



Transportation Planning : Infrastructure Design

APPEAL DOC REF: RH/4/A

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

OF

DAVID ROBERTS IEng FIHE FCIHT

ON BEHALF OF REDROW HOMES

DEALING WITH HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORT MATTERS

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
ON LAND AT WARBURTON LANE, TRAFFORD

PINS REF: APP/Q4245/W/19/3243720

LPA REF: 98031/OUT/19

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. My evidence deals with the highway, traffic and transport aspects of the proposal by Redrow Homes to develop land for residential purposes on the east and west sides of Warburton Lane, in Trafford, and should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Common Ground relating to transport matters.
2. My evidence addresses the areas where a dispute remains with the Council. The areas where full agreement has not been reached relate to the following:
 - 1.2.1 The timing of the improvement at the Manchester Road/Moss Lane mini roundabout
 - 1.2.2 The timing of the improvement at the Flixton Crossroads junction, if it is required
 - 1.2.3 The level of the contribution to the Carrington Relief Road, if the contribution is made as opposed to undertaking an improvement to Flixton Crossroads
 - 1.2.4 Whether the site is suitably located in terms of sustainability
 - 1.2.5 Whether the site is in a location that is or can be satisfactorily served by public transport
 - 1.2.6 Whether the development of the site could prejudice the provision of necessary highway infrastructure for the GM45 development under the GMSF by preventing the delivery of the Southern Link Road.
3. Whilst there is no dispute in relation to the need for an improvement at the Manchester Road/Moss Lane mini roundabout, the Council have requested that this improvement is implemented prior to the occupation of the first dwelling, whereas my evidence sets out why this can be delayed until 100 dwellings have been occupied on the site.
4. Even 100 dwellings would add less than 1 vehicle per minute travelling through the junction, and there would be no measurable number of pedestrians from the appeal site crossing at the junction, which is important since the improvement works are largely to increase safety for pedestrians. The Council's request would see an improvement being undertaken for an impact of 1 additional vehicle per hour passing through the junction, whereas delaying the junction improvement until there is nearer to 1 vehicle per minute passing through the junction would be eminently more reasonable.
5. Similarly, at the Flixton Crossroads junction, the Council are requesting that a significant junction improvement, that is agreed to mitigate the traffic from 400 dwellings, is implemented prior to the

occupation of the first dwelling. My evidence sets out why this junction improvement should be delayed until 100 dwellings have been occupied on the site.

6. This junction is some 5km from the appeal sites and a requirement to improve the junction prior to a single dwelling being occupied on the site is unreasonable. Even the occupation of 100 dwellings would add much less than 1 vehicle per minute through the junction and in my view this improvement, that is agreed to mitigate the traffic impact of 400 dwellings, should not be required until 100 dwellings have been occupied.
7. Furthermore, the Council have agreed that improvement works to this junction would not be required if the Carrington Relief Road is provided and that the Council would in those circumstances wish to exchange the improvement works for a contribution to the CRR. A delay in the implementation of the improvement works would therefore also result in a better opportunity to avoid unnecessary works at Flixton Crossroads and allow the improvement costs to be diverted to assist with the implementation of the CRR.
8. Notwithstanding my client's agreement to potentially exchange the improvement scheme at Flixton Crossroads for a contribution to the CRR, the Council has suggested that the level of contribution to the CRR should be £1,869,440. In contrast with this sought contribution, the works that have been agreed to mitigate the impact of the appeal proposals in a no CRR world, have been costed to be in the region of £400,000. Therefore, whilst the substitution of an agreed highway improvement for a contribution to the CRR is reasonable in principle, the level of contribution sought by the Council is unreasonable and unacceptable to my client.
9. In relation to a public transport, the Council believe that congestion on the road network would delay bus journey times and make this a car dependent development. This ignores the fact that the Council has allowed planning permission for developments using the same road network and that the level of congestion and delays would not materially change as a result of improvements that are being undertaken as part of each committed development. This equally applies to the appeal sites where highway improvements are proposed to mitigate any material impact. Furthermore, the journey times for buses and cars are likely be equally impacted on the highway network and the journey time is unlikely to be the determining factor on the choice of travel for most people.
10. On the basis that planning permission were to be allowed, the Council is seeking a contribution of £2.025m to public transport improvements on the basis that they believe that public transport provision in the area of the site is poor. This is not a view that I share. There are 6 buses per hour in each direction of travel passing close to the site, of which 3 buses per hour pass along the site frontage. This would be regarded as a good level of service in most locations. To

