



APPEAL DOC REF: RH/4/B

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

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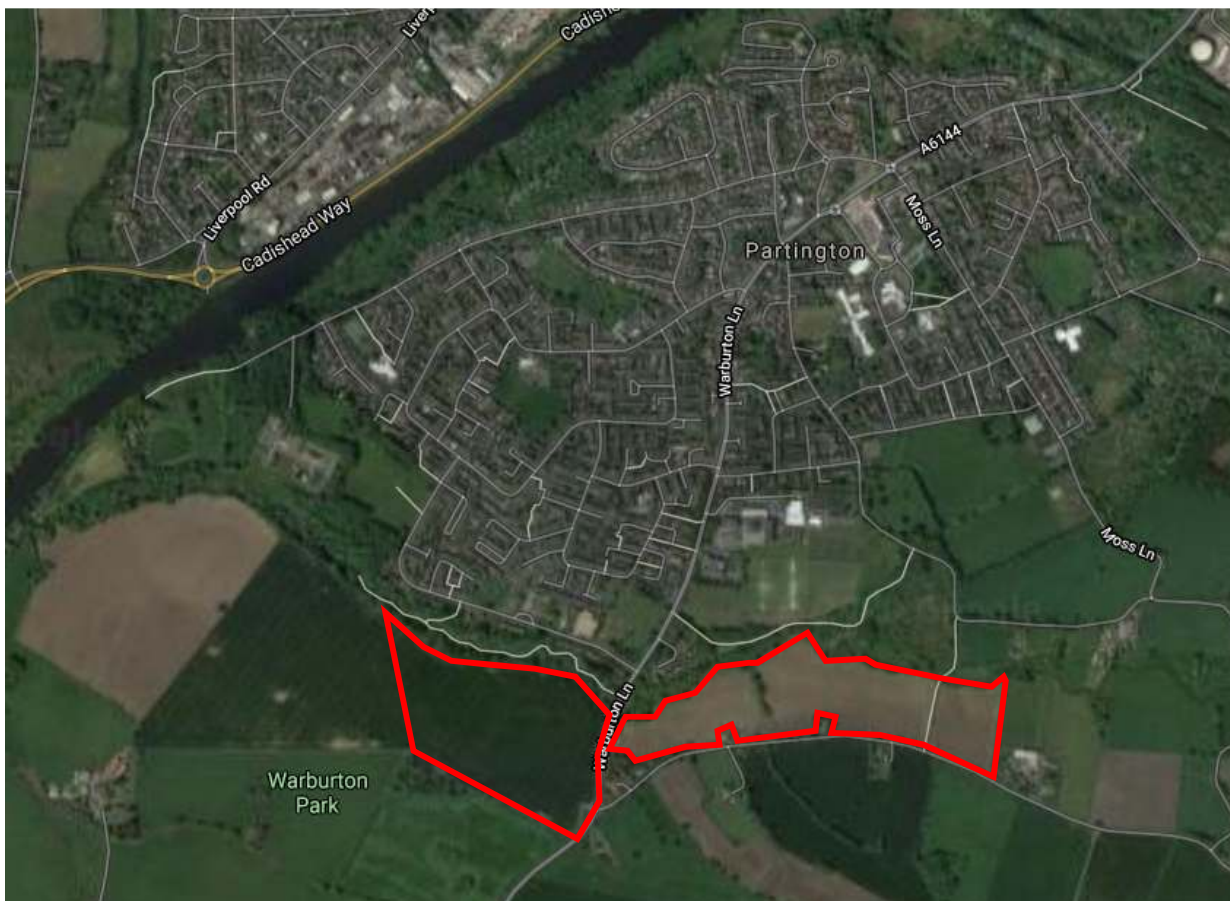
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1.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF DAVID ROBERTS IENG, FIHE, FCIHT

- 1.1 I am a Director of SCP, Transportation Planners and Infrastructure Designers, with offices in Manchester, Leeds and London.
- 1.2 I am an Incorporated Engineer of the Engineering Council, a Fellow of the Institute of Highway Engineers, and a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation.
- 1.3 I have over 30 years of experience of the highway, traffic and transport aspects of all types of development proposals and have advised many companies and local government authorities in that capacity.
- 1.4 I am acquainted with the site and the local area, having first been instructed to advise on this site, by Redrow Homes, in 2016, and I have carried out a series of observations, investigations and reports in connection with the proposals for this site.
- 1.5 I confirm that the opinions expressed in this Evidence are my true and professional opinions and have been prepared in accordance with the CIHT Code of Conduct.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 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, as indicated on the aerial photograph below:



2.2 My evidence should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Common Ground on Highway Matters (SoCG). The SoCG sets out the matters that are agreed between me and the Council, and also the area where agreement has not yet been achieved. This evidence concentrates on the area where agreement has not been reached and provides a summary and conclusions to demonstrate why planning permission can be granted from a highway, traffic and transport point of view.

