



**HIGHWAY OBSERVATIONS FOR: 19/01818/OUT**

**DATE:** 16 Jan 2020  
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**APPLICATION FOR: Proposed mixed employment development (B1(a)/B2/B8/A3) on land to the west of Brickhill Street, Bow Brickhill, Milton Keynes.**

**Summary of advice from Transport Development Management**

Object	<input type="checkbox"/>
No objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment only	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Further to the Highway Observations dated 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019, meetings have taken place with the applicant (31<sup>st</sup> October 2019) and with other council officers (29<sup>th</sup> November 2019).

The outcome of these meetings requires an update to the previous Highway Observations and this is provided below. (It should be noted that the previous Highway Observations referred to Policy SD16 in error, all references to Policy SD16 should read "Policy SD14").

Following the pre-application discussions and as noted in the Highway Observations of 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019, there were several transport related issues that remain unresolved. In brief, these are:

- Upgrading Brickhill Street to a Grid Road
- Redway Provision
- Public Transport
- Kelly's Kitchen roundabout

**Upgrading Brickhill Street to a Grid Road**

Policy SD14 includes the upgrading in recognition of the key link between the A5 and south Milton Keynes provided by Brickhill Street. Paragraphs 6.58-6.64 of the TA set out why the upgrading of Brickhill Street to a Grid Road is not required for capacity reasons.

The information provided is sound; however, the upgrading / safeguarding for upgrading is a matter of policy (SD14) and therefore the Council will need to consider the policy and the response. As already stated above, the upgrading is not required to enable this development.

It should be noted that whilst the proposals safeguard the future upgrading of the road with a green corridor adjacent to the existing road, there is a compound labelled “Anglian Water” within this area that would prevent any enhancement / widening of Brickhill Street. The applicant has made available the land within their gift, but this excludes the compound.

At the 31<sup>st</sup> October meeting the applicant clarified, to an acceptable level, the width of the reserved land and agreed to provide drawings to demonstrate this. Those drawings do not appear to have been provided. The applicant should be aware that the width of the corridor remains a matter to be agreed; however, an appropriately worded condition could cover this.

### **Redway Provision**

There remains no Redway provision proposed on this section of Brickhill Street. Again, due to the Anglian Water compound, the applicant is not in a position to provide the Redway along Brickhill Street within land they control.

This Redway is an essential piece of infrastructure that the development must contribute towards, notwithstanding the provision of a Redway through the site. This echoes the comments made in the Transport Policy team’s consultation response.

### **Public Transport**

The TA refers to public transport provision in Paragraphs 7.7-7.11, but there is no commitment to services. It is essential that a frequent service, from early morning to late evening, including weekends, is provided to this site given its likely round-the-clock operation.

Since the August Highway Observations there is no obvious formal response from the Passenger Transport team although discussions were being held. Any agreement on levels of service and contributions should be secured as part of the Section 106 agreement that any planning approval will no doubt be subject to.

### **A5/A4146 (Kelly’s Kitchen) Roundabout**

This junction has been assessed using a VISSIM microsimulation model and the results are summarised in Paragraphs 7.13-7.32 of the TA. The impacts on queuing at the junction have been assessed both with and without the major improvement scheme secured as part of the Eaton Leys proposals. The assessment shows that the impact from this development is relatively minor in terms of queue lengths in the short term.

Once background growth and committed developments are included the picture is less clear and the TA acknowledges that journey times across the junction will increase. However, the assertion in the TA is that this is due primarily to traffic growth and other development (such as Eaton Leys), which generate more significant volumes of peak hour traffic.

This junction assessment is being reviewed, as part of the review of the TA, by Highways England. Any mitigation sought by HE will need to be assessed for its impact on queuing at the non-A5 arms of the junction. It is noted that Highways England has recommended that the application is not determined prior to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020 in order for that review to be completed.

## **Mitigation of Highway Impacts**

The TA considers the impacts of the development on 3 local junctions; The Brickhill Street / Station Road mini-roundabout is considered in Paragraphs 7.33-7.42, Tilbrook Roundabout is considered in Paragraphs 7.43-7.47 and Walton Park Roundabout in Paragraphs 7.48-7.54.

### Brickhill Street / Station Road mini-roundabout

The assessment concludes that no mitigation is required at this junction. Due to the nature of the proposed uses, the main impact of the development at this junction is considered to be outside peak hours.

Whilst this may be true in capacity terms, the retention of a mini-roundabout is not desirable when considered against the potential increase in HGV use and the future upgrading of Brickhill Street. Currently the junction does not have a recorded accident record (no Personal Injury Accidents) and therefore a request for an improvement at this stage could be considered unreasonable.

