over 22 years' experience of transport planning and infrastructure projects across the UK, on behalf of both private and public sector clients. This experience has ranged from strategic transport planning to the detailed assessment of major transport infrastructure. In particular, my experience lies within the field of development planning and the assessment of the transport and highway impacts associated with a diverse range of developments and infrastructure projects.
- 2.1.5 I have visited the site and its wider environs, including the key local facilities in the surrounding area with particularly emphasis on the pedestrian and cycle infrastructure available for existing residents.
- 2.1.6 The evidence I am going to present on behalf of Denbighshire County Council, as the Local Planning Authority, has been prepared to consider highway, traffic and transportation matters as a result of the proposed planning application for the residential development comprising 133 dwellings on land at Mindale Farm, Meliden. I will provide commentary and justification of the Local Planning Authority's decision to ultimately refuse planning permission.
- 2.1.7 The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

2.2 Duty to this Appeal

- 2.2.1 I understand my duty to this Appeal is to help the Inspector on matters within my expertise and that this duty overrides any obligation to the person from whom I have received instructions or by whom I am paid. I believe that the facts I state within this Proof of Evidence are true and that the opinions expressed are correct.

3.0 Site Location and Highway Layout

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section of my Proof provides information on the site location and its context within the wider area, with particular reference to the highway network.

3.2 Site Location

3.2.1 The site is situated c. 3.5km to the east of Altrincham town centre, c. 15km to the south-west of Manchester City Centre, and c. 5km to the north-west of Manchester Airport. Figure 3.1 below shows the site in a regional context relating to the surrounding highway network:

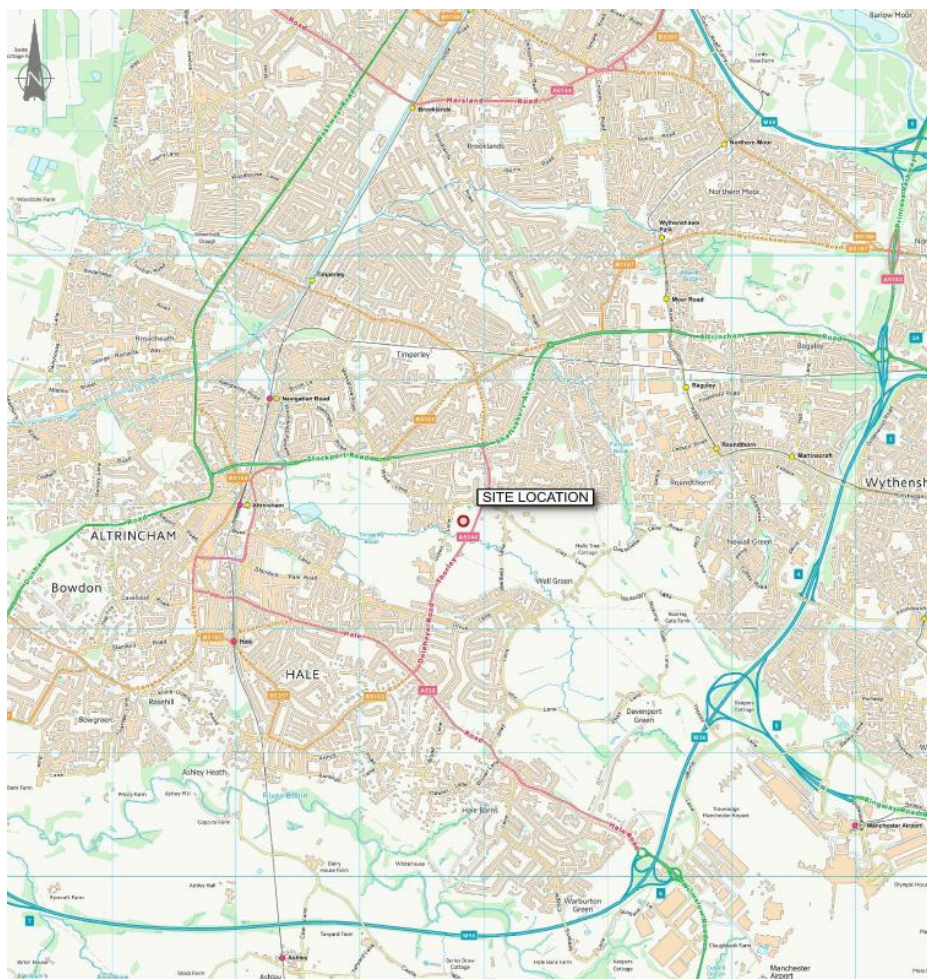


Figure 3.1 – Site Location in relation to the Regional Highway Network

(Source: OS Maps)

3.2.2 In a more local context, the site is bounded by Wood Lane to the north, Green Lane to the west, the Timperley Brook to the south, and the A5144 Thorley Lane to the east. Figure 3.2 below shows the site in a local context relating to the local highway network:

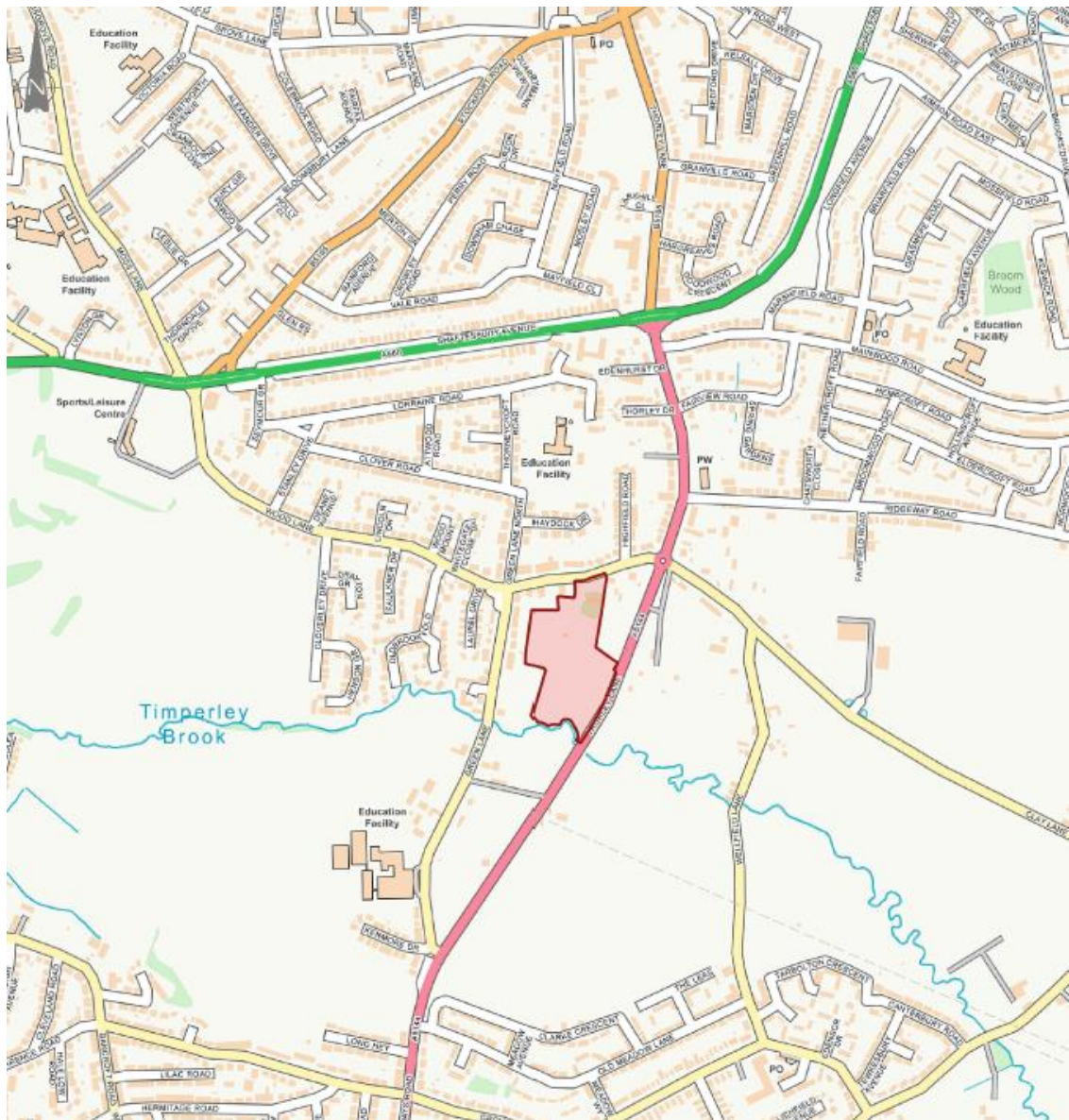


Figure 3.2 – Site location in relation to the Local Highway Network
(Source: OS Maps)

3.3 Surrounding Highway Network

Wood Lane

- 3.3.1 Forming the northern boundary of the site, Wood Lane extends for c. 1km between a roundabout junction with the A5144 Thorley Lane and Clay Lane in the east, and a signalised junction with the A560 Shaftesbury Avenue, Stockport Road, and Moss Lane in the west. In the vicinity of the site, the road comprises a single carriageway measuring approximately 6m in width.
- 3.3.2 There are footways of c. 2m wide along both sides of the carriageway, with dropped kerbs. At the roundabout junction with the A5144 Thorley Lane and Clay Lane, there is also a pedestrian refuge island. The road is residential in nature and is well-lit. At the signalised junction with the A560 Shaftesbury Avenue, there is additional pedestrian infrastructure such as a signalised crossing, dropped kerbs, tactile paving, and there are also advanced cycle stop lanes at each arm of the junction.
- 3.3.3 The road is subject to a 30mph speed limit, and there are speed humps and painted "SLOW" road markings located along the road at regular intervals to enforce this. There is a weight limit along Wood Lane, where vehicles weighing over 7.5 tonnes are not permitted.
- 3.3.4 To the west of the site access along Wood Lane, there are also a pair of bus stops with bus services between Altrincham and Timperley Grange. These bus stops comprise flag poles with TfGM contact information.
- 3.3.5 There are no Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) along Wood Lane. As such, to the west of the site, on-street car parking can be observed as the road provides direct frontage access to a number of residential and commercial properties.

Green Lane North / Green Lane

- 3.3.6 To the west of the site, Green Lane North is a single carriageway road that runs in a southerly direction for c. 170m as a continuation of Clover Road, where it meets Wood Lane at a priority junction. Here, the road continues further as Green Lane for c. 650m and leads to Altrincham College prior to terminating at a priority junction with the A5144 Thorley Lane.
- 3.3.7 Similar to Wood Lane, the carriageway is c. 5m in width with footways of c. 2m in width along at least one side of the road, is well-lit, and there are also speed humps along the road at regular intervals. There are several bus stop along the road with a flag pole where a school bus service to/from Altrincham College calls during term time.

