Project :	South West Milton Keynes (SWMK)		
Date:	29-12-2016	Ref: R02a	1067760/TN12
Subject:	**Technical Note 12 –** Response to WBC and NLPC Review of Transport Implications -		

Introduction

This Technical Note has been prepared to respond to points raised within the review of the transport implications on the local communities of West Bletchley and Newton Longville of the proposed development at South West Milton Keynes by David Tucker Associates (DTA).

The DTA Review is replicated below in blue, with responses to queries/concerns raised shown in red as necessary.

Comments and Response

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This note has been prepared by David Tucker Associates to review the transport implications on the local communities of West Bletchley and Newton Longville of the proposed development at land south of the A421 west of Far Bletchley, north of the East West Rail Link and east of Whaddon Road, Newton Longville. The proposals are the subject of the following applications:

Aylesbury Vale – application
Reference: 15/00314/AOP

For: Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for a mixed-use sustainable urban extension on land to the south west of Milton Keynes to provide up to 1,855 mixed tenure dwellings; an employment area (B1); a neighbourhood centre including retail (A1/A2/A3/A4/A5), community (D1/D2) and residential (C3) uses; a primary and a secondary school; a grid road reserve; multi-functional green space; a sustainable drainage system; and associated access, drainage and public transport infrastructure.

At: Land South Of The A421 West Of Far Bletchley North Of The East West Rail Link And East Of Whaddon Road Newton Longville

Milton Keynes
Main application - Reference: 15/00619/FUL
Consultation by AVDC as an adjoining authority - Reference: 15/00223/CONS

1.2 This review has been undertaken on behalf of West Bletchley Council and Newton Longville Parish Council. It has been informed by the Transport Assessment (TA) report prepared by Mouchel on behalf of the South West Milton Keynes Consortium (the applicant).

1.3 The core tests in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework in transport planning terms are set out at paragraph 32 which require consideration of:

- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and,
- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

1.4 With respect to sustainable travel (bullet point 1), there are proposals to integrate the site with the existing bus network into the site by extending a local service which provides access to central Milton Keynes only. There are no improvements proposed for services through Bletchley or for services into Aylesbury Vale. In particular there is no direct linkage to Leighton Buzzard station which is likely to be the most attractive boarding point for rail service other than by car. As such the destination options are limited and there is extremely limited scope for a mode shift within existing developed areas to offset the development traffic. A Travel Plan is proposed to encourage the development of sustainable trip patterns however the applicant's ambition for non-car use by residents is not high with a baseline for car use set in the Travel Plan at 82% (national average mode share (all purposes) according to the National Travel Survey is circa 40% car driver).

Following discussions with MKC and one of the main operators Arriva Buses, it is considered that extending/increasing frequencies on services into Central Milton Keynes would be preferable as opposed to Bletchley, as the latter would not be financially viable and would not present the best opportunity for improving sustainable travel options. . Given the wider level of train service connections at Milton Keynes Central, there would be greater opportunity for inter-modal bus-rail trips from Central Milton Keynes, which will contribute more positively in reducing the dependence on the use of the private car.

Enhancements to cycle parking facilities at Bletchley station are proposed to encourage cycle-rail trips and to reduce the number of car trips along Buckingham Road by commuters travelling towards Bletchley station.

Travel by bus to Leighton Buzzard station from Bletchley currently takes around 35 minutes, similar to the travel time to Milton Keynes Central. However, the range of train services from Milton Keynes Central is greater than from Leighton Buzzard, hence the decision to concentrate bus service enhancement into Central Milton Keynes, which would also serve journeys to work, shops and leisure as well as those with longer distance commutes to London and other major conurbations..

The baseline mode shares within the Framework Travel Plan are based on existing Census 2011 travel modes in the local wards. Following initial occupation, travel surveys will be

completed for new residents to establish a realistic baseline for the development. Targets will then be set accordingly based on the travel survey data. The baseline figures in the Framework Travel Plan are only indicative at this stage.