2.3 For completeness, the likely levels of traffic generation and the distribution of that traffic are agreed, and it is agreed that the proposals include satisfactory mitigation for the traffic impacts of the development. Mitigation on the highway network is proposed at the following locations:

- Works on the development site frontage to Warburton Lane to achieve satisfactory access to each site in terms of both highway safety and highway capacity

- Improvement to the mini roundabout junction of Warburton Lane, Manchester New Road and Central Road within Partington Local Centre to provide additional highway capacity
- Improvement to the mini roundabout junction of Manchester New Road, Manchester Road and Moss Lane within Partington to provide pedestrian safety improvements
- Improvement to the traffic signal controlled junction of Manchester Road, Carrington Lane, Isherwood Road and Flixton Road to provide additional highway capacity

2.4 Notwithstanding the level of agreement on the mitigation works, there are still matters of dispute on these matters in terms of the timing of the implementation of improvements for the works at the mini roundabout junction of Manchester New Road, Manchester Road and Moss Lane and also at the traffic signal controlled junction of Manchester Road, Carrington Lane, Isherwood Road and Flixton Road. The Council request that these junctions are improved prior to the first dwelling being occupied on the site, whereas it is my view that the occupation of the first dwelling will not have a measurable traffic impact that requires mitigation, and a more reasonable level of occupations would be 100 dwellings before the capacity improvements are required.

2.5 A further area of dispute in relation to the agreed mitigation is the Council's request for a contribution to the Carrington Relief Road (CRR), if this were to be confirmed as going ahead before the Flixton Crossroads works are implemented. If the contribution were to be requested and paid, then the improvement to Flixton Crossroads is not required. The principle of a contribution, as opposed to a junction improvements is agreed, however, the Council has requested that the contribution to CRR is £1,869,440, whereas the junction improvement works required to mitigate the impact of the development are estimated to cost around £400,000. If this £400,000 highway improvement mitigates the development's traffic impact, then an alternative contribution of over £1.8m cannot be justified.

2.6 Other areas where agreement has not been achieved from a Transport point of view are set out in the SoCG and relate to whether the site is, or can be, satisfactorily served by public transport, the sustainability of the site, and whether the development could prejudice the delivery of a southern link road, which may form part of a wider development area, which includes the appeal sites.

2.7 The Council's Statement of Case where it sets out putative reasons for refusal that elaborate on the sustainability of the site, the public transport issue and the potential to accommodate a southern relief road through the site:

Reason for Refusal 3 – (Extracts) The proposed development is in an area of poor accessibility to public transport, jobs and amenities, and with a heavily congested road

network. The proposal does not support necessary new infrastructure and facilities, and has not been planned to enable sensitive integration with the existing settlement and a potential new settlement, and to support wider regeneration.

Reason for Refusal 8 - The application site is located in an area where public transport provision is inadequate and there are limited alternative means of transport to the private car. Insufficient allowance has been made for the development to contribute towards an improved public transport network, and prospective residents of the development would become heavily reliant on the private car

Reason for Refusal 10 - The proposed development does not allow for potential additional infrastructure to be incorporated into the site to enable wider integration and to facilitate future sustainable growth.

- 2.8 My evidence will address these putative reasons for refusal and demonstrate that the sites are well located to local services and facilities and that it will support, and bring forward, the wider regeneration of the area. The sites have good access to good public transport services and these will be further enhanced as part of the development proposals. The development will not create any increased congestion in the short term and will complement the proposals for longer term highway improvements.