- 3.3.8 There are also no TROs along the road except in the vicinity of Altrincham College, where there are "SCHOOL – KEEP CLEAR" markings. Signage is provided to alert road users that stopping on the school entrance markings is prohibited between 08:00 – 17:00 on Mondays to Fridays.

A5144 Thorley Lane

- 3.3.9 Forming the eastern boundary of the site, the A5144 Thorley Lane commences at a signalised junction with the A560 Shaftesbury Avenue and B5165 Thorley Lane in the north and extends for c. 1.2km in a southerly direction. At the priority junction with Green Lane, the road continues as the A5144 Delahays Road into Hale.
- 3.3.10 In the vicinity of the site, the road comprises a single carriageway with an average width of 10m. There are also on-road painted cycle lanes in both directions along the entirety of the A5144 Thorley Lane. The road comprises wide footways of c. 2m along both sides of the carriageway, and is well-lit with street lights at regular intervals.
- 3.3.11 Approaching the A5144 Thorley Lane / Wood Lane / Clay Lane roundabout, the road is subject to a speed limit of 30mph, and there are road signs and markings to alert motorists to reduce their speed. To the south of the roundabout and in the vicinity of the existing World of Pets site access, the speed limit increases to 40mph.

4.0 Project Background

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section of my Proof provides a brief introduction to the development proposals and a summary of the planning background with regard to traffic and transport.

4.2 Appeal Site

- 4.2.1 The proposed development is for a residential scheme of circa 116 dwellings with associated landscaping, parking and amenities on an existing 2.9-hectare site which currently includes two retail units (World of Pets and Leisure and the World of Water Aquatics Centre), storage, car parking and fields.
- 4.2.2 Details of the Appeal site with regard to its size, current use, planning designations, character area and adjacent uses are set out in the Mr Harpers Planning Evidence.

4.3 Development Proposals

- 4.3.1 The proposed development is for a residential scheme of circa 116 dwellings with associated landscaping, parking and amenities on an existing 2.9-hectare site which currently includes two retail units (World of Pets and Leisure and the World of Water Aquatics Centre), storage, car parking and fields.
- 4.3.2 A more detailed overview of the development proposals is set out in Mr harpers Planning Evidence.
- 4.3.3 As the planning application is to be made in outline, indicative details have been provided to show how the site could be developed with an Outline Masterplan (CD-A29) prepared to inform the basis of the Assessments.

4.4 Proposed Access

Vehicle Access Strategy

- 4.4.1 It is proposed to use the existing vehicular accesses from the A5144 Thorley Lane and Wood Lane. Drawing 72011-CUR-00-XX-DR-TP-75001-P06 (CD-A38) illustrates the proposed site access strategy.
- 4.4.2 The access roads would comprise a 2m-wide footway on both sides of the road, and link into the internal road network of the site to access all dwellings. There would also be dropped kerbs and tactile paving at the junctions where the access roads meet the A5144 Thorley Lane and Wood Lane to facilitate pedestrian access.

- 4.4.3 Following comments from the Highways Officer at Trafford Council (in its capacity as the Local Highway Authority (LHA)), the accesses have been designed to be perpendicular to the existing highway for a distance of at least 15m. A footway will also be provided to the east of the Wood Lane access (at which there is no existing footway), and an uncontrolled / unmarked crossing point will be provided in the form of dropped kerbs and tactile paving across Wood Lane (opposite 117 Wood Lane). This would allow pedestrians to cross onto the northern side of the carriageway of Wood Lane and resolve the issue of pedestrian access raised by the LHA.
- 4.4.4 The existing footway along Wood Lane located at the proposed site access is unadopted, and the LHA has asked for clarification on whether it is intended for this section of the footway to be adopted. It is the developer's intention that this section of the footway would be offered up for adoption, however, full details on plans / drawings required would be provided at a detailed design / reserved matters stage.
- 4.4.5 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) has also been undertaken at both the Thorley Lane and Wood Lane accesses. The Stage 1 RSA did not identify any road safety issues related to the proposed design.
- 4.4.6 I am of the professional view that the proposed access strategy is appropriate for the intended use and this is an agreed position between the Appellant and the Local Highway Authority as set out in the SoCG.

4.5 Committed Highway Improvements

- 4.5.1 The Appellant is committed to providing further enhancements to the surrounding highway network which will benefit existing and future residents in the area. Subject to the confirmation of detail, local enhancements to be delivered in agreement with the Local Highway Authority are set out in the Draft head of Terms (CD-A35) and include;

"Financial contribution and scheme detailing pedestrian access improvements to the Thorley Lane/Wood Lane roundabout junction – Final figure to be agreed between both parties"

4.6 Planning Background

- 4.6.1 Curtins actively engaged with the Local Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority throughout the planning application process in order to agree the scope of the transport assessment and address any queries that arose through the determination period.
- 4.6.2 Section 2.0 of the Appeal Highway Statement (CD-B9) provides a summary of the engagement between all parties.

4.6.3 The conclusion of the application process was that all highways matters were resolved before determination of the application, subject to appropriate mitigation and detailed design as part of any subsequent reserved matters applications.

4.6.4 In respect of highways and transportation, the final highway position is confirmed in the Council's Committee Report of 10 March 2022 (CD-A41) with the Local Highway Authority (LHA), National Highways and Transport for Greater Manchester all consulted as part of the planning application with their response summarised as follows;

'Local Highway Authority (LHA) – No objections in principle, further information requested prior to determination of this application included a traffic speed survey of Thorley Lane and amendments to the junction turning radii. The LHA have also listed the information that they would expect to see included as part of any future reserved matters applications. Further comments are discussed in the Observations section of this report.

National Highways – No objections

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) – No objections. Advice provided regarding trip distribution and junction assessments and mitigation; traffic regulation orders in the area; site accessibility and measures to encourage sustainable forms of transport. Comments discussed in more detail in the Observations section of the report.'

4.6.5 The conclusion on access, highways and car parking is set out in paragraph 112 of the committee Report and states;

"It is concluded that the development would have an acceptable highways impact with reference to Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the NPPF."

4.6.6 In respect of the reason for refusal, which states;

"The development is also contrary to the spatial strategy of the development plan which seeks to direct new development to sustainable locations within the urban area."

4.6.7 I would stress that at no point during pre and post-application discussions with the Local Highway Authority was the overall sustainability and accessibility of the Appeal Site raised as an area of concern.

4.6.8 It is acknowledged that the accessibility of the site by public transport was noted to be poor, with the Local Highway Authority stating the following at Section 2.5 of their consultee response dated 15th September 2020;

“The LHA would seek the views of TfGM as to what possible benefits could be achieved through a developer contribution to the local services.”

- 4.6.9 TfGM issued their response on 27th October 2021, and in reference to public transport simply noted that;

“An appraisal of the site accessibility confirms that the development is not particularly well served by public transport. The nearest bus stops are located on Wood Lane within a 1-2-minute walk of the site, providing services between Timperley Grange and Altrincham at hourly intervals during the daytime.”

- 4.6.10 There is no suggestion from TfGM that the site is not accessible by public transport and no recommendation for developer contributions was requested. On the contrary, TfGM go on to state the following in regard to the Travel Plan;

“In order to encourage sustainable journeys to mitigate the traffic impact of the development, incentives should be offered through the Travel Plan to encourage residents to use public transport. These could include measures such as concessionary bus fares, discounted cycles, journey planning etc.”

- 4.6.11 I would again, reiterate, that at no point was the overall sustainability and accessibility of the site questioned by the Local Highway Authority of TfGM.

- 4.6.12 It was not until the Committee Report was issued that sustainability was raised as a concern with paragraph 52 of the Committee Report stating;

“There is, therefore, a real lack of public transport provision and services offer in relation to the application site and at present the site is considered to be an unsustainable location without immediate access to amenities. This is contrary to the spatial strategy and objectives of the development plan which seeks to meet housing needs within the most sustainable locations and would conflict with Policy L1.”

- 4.6.13 The position adopted by the Local Planning Authority in regard to the sustainability of the Appeal Site has clearly been reached independently from their own highways and transportation consultee responses.

4.7 Background

- 4.7.1 Based on this section of my evidence, I draw the following conclusions;

- The principle of development on the Appeal Site is acceptable in highway terms;
- The proposed site access strategy is appropriate for its intended

- use;
- Extensive pre-application and post-submission discussions took place with the local Highway Authority and TfGM;
- The Local Highway Authority, TfGM and National Highways have considered the outline planning submission and offer no objection to the application subject to conditions and there are no matters of disagreement between these parties.
- The sustainability and accessibility of the site has not been raised as an objection by either the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways.

5.0 Transport Planning Policy Context

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 To provide context for the evidence I present within my Proof, I have provided an overview of National and Local planning policy relevant to this Appeal and referenced in the reason for refusal and my interpretation of this.

5.2 National Planning Guidance

- 5.2.1 The reason for refusal states that the Appeal scheme is contrary to the spatial strategy of the development plan which seeks to direct new development to sustainable locations within the urban area and, as such, is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 5.2.2 My professional interpretation of the NPPF as a whole is that there is a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in Para 11, with sustainability a further important requirement of Paragraphs 104, 105, 110 and 112. The sustainability of the site is therefore fundamental to the acceptability of proposals and from a traffic and transport perspective this largely relates to accessibility.

- 5.2.3 The sustainability and accessibility of the Appeal Site has not been raised as an area of concern by the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of the Outline Planning Application provides a detailed review of the accessibility of the Appeal Site by sustainable modes of transport at Section 4.0 which has been accepted by Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways.

- 5.2.4 The NPPF confirms that if development can be demonstrated to be sustainable, it should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

- 5.2.5 The current version of NPPF dated July 2021 states at paragraph 104;

“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposal, so that;

...

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.”

- 5.2.6 Paragraph 105 of NPPF goes on to state:

“Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.”

5.2.7 This paragraph is particularly relevant to this Appeal as neither the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways suggested that the Appeal Site is not sustainable or requested significant mitigation or enhancements to existing infrastructure.

5.2.8 Paragraph 110 continues with;

"In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) Appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location."

5.2.9 Paragraph 112 also states that;

"... applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

5.2.10 It is evident that National Policy clearly prioritises walking and cycling above other forms of sustainable transport.

5.2.11 I provide evidence in Section 7 which demonstrates that the Appeal Site is located within a sustainable location and is accessible by a choice of sustainable transport modes including walking, cycling and public transport.

5.2.12 Notwithstanding the above, NPPF states at paragraph 111;

"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."

5.2.13 The conclusion on access, highways and car parking is set out in paragraph 112 of the Committee Report and states;

"It is concluded that the development would have an acceptable highways impact with reference to Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the NPPF."

5.3 Local Policy

5.3.1 The reason for refusal states that the Appeal scheme would be contrary to policy L1 and R4 of the Trafford Core Strategy and Policy C4 of the Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan.