1.5 With respect to access (bullet point 2), the site strategy has evolved with three points of access provided to the local road network. The Whaddon Road access is onto a high speed (60mph) road albeit a road which has an undulating vertical alignment that means driver forward visibility is significantly constrained and falls below the requirements of current design guidance. This guidance does allow for flexibility but the design speed is significantly reduced from the posted speed limit and the basis for this reduction is unclear. Moreover there have been a number of issues raised by the independent Road Safety Audit within the application relating to the compromises that have been adopted which remain unresolved. These ultimately relate back to vehicle speeds and the ability of drivers to avoid an incident. There are also concerns about the Buckingham Road access which has been changed from the signal arrangement which was originally proposed but which does not appear to have been subject to the same level of safety assessment.

Visibility to the proposed Whaddon Road access is provided in line with standards as set out in Manual for Streets 2, both the vertically and horizontally. The visibility does not fall below current design guidance. All issues raised within the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) have either been resolved via revised drawings submitted with the Designer's Response, or are detailed design issues that will be review in the Stage 2 Road Safety Audit at the appropriate time.

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit was completed for the proposed Buckingham Road access and is included, along with the Designer's Response, in Appendix I of the TA (August 2016).

1.6 With respect to impact (bullet point 3), there are methodological concerns about the modelling of individual junctions which need to be addressed before the impact arising can be understood. At present the mitigation strategy put forward is based on incorrect assumptions and will not adequately mitigate development impacts. Whilst the delivery of the mitigation is proposed to be by contribution rather than a set of works, there is no way of determining whether this is capable of delivering sufficient relief to ensure that the cumulative impact of the development is not severe in the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework test at paragraph 32.

The methodology followed within the TA (August 2016) was discussed at length with both BCC and MKC. All component parts of the modelling were agreed with both highway authorities prior to completion of the modelling. The modelling inputs and outputs are agreed to be representative of the existing situations at the junctions. The mitigation strategy has been developed to ensure there will be a *nil detriment* effect on the local highway network as a result of the proposed development. The *nil detriment* mitigation strategy goes beyond that required in NPPF to ensure there is no 'severe' residual cumulative impact. The equivalent financial contribution to be provided as mitigation has been determined based on the cost of physical improvements to the local highway network, which have been assessed and are proven through modelling to deliver sufficient relief to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.

2 THE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The proposed development comprises up to 1,855 mixed tenure dwellings (C3) on 54.70Ha of land; an employment area (B1) on 2.07Ha of land; a neighbourhood centre on 0.67Ha of land accommodating retail (A1/A2/A3/A4/A5), community (D1/D2) and residential (C3) uses; provision of a primary school on 3.0Ha of land; provision of a secondary school on 5.12Ha of land; and associated infrastructure.

2.2 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which considers the transport implications of proposals and a framework Travel Plan (fTP) has been prepared which sets out the measures that will be undertaken to encourage the development of sustainable travel patterns.

2.3 The access strategy for the site has been amended from that which was originally proposed. There remain three points of access. This includes a left in only slip road from the A421 westbound carriageway (previously left in and left out); an all-movements priority controlled junction on Whaddon Road; and a roundabout junction on Buckingham Road.

3 WHADDON ROAD SITE ACCESS

3.1 There are inconsistencies within the reported vehicle speeds on Whaddon Road in the vicinity of the proposed access. In Table 3.5 the speeds are reported at 51.5mph northbound and 55.9mph southbound. In Table 6.1 the speeds are reported at 46.7mph northbound and 51.9mph southbound. The TA also notes that the latter speeds are based on sampling and not the full dataset due to concerns about platooning of traffic during the peak hour periods. The full dataset has not however been provided to confirm the degree to which speeds are constrained during the peak period. It is also unclear from the description whether corrections have been applied to account for the survey method (use of automatic traffic counter data).

The speeds reported in the Section 3 (Existing Conditions) of the TA in Table 3.5 are the 7-day 24hr 85th percentile speeds as taken directly from traffic surveys at ATC2 (broadly the location of the proposed site access). The 85th percentile speeds reported in Section 6 (Access Strategy) in Table 6.1 are provided for the purpose of calculating the visibility required for the proposed access point. As such, and in accordance with TA 22/81 (Vehicle Speed Measurement on All Purpose Roads), those 85th percentile speeds have been calculated based on the 'preferred times for taking readings'[1] (1000-1200 and 1400-1600) and in accordance with Manual for Streets 2 are corrected to present 'wet weather' speeds. It is for this reason that there is a difference in the 85th percentile speeds presented in the two tables highlighted.