3.0 TIMING OF THE MANCHESTER ROAD/MOSS LANE MINI ROUNDABOUT IMPROVEMENT

- 3.1 The agreed works for the mini roundabout at the junction of Manchester Road with Moss Lane are contained in the SoCG at Appendix 3. These works form part of an approved development for a site referred to as Lock Lane in Partington.
- 3.2 The works were designed by my company in 2007 but the associated development has not yet been implemented, although the planning permission has been renewed.
- 3.3 The improvement scheme provides enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction, which are in part at least linked to the increase in pedestrians from that Lock Lane development heading towards the shops and services in the centre of Partington. Since that time, a traffic signal controlled pedestrian crossing has been installed on Manchester Road which provides a safe crossing point to the shops and services from Lock Lane.
- 3.4 Whilst there are some queues and delays at the junction, the improvement scheme does not remove the queues, but was intended to provide a road safety improvement for the increased pedestrians and vehicles from that development scheme.
- 3.5 The need for an improvement is less from the appeal site than the Lock Lane site. This is because the Lock Lane site generates both pedestrians and vehicles through the junction from a development of up to 550 dwellings, within 700m of the junction.
- 3.6 The appeal site is some 1.5km from the junction, is for a development of 150 less dwellings, and the junction is beyond the shops and services in Partington when travelling from the appeal sites, and hence there is no material pedestrian demand between the site and the junction.
- 3.7 The combination of the increased distance from the site, the reduced scale of development, and the absence of any linked pedestrian demand reduces the need for the works when compared to the impact of the Lock Lane development.
- 3.8 However, it is accepted that as the appeal scheme is developed, the traffic will increase through the junction and the justification for the improvement will gradually increase, as the increase in vehicles will lead to increased conflict with the existing pedestrians at the junction. There is no defined instant in time when the level of conflict goes from unnoticeable to noticeable, but in my view the completion of 100 dwellings could be occupied on the appeal site before the safety measures should be implemented.
- 3.9 The vehicle movements from 100 dwellings can be determined from the SoCG at paragraph 4.3. It is agreed that 400 dwellings will generate 275 vehicle movements at the site access in the busiest hour of the day. Therefore, 100 dwellings will generate 25% of this total; which is 69

vehicles. Not all of these vehicles will travel through the Moss Lane mini roundabout, but even if 90% of these vehicles passed through the mini roundabout the increase in traffic would only represent an average of 1 vehicle per minute.

- 3.10 In my view, 1 vehicle per minute can be accepted through this junction in the busiest hour of the day before the safety improvement becomes justified, which relates to the occupation of 100 dwellings on the appeal site.
- 3.11 The Council's position of requiring the improvement for 1 vehicle per hour when the first house is occupied on the appeal site is not justified and, as part of the discussion on Conditions, I would suggest that whilst the junction improvement is agreed, the scheme does not need to be implemented prior to first occupation, but before the occupation of the 101st dwelling.

4.0 TIMING OF THE FLIXTON CROSSROADS IMPROVEMENT

- 4.1 As agreed in the Transport SoCG at paragraph at 2.6, Flixton Crossroads is 5km to the north of the appeal sites. It is also agreed that the junction causes peak hour queues and delays at the present time, and that the various committed developments have incorporated improvements to the junction, and similarly the appeal proposals include an improvement to the junction. The improvement is shown at Appendix 4 in the Transport SoCG.
- 4.2 The Council has requested that this improvement is completed prior to the first dwelling being occupied on the appeal site. This is equivalent to suggesting that the junction capacity needs to be improved to accommodate the traffic from 400 dwellings, which is agreed, but the improvement is required when only 1 dwelling is occupied.
- 4.3 For a junction that is some 5km north of the site, and there is no guarantee that the 1 vehicle per hour from that dwelling in the peak hour will travel through the Flixton Crossroads, the requirement to implement the works prior to the first occupation is not justified, in my view, since there is no measurable traffic impact arising from that level of development to justify the works.
- 4.4 As set out in para 3.9 above, in my example of 90% of the traffic from 100 dwellings passing through the junction is equivalent to 1 additional vehicle per minute, then this would represent a reasonable level of occupations before the capacity improvement should be completed. However, whilst the Moss Lane example in Section 3, considered the possibility of the 1 additional vehicle per minute passing through that junction, the likelihood of 90% of the appeal site traffic passing through the Flixton Crossroads junction is unrealistic, due to the distance involved and the number of attractions that traffic would stop at, such as shops, places of employment, schools etc, and not need to travel through the Flixton Crossroads junction. Therefore, the completion of 100 dwellings on the appeal site is likely to lead to far less than 1 vehicle per minute travelling through the junction, which in my view makes the trigger of 100 dwellings being occupied before the junction improvement is required, reasonable.
- 4.5 Furthermore, the agreement that the works to Flixton Crossroads would not be required if the CRR is to be provided, means that a delay in the provision of the works has a better chance of avoiding abortive highway works by providing a greater opportunity for the CRR provision to be confirmed. The cost of the Flixton Crossroads improvement could then be diverted to the CRR and contribute to the longer term solution for traffic relief in Carrington.
- 4.6 Therefore, whilst there is agreement with the Council on the works needed to Flixton crossroads to accommodate the appeal proposals, as part of the discussions on Conditions, it will be suggested that the improvement should be delayed until 100 dwellings on the appeal sites have been occupied.