5.3.2 Policy L1 of the Trafford Core Strategy seeks to protect and promote land for new homes. There is no specific element of Policy L1 which considers the accessibility of sites by sustainable modes of transport.

5.3.3 Policy R4 of the Trafford Core Strategy relates to the green belt, countryside and other protected open land. Policy R4.4 states that;

“Development on this land will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

...

- The site will be accessible by a range of alternative modes other than the private car.”

5.3.4 I am of the view that the proposals demonstrate accordance with Policy R4.4 of the Trafford Core Strategy by locating the site in an area that is accessible with choices for travel on foot, by cycle and by public transport.

5.3.5 Whilst not referenced within the reason for refusal, Policy L4 of the Trafford Core Strategy relates to Transport and Accessibility and states;

“To facilitate the Delivery Strategy. The Council will promote the development and maintenance of a sustainable integrated transport network that is accessible and offers a choice of modes of travel to all sectors of the local community and visitors to the Borough by;

...

d) prioritising the location of development within the most sustainable areas accessible by a choice of modes of transport.”

5.3.6 I will provide in Section 7 of my Proof that the Appeal site is located in an accessible location with a range of facilities available within acceptable walking, cycle and public transport journeys in accordance with Policy L4.

5.3.7 Policy C4 of the Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan relates specifically to the Green Belt and does not influence the highways and transportation position.

5.3.8 I would reiterate once again that neither the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways offered an objection to the application on policy grounds.

5.4 Conclusion

5.4.1 Based on this section of my evidence I draw the following conclusions:

- Having considered the National and Local policy context in relation to the Appeal site and reason for refusal, I am of the view that there is a single highways and transportation element that must be addressed.

- Does the development represent sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF?

5.4.2 Based on the evidence I will present in Sections 7 and 8 of this Proof, I am of the firm view that the development does represent sustainable development and the Appeal Site is deliverable in isolation from the wider Timperley Wedge allocation.

5.4.3 There is no suggestion that the Appeal site is unsustainable by statutory consultees with no objections to the outline application.

6.0 Traffic Impact

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Section 5.0 of the Appeal Highway Statement (CD-B9) considers the traffic impact of the Appeal Site on the wider highway network.

6.1.2 The highway impact of the proposed development has been considered by the Local Highway Authority and does not form part of the reason for refusal.

6.1.3 The Council's position on Access, Highways and Car Parking matters is summarised at paragraph 112 of the Committee Report which concludes;

'It is concluded that the development would have an acceptable highways impact with reference to Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the NPPF.'

6.1.4 I will therefore not be revisiting traffic impact within this Proof.

6.2 Conclusion

6.2.1 It is acknowledged by the LHA that the proposed residential development of up to 116 dwellings will not result in any unacceptable impact on highway safety and/or severe residual cumulative impact on the surrounding highway network. Therefore, applying paragraph 111 of the NPPF, the proposed development should not be prevented or refused on highway grounds.

7.0 Accessibility and Sustainability

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 As the accessibility and sustainability of the Appeal Site forms part of the reason for refusal, I have set out below the accessibility appraisal which is presented within the Appeal Highways Statement (CD-B9) for ease of reference.

7.2 Accessibility Appraisal

- 7.2.1 A key element of national and local policy is to ensure that new developments are located in areas where alternative sustainable modes of travel are available. It is important to ensure that developments are not isolated but are located close to complementary land uses. This supports the aims of integrating planning and transport, providing more sustainable transport choices, and reducing overall travel and car use.
- 7.2.2 The accessibility of the proposed development is considered in this context within Section 4.0 of the submitted Transport Assessment (CD-A22).
- 7.2.3 In terms of sustainability, the Local Planning Authority notes within the Committee Report at paragraphs 50 to 52 the following;

'The housing policy objectives within the NPPF include providing new housing in suitable locations which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, services and infrastructure, including public transport. The Core Strategy, Policy L4 in particular, promotes development within the most sustainable locations, or where development comes forward in less sustainable locations in the Borough will deliver, or significantly contribute towards the delivery of measures to improve the sustainability of the location.'

The application site is located close to two parade of shops located at opposite sides of the junction with Green Lane and Wood Lane. The premises are designated as Neighbourhood Shopping Centres within the UDP Proposals Map. The Neighbourhood Centres have a limited offer with no retail food service such as a supermarket the nearest being Timperley village approximately 1km from the site. Local bus services are the only method of public transport available close to the site. TfGM's Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels map identifies the site within accessible areas 2 and 3 (1 being the lowest level of accessibility 8 being the highest).

There is, therefore, a real lack of public transport provision and services offer in relation to the application site and at present the site is considered to be an unsustainable location without immediate access to amenities. This is contrary to the spatial strategy and objectives of the development plan

which seeks to meet housing needs within the most sustainable locations and would conflict with Policy L1.'

7.2.4 I would highlight that this is the view of the Local Planning Authority and is not reflected within the statutory consultee responses from either the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways.

7.2.5 When considering the sustainability of a site, the NPPF sets out at paragraph 105 the following policy;

'Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.'

7.2.6 I have noted within the Additional Information Report to Planning Committee (CD-A42), at pages 21 and 22, that the LHA adopted the following position;

'The LHA would however support pedestrian improvements in the immediate vicinity of the application site, as also suggested by TfGM to improve pedestrian accessibility particularly at the Thorley Lane roundabout. This would be in the form of a signalled controlled crossing on Thorley Lane near the roundabout with Wood Lane/Clay Lane and a zebra crossing on Wood Lane with associated highway works such as pedestrian refuges. It is considered that these measures would secure much needed improvements to pedestrian infrastructure, mitigating the harm arising from the development, in the locality and improving accessibility to surrounding streets from the development site. The applicant has agreed to these provisions and details of which would be agreed by either condition or as part of the S106 and considered at reserved matters stage. The LHA have advised that they would support the inclusion of a condition securing the pedestrian improvement works in the event of planning approval being granted.'

7.2.7 Through the agreement to support the delivery of pedestrian infrastructure improvements suggested by TfGM, the Appellant has clearly demonstrated a willingness to enhance local infrastructure and improve access to the proposed Appeal site for pedestrians.

7.2.8 It is noted, however, that neither the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways considered the sustainability of the appeal site to be an area of concern or that the planning application should be refused on this basis.

7.2.9 There had been no suggestion prior to the Planning Committee that the Appeal site is in an unsustainable location.

7.3 Accessibility by Sustainable Modes of Transport

- 7.3.1 The submitted Transport Assessment (CD-A22) and Interim Travel Plan (CD-A11) provided a comprehensive review of the accessibility of the site by non-car modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.
- 7.3.2 It was ultimately concluded that the site is located such as to benefit from existing walking, cycling and public transport opportunities. The site is located in close proximity to a variety of key services and facilities as well as a number of pre-existing residential areas. The site was therefore considered to be accessible from sustainable modes of travel in line with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and Trafford Councils Core Strategy.
- 7.3.3 Notwithstanding the above, the following section reemphasises the locational sustainability of the Appeal site.

7.4 Accessibility to Key Local Facilities

- 7.4.1 The Chartered Institution for Highways and Transportation (CIHT) document entitled 'Providing for Journeys on Foot' suggests walking distances which are relevant to this outline planning application. These are reproduced in Table 7.1 below.

CIHT Category	Town Centres (m)	Commuting/School/ Sightseeing (m)	Elsewhere/Local Services (m)
Desirable	200	500	400
Acceptable	400	1,000	800
Preferred Maximum	800	2,000	1,200

Table 7.1 – CIHT Suggested Acceptable Walking Distances

- 7.4.2 Plan 082332-CUR-00-XX-DR-TP-06003-P01 (**Appendix AT001**) shows distances of 500m, 1,000m and 2,000m which are termed 'Desirable', 'Acceptable' and the 'Preferred Maximum' by the CIHT for commuting trips, which are likely to be the most significant categories of trips generated by the proposed residential development. It is also important to consider the corresponding distances within the final column for journeys to local services.
- 7.4.3 Plan 082332-CUR-00-XX-DR-TP-06003-P01 also illustrates the location of key local facilities that would benefit future residents of the Appeal scheme. The key facilities identified range from bus stops within 500m of the site to retail, education, medical and leisure facilities.
- 7.4.4 The key facilities accessible within the 500m walking catchment include local shops along Wood Lane to the west of the site such as a veterinarian, hot food takeaway, kitchen/bedroom/bathroom designers, local culinary / baking food studio, hair salon, photo lab and a dry cleaners. These facilities are defined within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as a Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre.

- 7.4.5 This 500m catchment also includes a florist, children's nursery, garden centre and place of worship to the north of the site, and a village hall and garden nursery to the east of the site. There is also another garden centre to the south of the site.
- 7.4.6 Most notably, there are bus stops along Wood Lane accessible within a 500m distance of the site.
- 7.4.7 A large number of amenities lie within the 1,000m walking catchment around the site, and the preferred maximum walking distance to local services. This catchment includes schools such as Cloverlea Primary School, Altrincham College and Sixth Form, Bromwood Primary School, and a children's art club. There are also daily amenities such as a public house, convenience stores and hot foot takeaways along the A560 Stockport Road, a Tesco Express and post office at Broomwood.
- 7.4.8 Additionally, there are other facilities within a 1,000m walking catchment of the site such as Timperley Sports Club, Hale Country Club & Spa, Bowdon Rugby Club, places of worship, retirement homes, Manor Park Farm, and several allotments.
- 7.4.9 It is clear that the Appeal Site is within walking distance of a large number of key local facilities.
- 7.4.10 Further afield but within a 2,000m walking catchment lies additional convenience stores to the north at Timperley town centre and northwest at another defined Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre as well as recreational facilities such as Altrincham Golf Course, Heyes Grove Tennis Club, Altrincham & District Athletics Club, Altrincham Kersal Rugby Football Club, a scout hall, and Altrincham Football Club and Community Sports Hall.
- 7.4.11 There are also employment opportunities such as at a business park off Scott Drive, medical practices, dentists, post offices, places of worship, parks, public houses, restaurants and cafés, local bed and breakfasts / lodging, Hale Cemetery, and several educational institutions including Wellington School, Willows Primary School, Pictor Academy, and Well Green Primary School.
- 7.4.12 Paragraph 51 of the Committee Report suggests that the availability of retail food services within 1km of the Appel site is a sustainability concern. Plan 082332-CUR-00-XX-DR-TP-06003-P01 confirms that convenience stores are located to the northwest of the site within a defined Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre which is within 1,200m (preferred maximum distance to local services) with a Tesco Express located to the northeast on Briarfield Road within a 1,000m walking distance.
- 7.4.13 It is therefore considered from a highway perspective that the development location is sustainable and is accessible on foot.