The speeds presented are not based on sampling, and are representative of the full dataset. Concerns regarding platooning of traffic, in an area without any traffic signals, are not raised within the TA.

The full traffic survey datasets have not been provided due to the amount of traffic survey data collected for the assessment of the proposed development. Peak hour traffic flows are provided in the traffic flow diagrams contained in Appendix E of the TA (August 2016). The

[1] TA 22/81 Appendix A Point 4

full dataset was provided to BCC, who have raised no concerns regarding constrained traffic on Whaddon Road during peak hours.

3.2 The significance of the above is in the determination of the stopping sight distances (SSD) and the deceleration lengths required for the site access design. The TA assumes that the appropriate SSD is 160m based on an 85kph (50mph) design speed and it assumes that the approaches are flat. In practice the road is undulating such that vehicle braking distances (and the design speed) are higher resulting in a requirement for up to 215m splays which are not attainable. These concerns echo directly those of the independent road safety auditors. At present the submitted scheme does not meet the NPPF paragraph 32 test for safe and suitable access.

The SSDs have been calculated based on 85th percentile wet weather speeds. Whilst the road is undulating, the change in gradient on the approaches to the proposed access point does not compromise the ability to provide the necessary vertical visibility splays. The comments raised by the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit are addressed through revised drawings and the Designer's Response, as included in Appendix I of the TA (August 2016).

4 BUCKINGHAM ROAD SITE ACCESS

4.1 There is no Road Safety Audit submitted to support the design of the roundabout junction. As a minimum, confirmation is required to ensure that the design is in accordance with current design standards and that the swept path of vehicles can be accommodated.

The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit for the proposed access off Buckingham Road is included, along with a Designer's Response, at Appendix I of the TA (August 2016). The roundabout is designed to meet current standards, and will easily accommodate the swept path of large vehicles.

5 TRANSPORT APPRAISAL

5.1 In terms of the traffic forecasts presented, there is no current year plus development assessment presented. As a result the approach is inconsistent with Government guidance and does not allow the direct impact of the development to be understood.

Following discussions with Highways England, BCC and MKC, the assessment scenarios were agreed prior to completion. There was no requirement for a current year plus development scenario to be assessed as this would never occur in reality. DfT Circular 02/2013 (The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development) does require assessment of the existing network with full development, however the guidance contained in the Circular is applicable to the Strategic Road Network only, and not to the local highway network.

5.2 The validation of the individual traffic models is important check that the geometry on the ground matches the assumptions in the model. Ideally such validation would have been undertaken with reference to queue surveys (i.e. on site observations) at the time of the traffic counts. The presented proxy using Google data is not appropriate method. The existence of significant queuing highlights the need for queue surveys). Whilst it is acknowledged that the junction modelling packages used are calibrated using empirical data from conventional junction layouts, the junction layouts on the local road network are not conventional, certainly with respect to the roundabout junctions) as circulatory carriageway are narrow from the practice of incorporating left turn only lanes (which would arguably be best treated within the models as a filter).

The use of Google Traffic within the TA (August 2016) to provide a validation check applies to the junctions within Buckinghamshire only. The models for the junctions within Milton Keynes were considered acceptable in the Original TA (January 2015) and required no amendment as agreed with Milton Keynes Council and their consultant..

Following discussions with BCC, it was agreed that collecting queue length data at all of the junctions assessed would be unnecessary given that the local highway network in those locations was not expected to be operating over capacity in the existing scenario. It was agreed that a validation 'check' would be completed using Google Traffic data captured at the time of the traffic surveys to allow direct comparisons.

Significant queuing does not occur at any of junctions in Buckinghamshire in the 2015 base scenario, hence the collection of extensive queue length data was not required.

The junction layouts modelled are considered to be conventional. The width of the circulatory carriageways on the roundabouts have been checked as part of the design of mitigation measures, and all are compliant with standards.

The geometric parameters, and the modelling inputs were checked by BCC, their consultants and MKC prior to completion of the assessments. BCC and MKC know this area of the local highway network extremely well as local highway authority, and at no time were requests made to model the junctions as anything other than conventional roundabouts, reflecting the actual situation. Furthermore, to model the left turn lanes as a 'filter' would remove traffic from the roundabout and artificially reduce the RFC values.