5.0 LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE CARRINGTON RELIEF ROAD

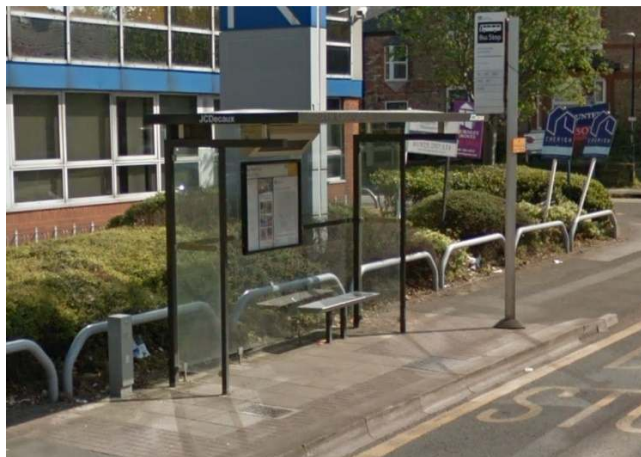
- 5.1 It is agreed that Carrington Relief Road is not required to mitigate the impact of the development proposals and that the highway works approved for Flixton Crossroads are acceptable in the event that the CRR is not implemented.
- 5.2 However, it is agreed with the Council that if CRR is implemented then the works to Flixton Crossroads are not required. On this basis, my client does not object to the funds that would have been spent on the Flixton crossroads improvement being diverted to the CRR scheme costs, if this resulted in the appeal scheme proceeding without delay or restriction.
- 5.3 My client has investigated costs for the approved Flixton Crossroad improvement, which I understand amount to around £400,000. This is the costs that my client would need to incur to mitigate the traffic impact of the appeal proposals at this junction. In agreeing to contribute to the CRR, to avoid abortive highway works at the Flixton Crossroads, as a principle, it would be unacceptable to my client to contribute a higher amount to the CRR and the level of contribution offered through the legal obligation should be this £400,000 figure.
- 5.4 Through the negotiations relating to the SoCG, the Council has sought to obtain a contribution of £1,869,440 to CRR in replacement for undertaking the improvement works to Flixton Crossroads. Whilst at the present time the Council has not provided any background in relation to how this total has been calculated, the scale of the requested by the Council is unacceptable on the grounds of unreasonableness, compared to the mitigation works that it would be off-set against.

6.0 PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES

- 6.1 Public transport has been assessed as part of the development proposals. This has been considered in relation to the frequency and destinations served by the bus services in the vicinity of the site and the location and quality of the bus stops.
- 6.2 I believe that it is important to note that there is a significant scale of residential development in the area around the site and the appeal sites extend that existing area rather than create a need for new services. A good level of public transport services is needed in this area irrespective of the appeal proposals.
- 6.3 There are two bus services that pass along the site frontage; these being the 5A and the 247. A further two bus services, the 255 and 260 terminate at Oak Road, to the east of the appeal site. The table below summarises the frequency of these existing services and the principal destinations served:

Service No.	Bus Stop Locations	Daytime Frequency	Destinations Served
5A	Warburton Lane & Moss Lane	60 mins	Warrington – Lymm – Partington - Altrincham
247	Warburton Lane & Moss Lane	30 mins	Trafford Centre – Partington - Altrincham
255	Oak Road	30 mins	Partington – Flixton – Urmston - Stretford – Old Trafford - Manchester
260	Oak Road	60 mins	Sale – Partington Circular

- 6.4 As a principle, 6 buses per hour in close proximity to the sites should be regarded as a good level of provision, subject to these services being accessible to the prospective residents on the appeal site.
- 6.5 With access to the existing good level of bus services in mind, as part of the development package it is agreed that there will be new bus stops provided on Moss Lane, such that future residents on the eastern parcel of land will have an excellent level of access to the existing three buses per hour that travel in each direction along Moss Lane. The bus stops will be located close to a pedestrian access into the development site, and will be provided with raised kerbs to allow easy access for wheelchairs and prams, and will have a shelter, lighting, seating and timetable information. A typical detail from elsewhere in Trafford is shown in the photograph below:



- 6.6 In addition, the nearest bus stops in each direction of travel on Warburton Lane will be improved to provide the same level of facilities.
- 6.7 With the new bus stop provision on Moss Lane, every dwelling on the eastern parcel of the appeal site can be within 400m of a bus stop that currently has 3 buses per hour, providing access to Warrington, Lymm, Altrincham and Partington, and 2 buses per hour to the Trafford Centre. Importantly, at the Trafford Centre, there is a connection to the metrolink tram system which opened in March 2020 and now provides even greater access to Manchester city centre and the wider region. The plan attached as **Appendix 1** shows the distances from the bus stops.
- 6.8 Similarly, virtually every dwelling on the western parcel of the appeal site would also be within 400m of the south/eastbound bus stop on Warburton Lane. The northbound bus stop is also within 400m of the centre of the site whilst the furthest dwelling may be some 530m from the bus stop, this is still only around a 6½ minutes' walk, which will not be a barrier for most people.
- 6.9 Further bus stops and services on Oak Road provide an even greater level of bus travel opportunities. Whilst these involve a longer walk of some 650m, which is still less than an 8 minutes' walk, these present a further opportunity for bus travel and direct access to additional destinations.
- 6.10 Notwithstanding my view that there is a good level of accessibility to frequent bus services, the Council raised an issue in their committee report, and subsequent Statement of Case, in relation to a requirement for a public transport contribution from Redrow Homes, via a legal obligation, to increase the frequency of bus services, which the Council regards as poor. Whilst it is only my judgement, I believe that the vast majority of the British population would be delighted to have a choice of 3-6 buses per hour in each direction of travel, and the Council's definition of this being a poor service is not a reasonable conclusion.

- 6.11 The public transport journey times from the site to some of the destinations served are set out in the table below:

Destination	Timetabled Journey
Altrincham	22 mins
Partington (Central Road)	5 mins
Flixton Rail Station	14 mins
Trafford Centre	31 mins
Manchester City Centre	60 mins
Warrington Town Centre	44 mins
Lymm	12 mins

- 6.12 It is worthy of note that there are several choices of routes to Manchester city centre which all provide similar journey times; these include a continuous bus journey, a bus to Flixton rail station and then a train journey into Manchester, a bus to the Trafford Centre and then a tram into Manchester, or a bus to Altrincham and then a tram into Manchester.
- 6.13 Since preparing their Statement of Case, the Council has provided further information in relation to their objections on public transport grounds. This has led to a request for a contribution of £200,000 per year for five years to fund an additional bus service per hour during the daytime, and to extend this bus service into the evening. The total contribution of £1m to improve public transport connections is a significant sum and should allow the transport authority to achieve a significant improvement for their customers.
- 6.14 My client has agreed to contribute this sum towards an improved bus service on the basis that it will serve the site and offer even more opportunities for future residents to undertake their journeys by sustainable modes of transport. In my view the existing good bus service would be become an excellent level of service with 4 buses per hour in the immediate vicinity of the sites and linking the sites with Altrincham, Partington and beyond on a very frequent basis. This is in addition to the 3 further bus services that can be accessed via a comfortable walk for most people to Oak Road.

- 6.15 In addition to the request for £200,000 per year to improve the frequency of a bus service passing the site, the Council has requested the following further bus contributions:
- £150,000 per year, for five years, to replace the TfGM subsidy on the existing hourly Cat 5a bus service.
 - £55,000 per year, for five years, to support a school service from Partington to meet demand for secondary school children wishing to attend schools elsewhere in the Borough
- 6.16 Whilst my client does not object to the principle of improving public transport services, and contributing to that improvement, I do not believe that the suggested purpose of the above two contributions, amounting to a further £1.025m is reasonable.
- 6.17 In terms of the subsidy for the Cat 5a service, it would seem that there is currently a need to subsidise this service by the Transport Authority, perhaps due to insufficient customers, and the development will increase the number of customers such that a reduced subsidy could be required from the Transport Authority in any event.
- 6.18 Moreover, the request seems to be that a developer should fund a subsidy that is needed to sustain a public bus service between Warrington and Altrincham, where the developer is one of many groups that would benefit from the service. The request for a private developer to replace public body funding would therefore seem to be an unreasonable request, when the developer would gain no other benefit or see any improvement as a result of that contribution. In my view, this would not pass the test of necessity to allow the development to proceed since there is no evidence to suggest that the existing situation will change, whether or not my client contributes to the service.
- 6.19 The contribution towards a secondary school bus service ‘from Partington to meet demand for secondary school children wishing to attend schools elsewhere in the Borough’ seems to be a request that is aimed at meeting existing demand rather than the impact of this development. The nearest secondary school to the appeal sites is some 900m from the site accesses and a school bus to connect the appeal site with other secondary schools in the Borough does not take into account the location of the appeal sites, which are exceptionally well located to make use of the existing secondary school without the need for a motorised journey. A contribution to improve a secondary school bus service would therefore not meet the test of necessity to allow this development to proceed.
- 6.20 In addressing the Council’s case that the development would be car dependent due to congestion on the road network that would make bus journey times high, this argument cannot in my view be sustained.