encourage the use of these services it is proposed to provide a new bus stop on Moss Lane for each direction of travel, and to improve the two nearest bus stops to the site on Warburton Lane. All of these bus stops would be provided to the highest standards, with raised kerbs for easy access to buses, shelters, lighting, seating and timetable information.

11. Notwithstanding my view that the existing level of services is good, and that the use of these services will be supported by a high level of bus stop infrastructure, my client has agreed to contribute to an additional bus per hour on the service between Warrington and Altrincham, and also extend the bus service into the evening, as requested by the Council at a cost of £200k per annum for a five years period. This amounts to an agreement to contribute £1m to public transport improvements.
12. In addition to the request that my client has agreed to, to provide an additional bus service per hour and extend services into the evening, the Council has requested a further contribution of £150k per year for five years to replace a subsidy currently provided by TfGM for an existing bus service. This request is effectively for a private developer to replace local authority funding that would see no benefit to the development or other places that the route that the bus serves. This request is neither essential nor reasonable and is not acceptable to my client.
13. A further contribution has been requested by the Council of £55k per year for five years towards funding a school bus to other secondary schools in the Borough, when the nearest secondary school is within 900m walking distance of the site. The location of the appeal site to the secondary school does not justify any contribution to school transport and the request is regarded as unreasonable.
14. Overall, out of the requested public transport contribution of £2.025m, my client is willing to provide a contribution of £1m to increase the frequency and extend bus services into the evening, but is not willing to contribute the remaining £1.025m towards replacing an existing bus subsidy or funding school transport services in an area where the schools are close to the appeal sites.
15. In terms of accessibility of the site, I have already discussed that the site has a good level of access to public transport, but the site is also within a comfortable walking distance of the local centre in Partington, which includes shops and other everyday services and facilities. Nursery, primary and secondary schools are all within a comfortable walking distance, with the secondary school being located within 500m of the site frontage.
16. It is accepted that walking is the most important form of travel at the local level and offers the greatest opportunity to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km. All of the shops and services within Partington are within this distance. Further details of the walking distances are

contained within the Statement of Common Ground, with particular reference to Appendix 5 in that document.

17. For cyclists, there are continuous cycle lanes from the site accesses to the local centre in Partington. Beyond Partington, all of the Carrington development area is within a comfortable cycling distance, where there is already a range of employment opportunities and further employment opportunities planned and approved.
18. It is therefore my view that the site is well located to encourage sustainable modes of travel and that there is no essential need to own or use a car to reach everyday destinations.
19. The Council has more recently raised the issue of the potential for the site to accommodate a southern relief road that would serve the New Carrington development area. Whilst the Council is not certain if the site needs to accommodate a relief road, the outline planning permission, along with the site access proposals, can be demonstrated to be suitable to provide a link road if it is ultimately determined to be required. I have provided a drawing (Appendix 2) to show how such a link road can be provided through the site and this highway corridor through the site can be protected or provided as part of the development.
20. Based upon the Council's ideas for a potential southern relief road through the site, to provide access to further development land to the north and east of the appeal site, there would be benefit in allowing the appeal site to be brought forward at an early stage to enable the further development land to follow on within a reasonable time period. Without the appeal site being developed, the land beyond the site would remain effectively land-locked.
21. The flexibility in the design of the access road through the site therefore makes the development of the appeal site suitable to be both developed as part of an extension to the existing urban area, and be the first phase of the development to facilitate the access route to a wider development area for New Carrington from the south.
22. For the reasons set out, I firmly believe that there are no highway, traffic or transport reasons to resist the development of the appeal site at this time.