

Highways Response Note (2022/0619)

8 September 2022
Version 1.1
Issue



1 Introduction

Fore Consulting Limited (Fore) has been commissioned by Rouse Homes Limited (Rouse) to provide transport advice on land at Woolley Colliery Road, Darton. An outline planning application (ref: 2022/0619), seeking detailed consent for access, has been submitted to Barnsley Council (BMBC) for 115 residential dwellings. The land is allocated for residential use as site HS1 in Barnsley Local Plan.

The purpose of this note is to provide a response to the transport and highways matters that have been raised by BMBC's highways officer in an email dated 23 August 2022 that has been sent to the applicant/agent.

2 BMBC Highway Comments

BMBC Comment 1

“To the east of Woolley Colliery Road, opposite the southern parcel of HS1, sits allocated site HS25 and this abuts HS11 further east. Within the Local Plan, policy HS1 is clear in that it states that development of the site shall not take place until the road layouts are in place for sites HS25 and HS11. Furthermore, policy HS25 reads that the development will be expected to ensure appropriate access is provided to enable development of site HS1. Clearly, given that road layouts for HS11 and HS25 have not been implemented, the development of HS1 is seen to be premature and not in accordance with policy HS1.

It is asserted within the Design & Access Statement submitted in support of these proposals that there is no justification for the requirement for the HS11 and HS25 sites to be developed prior to HS1 and that all essential services and facilities can already be accessed safely on foot from the HS1 site via existing footways. However, there is currently no continuous designated pedestrian route between the HS1 site and the numerous services and facilities in Darton. The pedestrian route to the south of the site via the off-road path from Woolley Colliery Road to the car park of Darton Railway Station subsequently leads to Station Road at which point there are no designated crossing points to allow pedestrians to safely cross the road to the nearest continuation of footway. The alternative route for pedestrians would be to stay on

Woolley Colliery Road but there is a 100m gap in footway provision so this route does not afford safe passage for pedestrians either. The development of the HS25 site would ameliorate the issue of pedestrian accessibility by securing footway provision along the southern boundary of the HS25 site thereby creating a continuous pedestrian route between the HS1 site and Darton.

Footway improvements are proposed as part of this scheme within the vicinity of the site along Woolley Colliery Road, these improvements include new footways along the site frontages and additional crossing points, both of these elements are welcomed. In addition to this however, there is scope to provide a significant improvement to the overall accessibility of the site by way of an upgrade to the existing footway along the eastern side of Woolley Colliery Road to create a 3m shared footway/cycleway, designed to LTN 1/20 cycle infrastructure design standards.

In conjunction with the facilities provided by the development of the HS11 and HS25 sites this would provide significant improvements to the accessibility of the site, however, until such a point that the HS11 site and the HS25 site in particular have been developed then the HS1 site is not considered to be sufficiently accessible, even with the proposed improvements, to accommodate the proposed development.”

Fore Response

Policy HS1 states:

“Development of the site will not take place until the road layouts are in place for sites HS25 and HS11.”

The applicant maintains that there is no justification for requiring the delivery of the road layouts for sites HS25 and HS11 prior to the development of site HS1.

As set out in the submitted Transport Assessment (TA), the vehicular traffic passing to and from site HS1 does not need to pass through site HS25 or HS11, and any benefits that may arise from the delivery of a new vehicular route through sites HS25 and HS11 would not be realised by traffic to and from site HS1. The traffic to and from site HS1 is distributed across the existing network without significant impact that could in any way be considered severe in the context of NPPF paragraph 111, as set out in the TA.

Whilst the delivery of a new route would provide an additional route choice, traffic ends up in the same place on the network and the policy wording is, therefore, not justified in practice in the case of the predicted routing from site HS1 for development traffic.

It is acknowledged that the provision of a section of additional footway on the south side of site HS25 is desirable to improve the wider infrastructure. It is understood from the correspondence that this footpath will be delivered by and utilising land from site HS25 in due course once the development of that site proceeds.

However, the applicant does not consider that either the HS25/HS11 road layouts, or this small section of additional footway associated with site HS25, are essential to allow the development of HS1 to proceed. This is particularly the case when the enhancement of surrounding walking/cycling infrastructure through site HS1, along with the further improvements requested, is taken into consideration. This will result in a considerable upgrade in overall walking/cycling facilities and consequent benefits for all existing and future users, not just residents of the new residential development at HS1.

Pedestrians from Woolley Colliery Road can currently pass through the footpath adjacent to the east of the station to and from facilities in Darton including the station itself. There is a clear footpath route between the site, along the station footpath and to the corner of Station Road adjacent to the rail station access. Whilst the infrastructure is not to modern day standards, the roads are lit, and the available routes are well used. The segregated footway terminates at the rail station access with Station Road and there are no designated crossing points. From here pedestrians disperse to either pass through the tunnel under the railway, a lightly trafficked road that provides access to local shops and facilities, or in addition pedestrians cross to re-join the footpath on the northern side of Station Road.