- 6.21 The congestion in the area is being managed by improvements that are being undertaken as part of the committed developments in the area, including the appeal site. These improvements will ensure that congestion is not made worse as the committed developments are constructed. However, the Council did not object on public transport grounds to the principle of these other developments being brought forward and an inconsistent stance has now been adopted by the Council.
- 6.22 Also, the Council's case implies that bus journey times will be impacted differently than journey times of cars; making car use more attractive than bus use for residents where there is some congestion on part of the route. This seems to over-simplify the choices people make over their mode of travel, and takes no account of the costs of car ownership, car parking availability at the destination and general availability of having a bus that serves both the origin and destination of a journey; these being more important than the level of congestion on a route that is used by both buses and cars.
- 6.23 Overall in relation to public transport, it is my view that the existing bus services currently offer a good level of connectivity to the surrounding towns and villages, with frequent levels of service throughout the daytime. The agreement of my client to fund an additional bus service per hour and extend services into the evening will further enhance this good level of bus provision. In conjunction with the additional bus stops and improved infrastructure, public transport offers a realistic and attractive opportunity for future residents on the appeal sites.

7.0 THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE SITE

- 7.1 The accessibility of the appeal site has not been a concern raised by the Highway Officers as part of the considerations of the development proposal.
- 7.2 As set out in the Statement of Common Ground, walking is recognised as the most important mode of travel at a local level and it offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly under two kilometres.
- 7.3 Partington's main local centre is within this distance, at some 1.5km walking distance from the centre of each site. The walking distances are shown on the plans included as Appendix 5 to the Statement of Common Ground.
- 7.4 The shops and services in the centre of Partington include a Tesco Express superstore, convenience store, a pharmacy, post office, health centre, dentist, café, hot food take-away, community centre, library and more. Closer to the sites are nursery, primary and secondary schools; the Broadoak secondary school being some 400m from the site frontage on Warburton Lane. 'The Fuse' community/conference/events centre is located adjacent to the southern edge of the school and the Partington Leisure Centre is located at the rear of the school. There are also local shops on Oak Road within an easy walk for most people.
- 7.5 The site is therefore well located for pedestrians to take advantage of these local services and facilities.
- 7.6 For cyclists, a journey distance of 5km is recognised as providing the greatest potential to replace a car trip. In this instance the whole of Partington and Carrington is within this journey length and cyclists would have the opportunity to reach all of the local services and places of employment in these areas. Indeed, new employment is being promoted and is approved or under construction in the Carrington area.
- 7.7 To assist cyclists, there are existing in-carriageway cycle lanes that link the centre of Partington to the road bridge over Red Brook. As part of the development proposals, these cycle links will be extended to the site accesses to ensure continuous cycle lanes between the appeal site and all of the services and facilities in Partington.
- 7.8 The bus provision in the vicinity of the site is currently of a good standard, as set out in Section 6 of my evidence. In addition to the major attractions of Manchester, Warrington and Altrincham that can be reached within a 60 minutes journey time, the buses also provide direct links to railway stations on the national rail network, metrolink tram services serving Greater Manchester, and even the international airport in Greater Manchester.