7.5 Accessibility by Cycle

- 7.5.1 The wider local highway network in the vicinity of the site is predominately residential in nature, which are lightly trafficked. Therefore, where specific cycle provisions are not provided the majority of the local roads are suitable for cycling. The local cycle network within the vicinity of the site is reproduced in Figure 7.1 below:

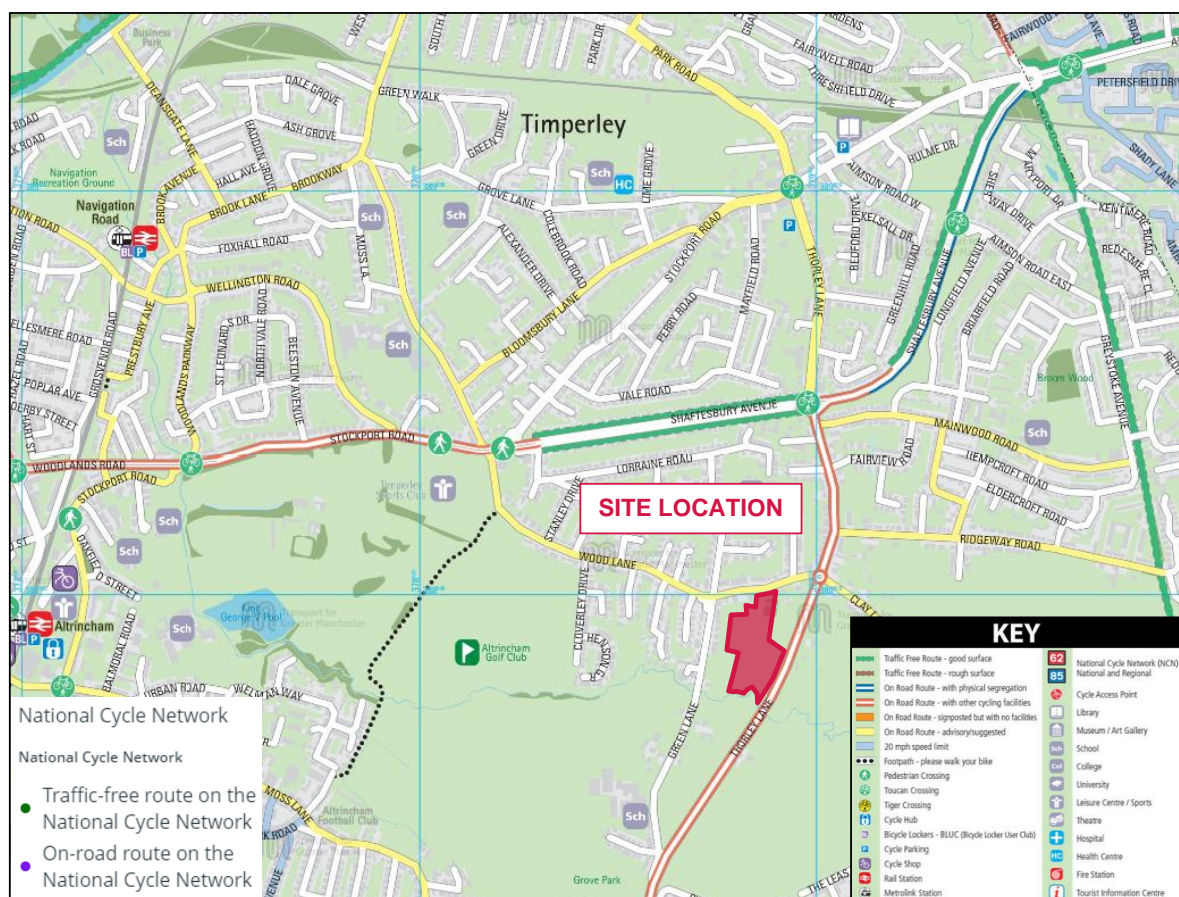


Figure 7.1 – Local Cycle Network
(Source: TfGM)

- 7.5.2 The local cycle network shown above is also a part of Greater Manchester's cycling and walking infrastructure proposal, named the "Bee Network". The Bee Network comprises signed routes that mark the most direct and pleasant way to navigate an area on foot or by bike. There are no proposed Bee Network improvements in Timperley, but there are confirmed Bee Network improvements in Sale which include public realm improvements, crossings, and a two-way cycle track in the vicinity of Sale Water Park, allowing future residents to benefit from better safety and quality of commute for leisure purposes.

7.5.3 Additionally, residents can cycle along c. 3km to the north via Wood Lane, Moss Lane, and subsequently Park Rod to access the Bridgewater Way 'Cycleway' adjacent to the Timperley Metrolink station. This is one of six 'Cycleways' in Greater Manchester, comprising resurfaced canal towpaths from Manchester to Altrincham and the Trafford Centre, and are completely traffic-free with various cycle access points across its entire length. A map of the route is provided in Figure 7.2:

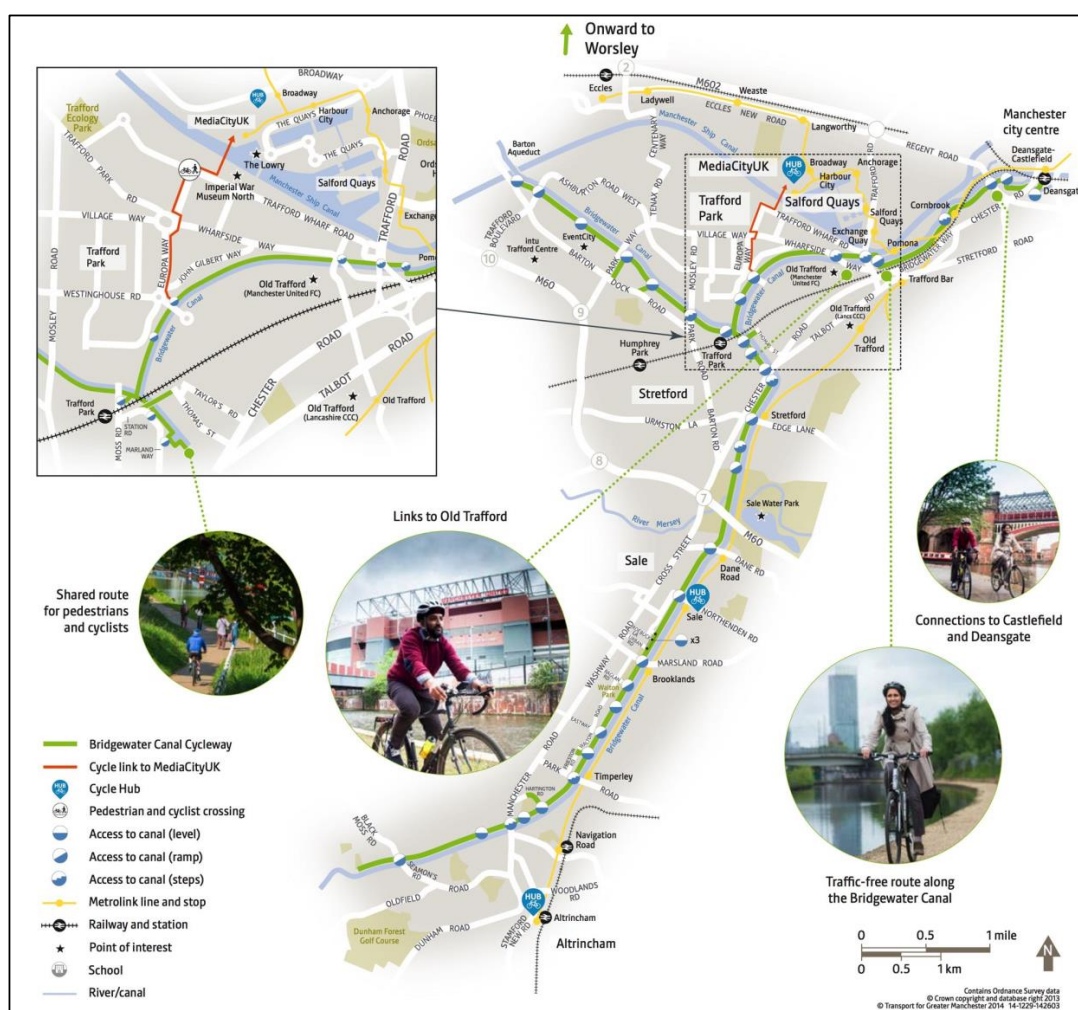


Figure 7.2 – Bridgewater Way Cycle Path

(Source: TfGM)

7.5.4 The proposed development is therefore ideally placed to take advantage of the cycle connections around Timperley.

7.5.5 In summary, it is considered that cycling is a highly realistic mode of travel for future residents of the Appeal site.

7.6 Accessibility by Public Transport

7.6.1 Developed by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels (GMAL) are a measure of the accessibility of a point to both the conventional public transport network (i.e. bus, Metrolink and rail) and Greater Manchester's Local Link (flexible transport service), considering walk access time, service availability, and average waiting time. The method is essentially a way of measuring the density of the public transport provision at any location within the Greater Manchester region.

7.6.2 The Committee Report makes specific reference to GMAL at paragraph 51 and reports at paragraph 51 that *"There is, therefore, a real lack of public transport provision and services offer in relation to the application site and at present the site is considered to be an unsustainable location without immediate access to amenities."*

7.6.3 Figure 7.3 provides an extract of the GMAL map in relation to the proposed Appeal site.

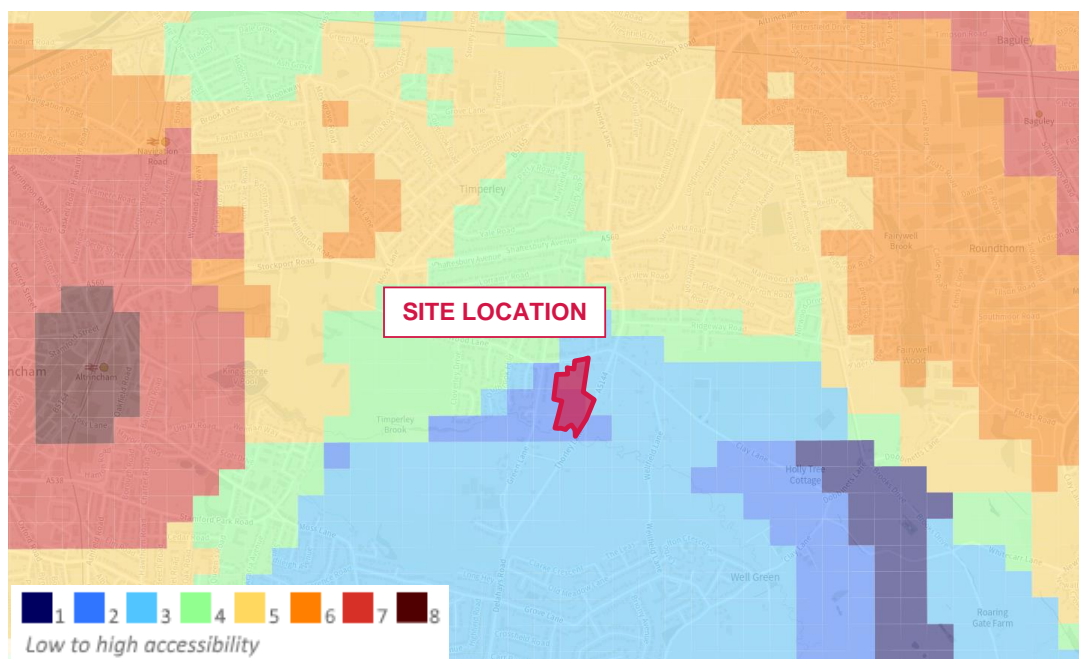


Figure 7.3 – Greater Manchester Accessibility Levels

(Source: MappingGM)

7.6.4 The accessibility index score is categorised into eight levels (1 to 8), where level 8 represents a high level of accessibility (described as 'excellent') and level 1 a low level of accessibility (described as 'very poor'). The site is located in an area with a GMAL rating ranging between 2 and 3.