The available pedestrian routes in this area are well used by existing residents from the catchments of Darton and Kexbrough who are walking to and from the rail station, and these are the only available means to access the station facilities on foot. In addition, the available routes are well used by rail passengers who are changing platforms, as well as for access by residents to the other local facilities including shops.

A review of Crashmap for the most recent five-year period shows there have been no recorded accidents in this area, either on Woolley Colliery Road or Station Road. From the review of the road safety records, it is therefore clear that there is no pre-existing road safety issue relating to the available pedestrian routes in the local area. The applicant does not, therefore, accept that development of the HS1 site will cause an unacceptable road safety issue.

Furthermore, it is noted that an application for residential development on the site was subject to an appeal¹ in 2006, and the Inspector's report dated 6 October 2006 is attached. The appeal was dismissed for reasons that did not relate to highways, however a main issue that was considered by the inspector during the appeal was:

ii) The impact of the proposal on the environment, highway safety and the free flow of traffic in Darton.

¹ Appeal Decision (Ref: APP/R4408/A/05/1182777) for mixed development on the Former Woolley Colliery Site, Darton, Barnsley S75 5JE dated 9 October 2006.



The report deals with highway issues at paragraphs 32 to 35 inclusive. The impacts of additional traffic are considered at paragraphs 32 and 34 of the report. Issues around pedestrian access are considered in paragraph 33. In paragraph 35 the report states that:

“... I conclude that it would not have a harmful impact on highway safety and the free flow of traffic or on the environment in Darton.”

Proposed improvements to the footpath between Woolley Colliery Road and Darton station (referenced in the report at paragraph 33) have subsequently been implemented following the inquiry. The improvements comprised widening and extension of the footpath route, new surfacing and the installation of street lighting.

The request from BMBC to further improve footway/cycleway facilities by way of the suggested upgrade to the existing footway on the eastern side of Woolley Colliery Road to create a 3m shared footway/cycleway is noted. The applicant would welcome a further discussion regarding the precise scope of the suggested further improvement so that this can be reviewed and the submitted information can be modified accordingly if necessary.

BMBC Comment 2

“In accordance with the recently adopted Sustainable Travel SPD, there will be a requirement for the applicant to provide a contribution towards sustainable transport and active travel measures through negotiation via a Section 106 agreement.”

Fore Response

Noted. The applicant would welcome an initial indication of the scale of the contribution that is sought for this requirement. It is assumed that any contributions can be ring fenced such that they can be used to directly improve sustainable travel measures in the vicinity of the site, for example in association with the suggested further improvements set out in Comment 1 above, as well as the funding of Travel Plan measures.

BMBC Comment 3

“With regard to the northern extent of the proposed off-site highway improvement works (a small portion of the proposed footway provision along with a pedestrian crossing point with tactile paving), I note that these works are both outside of the adopted highway and also outside the boundary of this Local Authority.”

Fore Response

Noted. Our understanding from the applicant is that the proposed improvements are either on land within the applicant’s control or within existing adopted highway. In this scenario, the proposed improvements are within Wakefield District boundary and works beyond the BMBC boundary can be agreed with the adjacent highway authority accordingly.



Alternatively, the applicant is willing to amend the proposed works accordingly to remove anything beyond the BMBC boundary.

BMBC Comment 4

“The Transport Assessment submitted in support of the proposals states in section 6.4 that, beyond the small number of junctions listed, “the traffic impacts associated with the development are not considered to be significant in terms of the impact on the wider network.” Preceding this statement, Table 6 demonstrates that the B6131 Church Street/A637 Barnsley Road/Churchfield Lane staggered junction would see a significant increase in vehicular traffic as a result of the development (63 two-way PCU’s in the AM peak and 56 in the PM peak). This junction should therefore be included within those selected for assessment/modelling.”

Fore Response

This is noted. An up-to-date traffic survey has been commissioned for this additional junction during week commencing 12 September 2022, such that a junction capacity assessment can be undertaken as requested. A supplementary note will then be submitted to set out the performance of the junction and how this will differ with the development traffic added for the future year scenario. This will follow as soon as possible once the survey data is received and the modelling has been completed.

Notwithstanding the above, it is the view of the applicant that given the modest level of trips that are generated by the development, the impacts of the development are unlikely to be significant at this location.

BMBC Comment 5

“The proposals are considered unacceptable from a highways development control perspective as they are contrary to policies set out within the Barnsley Local Plan and, in addition, would result in an unacceptable detrimental impact on highway safety, contrary to NPPF (July 2021) paragraph 111.”

Fore Response

As stated above, the applicant does not accept that the development of the HS1 site will cause an unacceptable road safety issue. There is no highways reason why the planning application should not be permitted and why development should not proceed ahead of development of sites HS25 or HS11.