7.9 In my view, this level of accessibility does not make the appeal site a car dependent development. As always, the key is to provide people with opportunities for sustainable travel, and the development proposals clearly provide these opportunities. These opportunities will also be supported by a Travel Plan. The Travel Plan has been submitted to the Council as part of the application and there have been no concerns raised in relation to the content of the Travel Plan. The Travel Plan will be provided in a 'Welcome Pack' that is provided to each household and will include the following:

- An introductory leaflet to the travel plan providing a summary of the contents, as well as the contact details of the Travel Plan Coordinator;
- A map showing the location of the development in relation to the local area, highlighting the nearby bus stops and key local facilities within easy walking distance of the site;
- Public transport information, including:
 - Bus timetables covering services from nearby bus stops;
 - Information on how to obtain concessionary bus travel passes;
 - Contact details for bus service providers.
- Active travel information, including:
 - Map indicating local walk and cycle routes;
 - Details of local bike repair shops/retailers, along with available training and maintenance sessions;
 - Details of 'Safer Routes to School' and associated 'Walking Buses' for access to local education;
 - Health information and details of local walking and cycling groups.
- A car cost calculator, providing information on the full cost of car use (i.e. financial, environmental, health, etc.); and
- Details of local taxi firms.

7.10 Overall, the site is well located to take advantage of local shops, services and employment opportunities and other facilities without the need to own or use a car for everyday journeys, and the use of sustainable modes of travel will be further encouraged by the implementation of a Travel Plan.

8.0 COMPATIBILITY WITH NEW CARRINGTON PROPOSALS

- 8.1 Since the non-determination appeal has been lodged, the Council has raised an issue in relation to the potential for the site to accommodate a southern relief road, that would link to the Carrington Relief Road and a wider development area.
- 8.2 The appeal site forms part of the wider development area that is included as a prospective allocation in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF). Indeed, development at Carrington Village, Common Lane and Heath Farm Lane has been agreed to be committed development within the prospective allocation, which is now being referred to as New Carrington. The wider proposals include for a 'Carrington Relief Road' which is seen as a major part of unlocking the road network for the longer term development aspirations. My understanding is that the link road is currently anticipated to be open for traffic use by 2024.
- 8.3 The Council confirm that their plans are to see the wider development of the Partington and Carrington areas, which include the development of this appeal site; potentially with a view to the start of a new southern link road passing through the eastern site, although their masterplanning is at a very early stage.
- 8.4 Overtime, there will be new services and facilities provided to serve the wider development and that future development will provide additional road, footway and cycleway connections that will further improve the accessibility of the site.
- 8.5 In the light of the Council's proposals for the wider development of the area, and a potential link road being provided through the eastern appeal site, it would support the appeal site being brought forward at an early stage to provide a road network that can both serve the development site but also enable a phased development to the north and east, beyond the current appeal site, which may otherwise be land-locked.
- 8.6 The current site access proposals have been designed to allow a two lane exit onto Warburton Lane, and the absence of buildings close to the access will allow modifications to be undertaken in the future, if necessary, without building constraints around the junction.
- 8.7 The appeal proposals would not prejudice the provision of a link road through the site, and the site can be suitably designed at the reserved matters stage to accommodate a road network that is capable of being readily extended into land beyond the appeal site; potentially incorporating a 6.75m wide carriageway through the site to serve a s future bus route. The drawing at **Appendix 2** shows the potential for a link road to pass through the appeal site from the proposed access.

8.8 In summary, there is nothing in the appeal proposals that would prejudice the provision of a southern relief road through the site, and indeed the approval of the site could enable the early provision of such a relief road to enable the development beyond the site to be brought forward. Any delay with the appeal site development could prejudice the ability to bring land forward that would ultimately be accessed from a southern relief road.

9.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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:
- 9.2.1 The timing of the improvement at the Manchester Road/Moss Lane mini roundabout
 - 9.2.2 The timing of the improvement at the Flixton Crossroads junction, if it is required
 - 9.2.3 The level of the contribution to the Carrington Relief Road, if the contribution is made as opposed to undertaking an improvement to Flixton Crossroads
 - 9.2.4 Whether the site is suitably located in terms of sustainability
 - 9.2.5 Whether the site is in a location that is or can be satisfactorily served by public transport
 - 9.2.6 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.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 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.
- 9.5 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.

- 9.6 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.
- 9.7 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.
- 9.8 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.
- 9.9 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.
- 9.10 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.

- 9.11 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.
- 9.12 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.
- 9.13 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.
- 9.14 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.
- 9.15 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.
- 9.16 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.

- 9.17 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.
- 9.18 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.
- 9.19 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.
- 9.20 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.
- 9.21 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.
- 9.22 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.