7.6.5 The GMAL measure reflects;

- Walking time from the point-of interest to the public transport access points;
- The number of services (bus, Metrolink and Rail) available within the catchment;
- The level of service at the public transport access points - i.e. average waiting time; and
- The operating areas of Local Link (flexible transport) services.

7.6.6 The GMAL rating does not capture the potential for multi-modal journeys where a bus journey could be linked to a wider journey by either light or heavy rail services.

7.6.7 The GMAL rating is therefore not a measurement of the accessibility of a site to key facilities, rather the availability of public transport services within a specific area. This is particularly evident as areas of 'high' levels of accessibility are focused on major town/city centres where public transport interchanges are located.

7.6.8 Figure 7.4 below demonstrates the areas accessible via public transport within 20, 40 and 60 minutes of the Appeal site. Within a 20-minute journey on public transport, future residents can access all of Timperley and Altrincham town centre. Whereas, within a 40-minute journey, this catchment expands to Sale, Manchester Airport, Ashley, and Bowdon. Within a 60-minute journey on public transport, the catchment extends as far as Trafford Park, Manchester City Centre and Salford Crescent to the north, Didsbury, Gatley and Cheadle Hulme to the east, Wilmslow, Knutsford and Greenbank to the south, and Partington to the west.

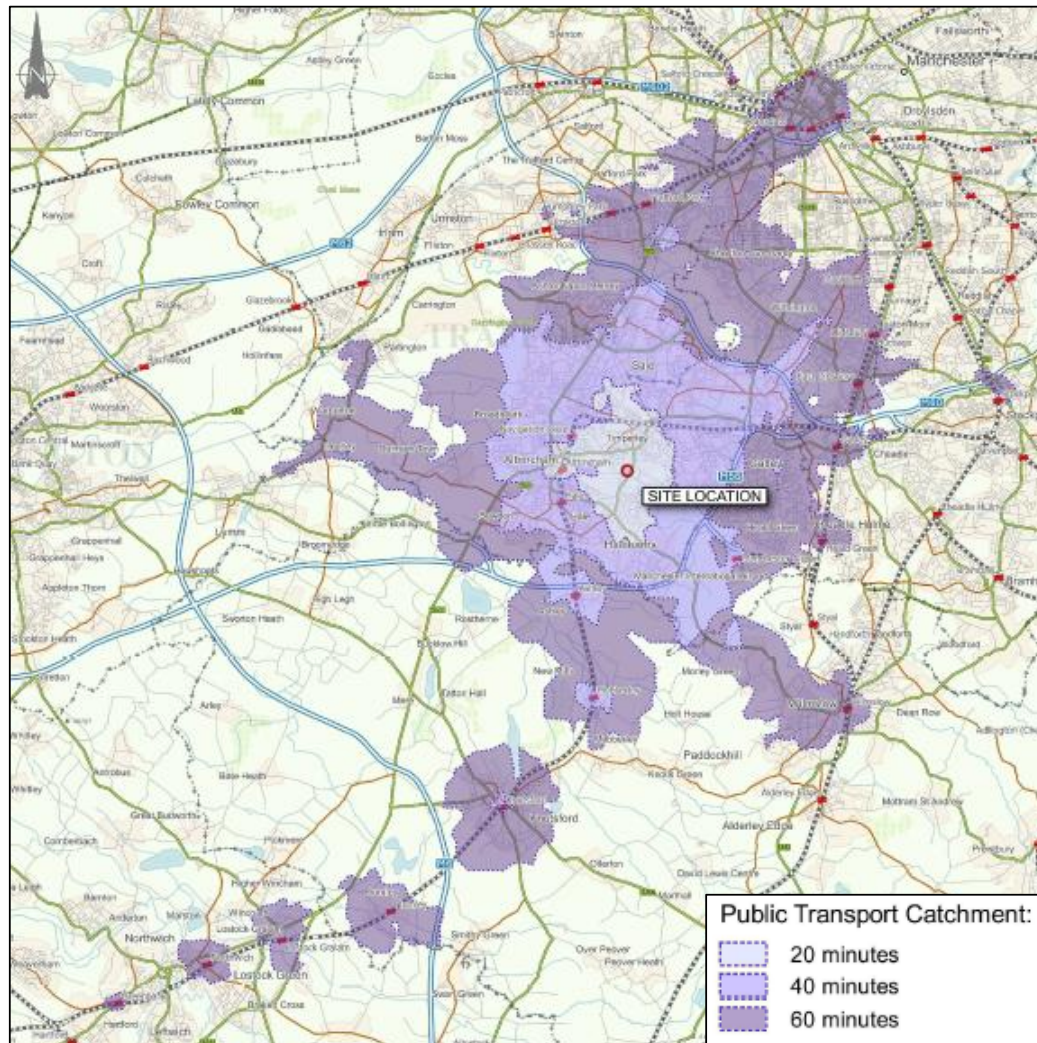


Figure 7.4 – Indicative Public Transport Catchment

7.6.9 Additionally, accessibility by bus, rail and Metrolink are considered further below, with a local public transport network map included in Figure 7.5 below:



Figure 7.5 – Local Public Transport Network Map
(Source: TfGM)

Bus Accessibility

7.6.10 Guidance from the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) document 'Buses in Urban Developments' (2018) indicates that ideally, a bus stop should be located within the following from a new development based on its location and the number of services:

Situation	Maximum Walking Distance (m)
Core bus corridors with two or more high-frequency services	500
Single high-frequency routes (every 12 minutes or better)	400
Less frequent routes	300
Town/city centres	250

Table 7.2 – CIHT Maximum Suggested Walking Distances to Bus Stops

7.6.11 A distance of 400m, which equates to an approximate 5-minute walk, is also commonly cited as a benchmark for access to local bus services. However, guidance from the CIHT does state that these distances should not be followed slavishly.

- 7.6.12 The nearest bus stops to the site are along Wood Lane, located approximately 50 – 100m away from the Wood Lane site access (within walking distance of "less frequent routes"). Bus no. 285 calls at the eastbound bus stop, whereas bus no. 286 calls at the westbound bus stops. Additionally, during the school term, several school buses also call at the eastbound bus stop. These school bus services provide access to areas such as Altrincham College of Arts.
- 7.6.13 Alternatively, future residents can walk c. 750m to the north along the A5144 Thorley Lane and turn right to Mainwood Road, where bus no. 11 serves.
- 7.6.14 Following comments from the Local Highway Authority, the first and last bus times of the above services are as follows:

Bus Service	Journey	Frequency and First / Last Times		
		Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
From Wood Lane (eastbound):				
285	Altrincham – Timperley – Timperley Grange circular	Hourly between 06:42 – 22:49	Hourly between 07:50 – 22:49	Every two hrs between 08:49 – 20:49
From Wood Lane (westbound):				
286	Altrincham – Timperley Grange – Timperley circular	Hourly between 06:23 – 22:02	Hourly between 07:40 – 22:02	Every two hrs between 10:02 – 20:02
From Mainwood Road:				
11	Altrincham – Gatley – Cheadle – Edgeley – Stockport	Every 20 mins between 05:50 – 20:50, then hourly until 23:50	Every 20 mins between 06:17 – 19:50, then hourly until 23:50	Every 30 mins between 08:18 – 19:58, then hourly until 22:50
	Stockport – Edgeley – Cheadle – Gatley – Altrincham	Every 20 mins between 05:51 – 20:20, then hourly until 23:20	Every 20 mins between 06:29 – 20:21, then hourly until 23:21	Every 30 mins between 07:56 – 20:22, then hourly until 23:19

Table 7.3 – Bus Service Summary

- 7.6.15 It is noted that the provision of bus services will change over time in response to current circumstances. The bus times are accurate at the time of writing, whereas up-to-date bus times can be found on TfGM's website: [tfgm.com/public-transport/bus](https://www.tfgm.com/public-transport/bus).
- 7.6.16 These stops provide frequent access to both educational facilities and larger public transport interchanges across the town (such as Altrincham town centre and the rail / Metrolink stations) on weekdays and weekends. It is considered that the site is accessible by bus.

Community Transport

7.6.17 For residents who may have difficulty accessing regular public transport, Trafford Council provides several alternative schemes such as:

- **Ring and Ride** – door-to-door transport for people who face difficulty getting to a bus stop or boarding / alighting ordinary buses, whereby drivers trained in disability awareness can provide short local journeys on buses with low entrance steps and lifts at the rear, along with wheelchair equipment and the option for carers / friends / relatives to travel together;
- **TfGM Travel Vouchers** – vouchers that can be used to pay for taxis and for travel on accessible bus services such as Ring and Ride;
- **The Motability Scheme** – a national charity where a disabled person can use their higher rate component of Disability Living Allowance or their War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement to lease or buy a car or powered wheelchair or scooter;
- **Trafford Blue Badge Scheme** – allows parking concessions for use by a disabled person in any car, for people who receive Mobility Allowance or who are registered blind; and
- **Shopmobility Trafford** – Wheelchair or scooter available to lend for access to shops and services, with an option to book a 'shopping escort' to push a wheelchair or help people with visual impairment.

Rail Accessibility

7.6.18 The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) document, 'Planning for Public Transport in Developments' notes that those travelling to a site by rail will typically be prepared to walk further to the site than those travelling by bus, with a preferred distance of 800m.

7.6.19 The Navigation Road rail station is located approximately 2.2km to the north-west of the site. This lies outside the CIHT preferred distance; however, future residents could board the no. 286 bus service, alight at Old Hall Timperley, and walk for c. 900m to reach the station. Alternatively, the no. 11 bus service along Marshfield Road also calls directly outside the Altrincham rail station, which is c. 2.6km to the west of the site.

