
HIGHWAYS RESPONSE

To: Matthew Shepherd
Senior Planning Officer

Our Ref: 23/02094/FULMAJ

From: Paul Goddard
Highways Development Control
Team Leader

Your Ref: 23/02094/FULMAJ

Extn:

Date: May 30th 2024

The Kennet Shopping Centre, Newbury

Full planning permission for the redevelopment of the Kennet Centre comprising the partial demolition of the existing building on site and the development of new residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and residents' ancillary facilities; commercial, business and service floorspace including office (Class E (a, b, c, d, e, f, and g)); access, parking, and cycle parking; landscaping and open space; sustainable energy installations; associated works, and alterations to the retained Vue Cinema and multi storey car park.

Introduction

1. I refer to the submissions received on May 17th 2024 including a report on the VISSIM traffic modelling.

Traffic generation

2. As previously advised, the Local Highway Authority sought use of the Councils VISSIM traffic model to assess this proposal. The traffic generation figures have been agreed previously. The figures compare the projected traffic generation for the development and what the existing uses of this of the site would have generated should the Kennet shopping centre be used at a reasonably high occupancy.
3. The modelling work was undertaken by WSP who operate and maintain the VISSIM model on behalf of West Berkshire Council. The following junctions were modelled:
 - A339 / B3421 Kings Road / Bear Lane Roundabout;
 - A339 / Cheap Street Junction;
 - Cheap Street / Market Street Junction;
 - Bear Lane / The Wharf Junction; and
 - Market Street / Bartholomew Street.
4. As there was an expected increase in traffic during the AM peak, the model has been run for the AM peak within the 2031 future assessment year. The model includes all known committed developments including Sandleford Park, all highway improvement schemes and mitigation from strategic housing developments such as Sandleford Park.
5. WSP also updated the model to include a new proposed southbound arm at the Bartholomew Street. Market Street junction and the signals adapted for this additional demand. The proposed works to this junction will be mentioned later.

6. From the results, I am satisfied that the proposed development compared to what the Kennet shopping centre could generate would not have a severe traffic impact on the highway and travel network.

Site layout.

7. I have viewed this element with colleagues in the Active Travel team. We are concerned that the service access off Cheap Street will impact the northbound bus stop in Cheap Street. In event of the Bus Station being unavailable, this is identified as an alternative terminus bus stop. The developer will need to identify how this stop can be re-provided in the same area.
8. Perhaps not so much of an issue for us in highways, but May we ask if full consideration been given to the impact of removing a covered shopping/leisure facility, in a time of more climate extremes? Is it too late to consider even passive provision for a section that could be used as a covered area within the development?
9. There are still concerns about some of the cycle routes to the stores that have 90° turns in corridors. Will there be adequate space to manoeuvre standard and non-standard cycles? Will the fire doors be easy to negotiate with a cycle?
10. Can clarification be provided on the number of cycle stands? 632 have been stated, but in 9.4 in Appendix F, a total of 685 spaces is cited. Which is correct?
11. We welcome the plans outlined in 9.4 for a cycle workshop to complement the cycle parking spaces but would prefer this be couched as a Cycle Hub, with that facility being closely linked in with any other such facilities that the Council and its partners may provide in the area.

Bartholomew / Market Street traffic signal junction.

12. At the southern end of the junction, the signalised junction should provide cycle ASL's on all arms. Greater guidance for cyclists at end of contra-flow lane is required to join the southbound lane. Cyclists should have priority over vehicles exiting the car park. Moving the northern stop line south will increase the inter-green time and reduce capacity at the junction but this may offer the better solution for cyclists to join the contra-flow lane. If street furniture were relocated to allow the existing stop line to be maintained whilst providing earlier access for cyclists to the contra-flow lane, there may be conflict with pedestrians.
13. There is concern at how the start of the southbound lane is depicted on drawing 18916100-WAT-HGN-ZZ-DR-C-950 P01, as there is a sudden deflection to the left (east) level with the Vape shop and Betting shop. However overall, we accept that this is only a feasibility design. In addition, cyclists southbound in Bartholomew Street should have clearly indicated priority both over vehicles exiting the car park and over vehicles entering and exiting the service yard.
14. Phase B should be left turn only.
15. We consider that much of this can be considered further at a more detailed design stage.

Car Parking

16. We have also received two further documents on May 17th regarding the car parking issues. The documents are titled CoMoUK shared transport appraisal and a highways

response dated May 15th 2024. I have reviewed the documents and in my view, there isn't much more presented that would assist with resolving the outstanding car parking issue.

17. The CoMoUK shared transport appraisal are items that I would normally expect in any travel plan that I am assuming has been assessed by colleagues within the Transport Policy team. I am not convinced that this relates to the issue of car ownership overall.
18. I am then concerned that the Build to Rent Car Parking examples within the highways response are from locations such as Birmingham and Manchester that have no relevance in my view to a town the size of Newbury.
19. Therefore, I am not giving much weight to what has been submitted. The local highway authority maintains the view that along with all other proposals, this proposal must comply to parking standards set within Policy P1. With other highway teams within the Council, we are in the process of undertaking several pieces of work in support of this, and also actively looking for potential solutions. When this work is completed, we will present our findings further along with a potential meeting to discuss any conclusions reached.

Overall conclusion

20. Much work has been undertaken, especially with the traffic modelling, however the main issue remaining is car parking, which I write further about at a later date.

Paul Goddard
Highways Development Control Team Leader