However, the protection of the future upgrading of Brickhill Street should include sufficient land to improve this junction to a minimum 40m ICD roundabout or a suitable alternative junction arrangement that offers comparable HGV provision and capacity.

This was another matter covered in the 31<sup>st</sup> October meeting and another matter where a drawing was to be provided. Again, no drawing appears to have been submitted.

### Tilbrook Roundabout

Whilst the TA concludes that the impact at this junction is minimal, the assessment is based on the provision of an improvement to the junction delivered by the Red Bull proposals. Should that scheme not proceed and therefore not provide the improvement, this development should be required to do so.

As a result, any approval should include a requirement to provide the Red Bull mitigation scheme. As it is likely that such an approval will be subject to a Section 106 agreement, that would seem the most appropriate mechanism.

Whichever development occurs first will then provide the improvement.

### Walton Park Roundabout

The assessment concludes that a mitigation scheme would sufficiently improve the operation of this junction to offset the impact of the development. The mitigation scheme proposed appears to be acceptable and a mechanism for securing this scheme is required. As it is likely any approval will be subject to a Section 106 agreement, that would seem the most appropriate mechanism.

## **Other Matters**

### Bow Brickhill Level Crossing

The impact of development crossing has been assessed and the TA concludes that the proposal would have a minimal impact on queuing on the approaches to the crossing.

Queues at the crossing are, as expected, longest during the peak periods (08.00-09.00 & 17.00-18.00) and therefore these periods have been assessed. The average time for the barriers being closed is stated as 3m31s, which seems reasonable. Observed barrier closed times in the two peak hours is given in the TA and averages approx. 2m48s.

The TA states that during each period of the barrier being down (based on 3m31s) the number of vehicles associated with the development that would add to any queuing is as shown in the table below.

	AM Peak		PM Peak	
	Northbound	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound
Average Queue	40	26	117	17
Additional Vehicles	5	8	7	4
Total	45	34	124	21

This shows that whilst the development is potentially adding to queues, the impact is not significant.

It is noted that the Transport Policy team has, in its response, stated that:

*“There is a strong likelihood that because of the East West Rail project the level crossing will close in future or the increased barrier downtime will have an unacceptable impact on traffic movements along the V10 Brickhill Street”.*

As demonstrated above, the current impacts from the development clearly do not have an unacceptable impact.

The Transport policy response also refers to an aspiration to have identified potential land requirements for a bridge to replace the level crossing. This is hoped for by February 2020 (in line with the HE holding response) but it is unclear what the status of this exercise has in terms of determining the planning application.

## Brickhill Street proposed dualling and New Roundabout

Drawings have been submitted as part of the TA which indicate the dualling of Brickhill Street between the A5 and the new access roundabout as well as the layout of the roundabout access junction. Technical approval of this infrastructure will take some time and will need to involve Highways England. As a result, it would not be appropriate to do this while the application is live.

Therefore, although Means of Access is not reserved for subsequent approval, only the location of the access and the principle of a roundabout can / should be agreed at this stage. Any approval should exclude the submitted plans and should require the submission of technical details as part of the Reserved Matters.

## Potential Transport Schemes

In its consultation response the Transport Policy Team has also raised the potential issues of the (Oxford-Cambridge) Expressway and a possible Rapid Mass Transit route. Whilst both of these schemes may be brought forward in the future and both may be located close to the site, neither have sufficient certainty to make a clear recommendation at present.

## **Summary**

The key highway / transport issues to address are:

- Upgrading of the full length of Brickhill Street to grid road standard is not part of the current application, but is not required to enable the proposed development. The applicant does not control the Anglian Water compound adjacent to Brickhill Street and therefore would not be able to deliver the dualling in any case.
- A Redway is required along the full length of Brickhill Street in addition to the on-site Redway. A contribution to this Redway is required as part of any planning approval;
- Public Transport provision needs to be resolved prior to approval being given and the means to secure that provision needs to be part of the planning approval / Section 106 agreement;
- A mechanism to secure the improvements to the Tilbrook and Walton Park Roundabouts should be in place prior to the issuing of any consent;
- The implications for queuing on local roads as a result of any mitigation scheme at the A5/A4146 roundabout need to be considered prior to agreement of any mitigation scheme being agreed between HE and the applicant.

Whilst there is no objection in principle to the proposed development, planning consent should not be granted until these issues have been satisfactorily addressed.