7.6.20 The Navigation Road station comprises a single platform which serves Northern Rail trains. There is no ticket office, however there are 5 Sheffield cycle hoops available in an area with CCTV monitoring, along with a large car park comprising 70 spaces (with disabled parking provision) for "Park and Ride" use. There is also step-free access across the whole station with ramps to the platform.

7.6.21 Altrincham station is a larger station on the Mid-Cheshire Line, with regular services to Manchester Piccadilly via Stockport, and Chester. The ticket office is staffed during all regular opening hours and

the station is sheltered. Train running information is offered via CIS screens, and there are payphones and customer help points present for passenger use.

7.6.22 There is step-free access across the whole station. There are 8 cycle storage stands available in an area with CCTV monitoring, and there is also a secure and sheltered TfGM Cycle Hub with 53 spaces where future residents could sign up to a membership for. There are also 45 parking spaces for residents who wish to “Park and Ride”.

7.6.23 A summary of rail services from the stations are outlined in Table 7.4. The frequencies apply to trains in both directions.

Destination	Service Frequency		
	Peak Weekday	Peak Saturday	Peak Sunday
Manchester to Chester via Altrincham Calling at: Manchester Piccadilly, Stockport, Navigation Road, Altrincham, Hale, Ashley, Mobberley, Knutsford, Plumley, Lostock Gralam, Northwich, Greenbank, Cuddington, Delamere, Mouldsworth, and Chester.	Every 2 hours	Every 2 hours	Every 2 hours

Table 7.4 – Summary of Rail Services calling at Navigation Road and Altrincham

7.6.24 It is noted that the provision of rail services will change over time in response to current circumstances. The rail times are accurate at the time of writing, whereas up-to-date rail times can be found on Northern Rail’s website: northernrailway.co.uk/timetables.

7.6.25 The trains that service Navigation Road and Altrincham run 7 days of the week and allow future residents to change to larger cities such as Manchester and Chester in under half an hour. This also allows access to a number of different locations across Greater Manchester; and is a viable alternative to private car use.

7.6.26 I consider the Appeal site to be accessible by rail as part of a multi-modal journey.

MetroLink (Light Rail) Accessibility

7.6.27 Future residents can also board the MetroLink at Altrincham or Navigation Road, both located to the west of the site and can be accessed as part of a multi-modal journey via buses no. 11 and 286 or via cycle. Both stations are located on the Purple Line between Altrincham and Manchester Piccadilly, with Altrincham serving as the southern terminus.

7.6.28 The start and end times for specific stations will change over time in response to current circumstances. The Metrolink frequencies are accurate at the time of writing, whereas up-to-date times can be found on the Metrolink website at: tfgm.com/public-transport/tram/tram-times.

7.6.29 Metrolink services provide access to the site seven days a week with trams running from a variety of locations across Greater Manchester, including key interchanges at Trafford Bar, Cornbrook, and St Peter's Square, where passengers can change to access areas such as East Didsbury, Manchester Airport, Eccles, Bury, Rochdale, and Ashton-under-Lyne. The Greater Manchester Metrolink network is shown in Figure 76 below:

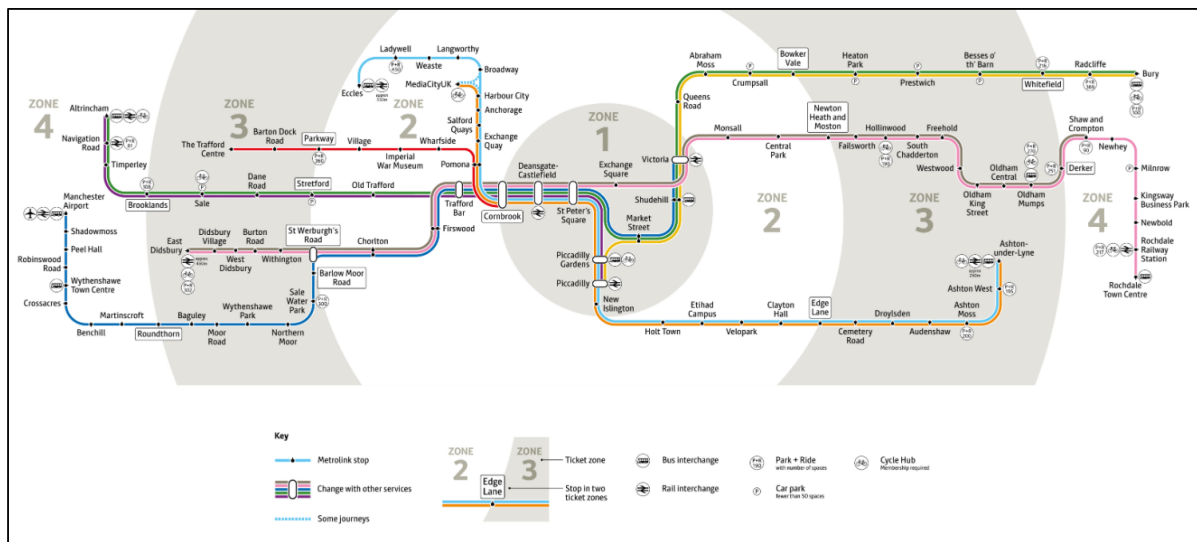


Figure 7.6 – Greater Manchester Metrolink Network Map
(Source: TfGM)

7.6.30 Overall, the Appeal site is accessible by Metrolink as part of a multi-modal journey.

7.7 Interim Travel Plan

7.7.1 As noted previously, the planning application was also supported by an Interim Travel Plan (CD-A11). An Interim Travel Plan is the first stage of the Travel Plan process and is often prepared during the planning stage prior to the construction of the development. It includes a list of potential measures that could be implemented to affect modal choice, and a management strategy for producing a full Travel Plan in the future.

7.7.2 The implementation of a Full Travel Plan would be secured by means of a suitably worded planning condition.

7.7.3 Table 7.1 of the Interim Travel Plan sets out the current travel modal split (based on the 2011 Census data) and identifies preliminary targets for reducing single occupancy car trips to/from the development in the future. This is supported by an Action Plan summarised in Table 9.1 of the Interim Travel Plan.

7.7.4 The implementation of a Full Travel Plan will assist in promoting sustainable travel modes and reduce the reliance on private car journeys.

7.8 Relevant Appeal Decisions

7.8.1 The sustainability of new development sites has formed part of numerous planning applications and appeals.

7.8.2 Table 7.5 below provides a summary of recent Appeal decisions that considered sustainability as part of the reasons for refusal and demonstrate similarities with the Appeal Site. The full decision reports are included as Appendix A of the Appeal Highway Statement.

Appeal Ref	Address	Date	Decision	Comment
APP/Y1110/W/22/3292721	Land off Spruce Close, Exeter, EX4 9DR	25 th August 2022	Allowed	<p>Appeal site is a little over 2.5 miles from central Exeter but immediately adjacent to existing urban area which is predominantly residential.</p> <p>The topography is steep (excess of 5% recommended in MfS) but the Inspector concluded 'the distances, steepness and walking environs experience to be manageable'</p> <p>The area is also served by a single local bus service.</p> <p>Inspector Concludes '<i>I consider that the location of the appeal site affords a genuine choice of sustainable ways to access services and facilities. Even if such choices might involve limitations, the proposed development would ensure safe and suitable access to services and facilities by a range of transport modes.</i>'</p>
APP/C1570/W/19/3243744	Land east of Elsenham, to the north of the B1051, Henham Road	22 nd December 2020	Allowed	<p>the village has a GP Surgery, a primary school, a Tesco Express, a Post Office, a hair salon, a takeaway food outlet, a public house, a village hall, a Memorial Hall, a Bowls Club and a recreation ground.</p> <p>The Council view was that the facilities were outside the desirable and acceptable walking distances as set out in the IHT document 'Planning for Journeys on Foot'.</p> <p>The Inspector concludes, '<i>the IHT document dates back to the year 2000 and has no formal or other status in local or national planning policy. As an alternative, the appellant maintained that it was more appropriate to look at what had until 2012 been national guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) 'Transport' – now superseded by the Framework. I consider there to be some merit</i></p>

				<p><i>in this view, as not only was PPG13 a more recent document than that published by IHT, it also had greater standing and status.</i></p> <p><i>Whilst accepting that PPG13 no longer carries any formal weight, no equivalent guidance on acceptable travel distances is contained within the Framework. Because of this I consider it reasonable to have regard to the PPG13 guidance, which stated that walking is the most important mode of travel at the local level and offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly under 2km. All of the facilities within the village, detailed above, fall well within this 2km range.</i></p> <p><i>With regards to the CIHT document referencing a 400m maximum acceptable walking distance to bus stops, this is again a document that carries no formal or other status in local or national planning policy.'</i></p>
APP/T2350/W/19/3221189	Henthorn Road, Clitheroe BB7 2QF	19 th June 2019	Allowed	<p>The appeal site is located at the extreme edge of the urban area and approximately 2km from the town centre and Clitheroe Railway Station. There is some dispute between the main parties regarding the application of relevant guidance regarding journeys undertaken on foot. The appellant identified the National Travel Survey 2017 which indicates that 81% of trips under 1 mile (1.6KM) are made by foot. Both parties refer to the CIHT document 'Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot'11 which indicates that the preferred maximum distance to walk to town centres, commuting/school and journeys elsewhere is 800m, 2,000m and 1,200m respectively. Reference was also made to the Manual for Streets12 (MfS) which identifies that 'walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes (up to about 800m) walking distance of residential areas in which residents may access comfortably on foot'. However, paragraph 4.4.1 of MfS identifies that this is not an upper limit and further adds that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km. Inspector concluded, '<i>In my view a degree of realism needs to be applied to the distances in the guidance and the locational circumstance of the appeal site. It is clear that there are a range of facilities within an easy walk of the site. Although the town centre is 2,000m away, the routes to it are relatively direct on good footway infrastructure. The walk from the appeal site to the town centre, which I undertook at the site visit, was neither unduly lengthy nor strenuous. I consider that some residents are likely to walk into the town centre as a matter of choice.</i></p>

				<p><i>Although Henthorn Road is relatively straight and level, I recognise that local topography on the close approach to the town centre has, in parts, moderate gradients. However, this is common to residents wherever they live in Clitheroe and is no more or less a deterrent to walking for residents of the appeal site than is typical for existing residents.'</i></p>
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Figure 7.7 – Appeal Decision Summary

- 7.8.3 The decisions demonstrate that the sustainability of a site should be considered across all modes of travel including walking, cycling as well as public transport.
- 7.8.4 It has been accepted that locating sites with a range of key facilities within a walking distance of up to 2,000m affords a genuine choice sustainable travel opportunities with future residents able to access key services on foot.
- 7.8.5 The proximity of sites to nearby bus stops, serving a single bus service, is also considered to offer realistic public transport opportunities for future residents.

7.9 Detailed Accessibility Appraisal

- 7.9.1 Following the submission of the Appeal Highway Statement, and in response to the Local Planning Authority Statement of Case, I have undertaken a more detailed analysis with specific emphasis on access to key facilities on foot.
- 7.9.2 Drawing 82332-CUR-00-XX-DR-TP-06006-P01 (**Appendix AT002**) presents the Appeal Site in a local context with walking routes identified to key local facilities including bus stops on Wood Lane and Thorley Lane, the Local & Neighbourhood Shopping Centres at Wood Lane and the A560 Shaftesbury Avenue, a Tesco Express at Briarfield Road and Timperley Village Centre. Each of these facilities offer a unique service to existing and potential future residents and I consider each to be within an acceptable walking distance from the centre of the Appeal Site.
- 7.9.3 Unlike the pedestrian catchment plan presented within the Transport Assessment and Appeal Highway Statement, the plan presented in **Appendix AT002** takes account of the proposed access via Wood Lane which will be in place as part of the completed Appeal scheme. The programme used to prepare the previous catchment plans takes account of existing highway infrastructure with access into the site achievable via Thorley Lane only.
- 7.9.4 I have considered the proximity of each key facility in terms of distance, via the most direct walking route available, and also the typical journey time.

7.9.5 In terms of journey time, I have reviewed the following documentation published by The Chartered Institution for Highways and Transportation (CIHT);

Providing for Journeys on Foot, 2000; and

Planning for Walking, 2015

7.9.6 Providing for Journeys on Foot states the following at paragraph 3.30;

“The main factors that influence both walking distance and walking time in a city or town centre appear to be the size of the city or town itself, the shape and the quality of the pedestrianised area, the type of shops and number of activities carried out. An average walking speed of approximately 1.4m/s can be assumed, which equates to approximately 400m in five minutes or three miles per hour.”

7.9.7 An extract of Providing for Journeys on Foot is provided as **Appendix AT003**.

7.9.8 Planning for Walking states the following at Section 6.4;

“Walking neighbourhoods are typically characterised as having a range of facilities within 10 minutes’ walking distance (around 800 metres). However, the propensity to walk or cycle is not only influenced by distance but also the quality of the experience; people may be willing to walk or cycle further where their surroundings are more attractive, safe and stimulating.”

7.9.9 A Walkable Neighbourhood is defined by the Ramblers Association as “a safe and welcoming place to be a pedestrian”.

7.9.10 Planning for Walking assumes a slightly slower walking speed of 1.33m/s when compared to recommendations prepared by the CIHT in 2000. An extract of Planning for Walking is provided as **Appendix AT004**.

7.9.11 I have therefore applied the more conservative walking speed of 1.33m/s to inform my appraisal. Taking each facility in turn;

Bus Stops – Wood Lane

7.9.12 The distance from the centre of the site to the westbound bus stop located on Wood Lane is approximately 180m. the distance to the eastbound bus stop is slightly further at a distance of approximately 225m.

7.9.13 Adopting a typical walking speed of 1.33m/s the westbound and eastbound bus stops can be reached within 2.25 minutes and 2.81 minutes respectively.

7.9.14 Planning for Walking also states at Section 6.4 that;

“For bus stops in residential areas, 400 metres has traditionally been regarded as a cut-off point”.

7.9.15 The bus stops on Wood Lane are clearly accessible from the Appeal Site.

Wood Lane Local & Neighbourhood Centre

7.9.16 As noted in paragraph 7.4.4 of my Proof, the facilities at Wood Lane are defined within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as a Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre. These facilities include;

2 x Food Takeaways;

A Kitchen Showroom;

A Beauty Spa;

A Hair and Beauty Salon;

Dry Cleaners; and

A Photographers.

7.9.17 The distance from the centre of the site to the Wood Lane/Green Lane crossroad junction (the indicative centre of the Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre) is approximately 260m which equates to a walking journey time of 3.25 minutes.

7.9.18 Whilst the facilities at the Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre do not currently offer what could be considered as daily essential services, there is no reason to suggest that a more diverse range of services could not be provided in the future. Notwithstanding, the facilities which are currently provided do offer existing and future residents with services that can be used on a regular basis and accessible by modes of transport other than the private car.

7.9.19 The Wood Lane Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre is clearly accessible from the Appeal Site, as defined by guidance and recommendations set out by the CIHT, and well within a 10 minute walking journey which characterises a “walking neighbourhood”.

Bus Stops – Thorley Lane (Timperley Church)

7.9.20 The distance from the centre of the site to the southbound bus stop located on Thorley Lane is approximately 400m. the distance to the northbound bus stop is slightly further at a distance of approximately 450m.

- 7.9.21 Adopting a typical walking speed of 1.33m/s the southbound and northbound bus stops can be reached within 5 minutes and 5.64 minutes respectively.
- 7.9.22 Whilst the northbound bus stop is 50m beyond the traditional cut-off distance for bus stops in residential areas, I do not believe the additional distance would be a barrier to public transport use and residents accessing the bus stop in this location.
- 7.9.23 I therefore consider both the southbound and northbound bus stops on Thorley Lane as being accessible from the Appeal Site.

Shaftesbury Avenue Local & Neighbourhood Centre

- 7.9.24 The facilities at Shaftesbury Avenue are also defined within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as a Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre. These facilities include;
- A Convenience Store/Newsagent;
- 2 x Food Takeaways;
- A Hair and Beauty Salon; and
- A Barbers.
- 7.9.25 I would also note that a petrol filling station with an additional convenience store element is situated on the northern side of Shaftesbury Avenue opposite the Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre further enhancing the facilities on offer in this location.
- 7.9.26 The distance from the centre of the site to the Shaftesbury Avenue Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre is approximately 1.03km which equates to a walking journey time of 12.9 minutes.
- 7.9.27 Given the additional facilities provided, I consider the Shaftesbury Avenue Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre to be accessible from the Appeal Site on foot and is only moderately beyond the 10 minute walking journey which characterises a “walking neighbourhood”.
- 7.9.28 I would note, however, that the Shaftesbury Avenue Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre is within a “preferred maximum” 1,200m walking distance from local services as defined by the CIHT (see Table 7.1 of this Proof).
- 7.9.29 The Shaftesbury Avenue Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre is clearly accessible from the Appeal Site, as defined by guidance and recommendations set out by the CIHT.

Tesco Express, Briarfield Road

- 7.9.30 The Tesco Express on Briarfield Road is located amongst a parade of facilities and immediately adjacent to The Lakes Medical Centre and a pharmacy. The Tesco Express also provides local Post Office services.
- 7.9.31 The distance from the centre of the site to the Tesco Express is approximately 1km which equates to an overall walking journey time of 12.53 minutes.
- 7.9.32 As with the Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre at Shaftesbury Avenue, given the available facilities on offer including the addition of the Post Office, I consider the Tesco Express at Briarfield Road to be accessible from the Appeal Site on foot and is only moderately beyond the 10 minute walking journey which characterises a “walking neighbourhood”.
- 7.9.33 I would note, as with the Shaftesbury Avenue Local and Neighbourhood Shopping Centre, the Tesco Express is within a “preferred maximum” 1,200m walking distance from local services as defined by the CIHT (see Table 7.1 of this Proof).
- 7.9.34 The Tesco Express, and neighbouring facilities, are clearly accessible from the Appeal Site, as defined by guidance and recommendations set out by the CIHT.

Timperley Village

- 7.9.35 Timperley Village is located to the north of the Appeal Site and provides a wide range of facilities and services including;
- 3 x Convenience Stores;
- A Green Grocers;
- A Bakery;
- A Butchers;
- A Post Office;
- A Pharmacy;
- A Coffee Shop; and
- Timperley Village Club (Community Centre).

- 7.9.36 The distance from the centre of the site to the Thorley Lane/Stockport Road crossroad junction (indicative village centre) is approximately 1.23km which equates to an overall walking journey time of 15.41 minutes.
- 7.9.37 Planning for Walking acknowledges at Section 6.4 that the propensity to walk is not only influenced by distance but also the quality of the experience with people willing to walk further where their surroundings are more attractive, safe and stimulating.
- 7.9.38 Whilst Timperley Village is located beyond what is considered acceptable as a walking neighbourhood, having walked all routes to the key local facilities I have found no significant barriers which limit accessibility from the Appeal Site.
- 7.9.39 Pedestrians are required to cross the A560 Shaftesbury Avenue which is a key arterial route running east/west through Timperley and provided access to Altrincham town centre to the west and the M56 to the east. Whilst the A560 is a key vehicular route, the Shaftesbury Avenue/Thorley Lane signal controlled junction provides controlled Toucan Crossing facilities across all approach arms which provides safe and convenient crossing opportunities.
- 7.9.40 The pedestrian infrastructure between the Appeal Site and Timperley Village is also well maintained, with typical footway widths of at least 2m and the full route benefitting from street lighting.
- 7.9.41 Furthermore, as noted in section 4.5 of my Proof, the Appellant is committed to delivering pedestrian infrastructure enhancements at the Thorley Lane/Wood Lane roundabout junction.
- 7.9.42 Whilst Timperley Village is slightly beyond a “preferred maximum” 1,200m walking distance from local services, the existing pedestrian infrastructure between the Appeal Site and the Village centre provides a safe and attractive route for existing and future residents. The extensive facilities provided will make Timperley Village an attractive destination.
- 7.9.43 Taking all factors into consideration, it is my professional opinion that the Timperley Village is accessible from the Appeal Site on foot and will provide future residents with access to a wide range of services that can be reached by modes of transport other than the private car.

7.10 Conclusion

- 7.10.1 In my professional opinion, the Appeal Site is located such as to benefit from existing walking, cycling and public transport opportunities. The site is located in close proximity to a variety of key local services and facilities as well as a number of pre-existing residential areas. The site is therefore considered to be accessible from sustainable modes of travel in line with national and local transport planning policy.

- 7.10.2 In response to the Local Planning Authorities position, set out within the Committee Report, it is not appropriate in this instance to determine the sustainability of the Appeal site purely on the basis of the GMAL rating as the accessibility of any given site is not based purely on the availability of public transport provision.
- 7.10.3 The analysis presented within the planning submission and explored further in my Proof clearly demonstrates that the Appeal site is accessible by a choice of non-car modes of travel in accordance with guidance and recommendations set out by the CIHT, NPPF and the Trafford Local Plan.
- 7.10.4 Furthermore, neither the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways have indicated that the site is unsustainable, or enhancements are required to public transport infrastructure.

8.0 Masterplan for Timperley Wedge Allocation

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The Local Planning Authority refers to acceptability of the Appeal site in regard to the emerging Policy JP Allocation 3.2 (Timperley Wedge) within their Statement of Case. The status of Policy JP Allocation 3.2 is discussed in the Planning Evidence prepared by Mr Harper.

8.1.2 The Statement of Case sets out the position on sustainability at paragraph 5.11;

“The Council will demonstrate that the appeal site is in an unsustainable location poorly served by public transport and dependent on car borne journeys with limited offer at the nearby Neighbourhood Shopping Centres on Wood Lane/Green Lane. The site is an acceptable location for development in as part of emerging Policy JP Allocation 3.2 but not in isolation. The emerging policy would allow for improvements to the highway network, provision of new public transport modes (Metrolink station and rapid bus network) and infrastructure as well as a new Local Centre. It will be demonstrated that this site can only sustainably be developed as part of a coordinated whole. This is not a prematurity case, it doesn't threaten the allocation, but is not sustainable development without all of the elements of the allocation. The site is in an unsustainable location and it will remain so unless and until the development is delivered as part of the wider Timperley Wedge allocation which includes the provision of the new spine road; rapid bus service between Altrincham and Manchester Airport with priority public transport lanes; new and enhanced cycle and pedestrian routes; HS2 and Northern Powerhouse railway station and new Metrolink stations in association with the western leg extension.”

8.1.3 Section 2.0 of the Appeal Highway Statement (CD-B9) provides a summary of the engagement between all parties. I would note that throughout the extensive engagement with the Local Planning and Highway Authority, which dates back to October 2019, at no time was the sustainability or accessibility of the site raised as an area of concern either in isolation or as part of the Timperley Wedge Allocation.

8.1.4 Notwithstanding, it is suggested that the Appeal site is located in an unsustainable location and will remain so unless and until the development is delivered as part for the wider Timperley Wedge allocation. This position is maintained by the Local Planning Authority on the basis that the Timperley Wedge allocation would deliver extensive infrastructure improvements including;

- A new spin road;
- A rapid bus service between Altrincham and Manchester Airport;
- New and enhanced cycle and pedestrian routes;

- HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Railway Station; and
- New Metrolink Stations in association with the Manchester Airport western leg extension.

8.2 Timperley Wedge Masterplan Review

- 8.2.1 A Masterplan for Timperley Wedge Allocation was prepared on behalf of Trafford Council in September 2020 (CD-E4). The masterplan confirms the following at Section 1.0;

“Timperley Wedge has been selected for housing and employment allocation due to the opportunity for sustainable development on this site and its location adjacent to other areas of growth identified at Medi Park and Airport City.”

- 8.2.2 I do not intend to undertake a full appraisal of the masterplan document or detailed technical review of the baseline constraints and opportunities, design principles and development details. My review considers the masterplan in the context of the Appeal Site and the reference made in the Local Planning Authority Statement of Case only.

- 8.2.3 The Appeal site is included with the Masterplan as Development Plot no. 1 (Section 5.6) and identified as an indicative residential area (Section 5.8).

- 8.2.4 Section 5.9 of the Masterplan breaks down the Timperley Wedge Allocation into 4 regions with the Appeal Site situated in Region 1. The supporting text confirms the following;

“Region 1 involves developments in the north of the site. These developments , closer to the existing urban areas have the potential to be developed more quickly. Access to these sites will be off of the existing road network, although upgrades to the existing road network will be required in some areas.

Approx. 608 dwellings”

- 8.2.5 At this point, I would determine from the Masterplan that there is an acceptance that the Appeal Site will be delivered as an early phase in advance of completion of the major infrastructure which is referred to in the Statement of Case. This is confirmed at section 6.10 which states that Plot no. 1 is expected to be delivered in Phase 1 with an anticipated start on site in 2024 with Region 1 expected to be completed in 2030/31. The completion of the Timperley Wedge masterplan is anticipated in 2036/37.

- 8.2.6 Within the indicative phasing plan, localised highway improvements are anticipated to commence during the Phase 1 planning period and continue throughout the delivery of Phase 1.

- 8.2.7 The construction of the Spine Road would commence 12 – 24 months after the first dwellings in Region 1 are completed. The Construction period for the Spine Road is expected to be six years and delivered alongside Region 1.
- 8.2.8 At this point, it is evident that a significant element of Region 1, in which the Appeal Site is located, will be completed in advance of the completion of the Link Road. There will therefore be a significant period where the Link Road is being constructed and the Region 1 dwellings will be occupied.
- 8.2.9 The suggestion by the Local Planning Authority that the Appeal Site will remain unsustainable until the Link Road is complete is therefore contradicted by Timperley Wedge Masterplan which acknowledges that residential development can, and will come forward prior to the Link Road.
- 8.2.10 I would also note that the delivery of a rapid bus service between Altrincham and Manchester Airport would be linked to the completion of the Link Road. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that Region 1 of the Timperley Wedge masterplan would be delivered almost in its entirety in advance of the new public transport infrastructure.
- 8.2.11 Again, this clearly indicates that the delivery of Region 1 is not reliant on the rapid bus service as stated by the Local Planning Authority in order to deliver sustainable development.
- 8.2.12 Finally, the Metrolink Western Leg infrastructure works are not expected to commence until the majority of Region 1 is complete and would take a further nine years to complete. The full quantum of residential and employment uses proposed as part of the Timperley Wedge Masterplan will be delivered in advance of the Metrolink extension and the associated tram stops that would be provided.
- 8.2.13 The suggestion by the Local Planning Authority in their Statement of Case that “The site is in an unsustainable location, and it will remain so unless and until the development is delivered as part of the wider Timperley Wedge allocation ...” is clearly not supported by the Masterplan.
- 8.2.14 The status of the HS2 route and timetable are still subject to change and I am not in a position to comment, other than to express my opinion that the Timperley Wedge Masterplan would be delivered in full well in advance of HS2 based on the phasing set out within the masterplan document.

8.3 Conclusion

- 8.3.1 The Local Planning Authority believes that the Appeal site is, and would remain, an unsustainable site unless delivered as part of the wider Timperley Wedge masterplan.
- 8.3.2 Having reviewed the phasing and delivery of the Timperley Wedge masterplan, prepared on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, I have found that this position is unfounded and contradicted by the information presented within the masterplan document.

- 8.3.3 The Appeal site is located in an area identified for early delivery, well in advance of the significant infrastructure improvements and public transport enhancements proposed as part of the wider masterplan.
- 8.3.4 There is clearly an acknowledgement that the Appeal site is deliverable in the immediate term and is not reliant of the wider masterplan.

9.0 Interested Party Comments

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 I have been provided with a number of interested party comments in connection with the Appeal.

9.1.2 I have prepared a summary of each third party comment, in relation to highways and transportation, and provided a response to each.

9.1.3 The main highway comment relates to the additional traffic generated by the Appeal site and the impact on highway safety and network operation.

9.1.4 The Council's position on Access, Highways and Car Parking matters is summarised at paragraph 112 of the Committee Report which concludes;

'It is concluded that the development would have an acceptable highways impact with reference to Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the NPPF.'

9.1.5 My summary and responses are provided in **Appendix AT005**.

10.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 10.1.1 My evidence has considered the relevant traffic and transport matters in relation to the proposed residential development of up to 116 dwellings on land to the west of Thorley Lane in Timperley.
- 10.1.2 The Outline Planning Application was supported by a Transport Assessment, an Interim Travel Plan and a formal response to Local Highway Authority/TfGM feedback. In preparing these documents extensive discussions were held with the Local Planning Authority and the Local Highway Authority.
- 10.1.3 The Local Highway Authority (LHA), National Highways and Transport for Greater Manchester were all consulted as part of the planning application with their response summarised as follows;

'Local Highway Authority (LHA) – No objections in principle, further information requested prior to determination of this application included a traffic speed survey of Thorley Lane and amendments to the junction turning radii. The LHA have also listed the information that they would expect to see included as part of any future reserved matters applications. Further comments are discussed in the Observations section of this report.

National Highways – No objections

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) – No objections. Advice provided regarding trip distribution and junction assessments and mitigation; traffic regulation orders in the area; site accessibility and measures to encourage sustainable forms of transport. Comments discussed in more detail in the Observations section of the report.'

- 10.1.4 The Council's position on Access, Highways and Car Parking matters is summarised at paragraph 112 of the Committee Report which concludes;

'It is concluded that the development would have an acceptable highways impact with reference to Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the NPPF.'

- 10.1.5 The application was recommended for refusal by Officers at Planning Committee on 10 March 2022 with the sustainability of the site forming a part of the single reason for refusal.
- 10.1.6 The proposed site access strategy is considered fully acceptable to the Local Highway Authority and it has been agreed with both the Local Planning Authority and Local Highway Authority that the internal site layout would be subject to detailed design as part of any future Reserved Matters application.
- 10.1.7 It is acknowledged by the Local Highway Authority that the proposed residential development of up to 116 dwellings will not result in any unacceptable impact on highway safety or any severe residual

cumulative impacts on the surrounding highway network. As such, applying paragraph 111 of the NPPF, the proposed development should not be prevented or refused on highway grounds.

- 10.1.8 In **Section 5**, I considered the National and Local policy context in relation to the Appeal Scheme in order to determine whether the development represents a sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF, Trafford Core Strategy and the Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan. By promoting a residential development within an accessible area that benefits from access to key local facilities by a choice of sustainable travel modes, the proposed development accords with the general principles of Policy L4 and the sustainability element of Policy R4 of the Trafford Core Strategy as well as paragraph 110 of NPPF.
- 10.1.9 I have not been presented with any evidence to suggest that the Appeal Site does not represent a sustainable development and highlight that neither the Local Highway Authority, TfGM or National Highways have identified sustainability or accessibility of the Appeal Site as a reason for objection to the outline planning application.
- 10.1.10 In **Section 7**, I have undertaken a detailed appraisal of the accessibility of the Appeal Site by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport. I have concluded that the Appeal Site is located such as to benefit from existing walking, cycling and public transport opportunities. The site is located in close proximity to a variety of key local services and facilities as well as a number of pre-existing residential areas. The site is therefore considered to be accessible from sustainable modes of travel in line with national and local transport planning policy.
- 10.1.11 In **Section 8**, I have reviewed the Timperley Wedge allocation relative to the Appeal site. The Local Planning Authority believes that the Appeal site is, and would remain, an unsustainable site unless delivered as part of the wider Timperley Wedge masterplan. Having reviewed the phasing and delivery of the Timperley Wedge masterplan, prepared on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, I have found that this position is unfounded and contradicted by the information presented within the masterplan document.
- 10.1.12 In conclusion, I am in full agreement with the Local Highway Authority, TfGM and National Highways in that the proposals to deliver 116 dwellings on land west of Thorley Lane will not have a severe residual impact on the surrounding highway network in accordance with NPPF.
- 10.1.13 Furthermore, the delivery of the Appeal site is not reliant on the infrastructure proposed as part of the wider Timperley Wedge allocation. The proposals achieve the aims and objectives of national and local transport planning policy by locating the site in an accessible location with access to a wide range of key local facilities by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport.

Our Locations

Birmingham

2 The Wharf
Bridge Street
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