5.3 The Bottledump roundabout is an example of such an unconventional geometry. There is a single lane exit on the A421 West arm. As a result the nearside lane on the A421 westbound approach requires ahead traffic to use the off-side lane and traffic bound for Newton Longville to use the nearside lane. This results in unbalanced flows between lanes. By way of example the maximum unopposed entry flows from a single lane on a roundabout is around 1200 vehicles per hour (vph) (typically 1000 vph would be applied for design purposes). In practice the entry capacity will be reduced by turning traffic which vehicles will need to give way to. The effective entry capacity is therefore likely to be no more than around 900 vph.

5.4 In the 2026 development traffic forecasts the ahead movements at this junction are 971 vph in the AM peak and 1352 vph in the PM peak. The vehicle demand of the ahead lane will be 108% and 150% of the available capacity respectively in the AM and PM peaks respectively. In the PM peak the excess demand is of the order of 450 vehicles per hour. Such levels of over-capacity would lead to significant levels of queuing (on high speed roads) and interactions with adjacent junctions and re-routing, in this case through the development site or through Newton Longville. There are a number of appeal decisions which restricted development where a significant existing congestion issue occurred despite relatively small impacts from the development itself. The corresponding demand reported in the TA, where the demand flows and capacity for the two lanes are combined, are 72% and 84% of the available capacity in the AM and PM peaks respectively and consequently suggest that there are no issues.

The geometric parameters, and the modelling inputs were checked by BCC, their consultants and MKC prior to completion of the assessments. BCC and MKC know this area of the local highway network extremely well as local highway authority, and are content that the modelling reflects the existing situation for the purposes of the assessment of the development.

Any queuing of the ahead lane westbound can be easily accommodated on A421 which is a dual carriageway. Visibility along A421 is very good, therefore vehicles approaching the back of a queue would be aware of that queue before reaching it. Logically, vehicles would not route via Newton Longville when travelling westwards on A421 as the diversion route to avoid a single roundabout would be extensive and counter-productive.

There is no ‘significant existing congestion issue’ at this junction, as shown by the Google Traffic screenshots taken on the survey days, numerous observational visits to site, and as agreed with BCC and MKC.

5.5 Although the impact of the junction geometry on performance may not be as significant at other locations but similar concerns apply to all-multi-entry roundabout approaches including the junctions through West Bletchley where the need to mitigate the impact of the development has already been identified. This is most likely to be significant at the junctions where mitigation has been proposed and where the entry exceeds the width of the circulatory carriageway. At these locations confirmation is required to demonstrate that the associated circulatory does not also require widening.

The geometric parameters, and the modelling inputs were checked by BCC, their consultants and MKC prior to completion of the assessments. BCC and MKC know this area of the local highway network extremely well as local highway authority, and are content that the modelling reflects the existing situation for the purposes of the assessment of the development.

6 WEST BLETCHLEY

6.1 The traffic flows on the Buckingham Road through West Bletchley has been evaluated on a link capacity basis. There are significant increases in flow forecast on this route. To the West, during the AM peak period the traffic flow in the eastbound direction increases 44% as a result of the proposed development against 2026. Against current day flows the increase will be greater than 50%.

6.2 The link capacity has been estimated on the basis of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) TA79/99 'Traffic Capacity of Urban Roads'. The road is categorised as an Urban All-purpose 3 (UAP3) road described as:

Variable standard road carrying mixed traffic with frontage access, more than 2 side roads per km, kerb side bus stops and at-grade crossings. 30-40mph

6.3 Note that UAP4 is described as:

Busy high street carrying predominantly local traffic with frontage activity including loading and unloading, more than 2 side roads per km, unlimited access to houses, shops and businesses, kerbside bus stops, 30mph

6.4 UAP4 would therefore more appropriately apply to the sections with shop frontages, alongside primary schools and where there is a high density of (direct) driveway accesses. The difference is that the capacity of UAP3 is around 15% higher than UAP4.

B4034 Buckingham Road is not a 'busy high street' in the section through West Bletchley assessed within the TA. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is a Tesco Express on the corner of Newton Road and a Premier on the corner of Grange Road, there are no other shops located along the route. There is no requirement for frequent loading and unloading along the road. Neither of the schools with frontages along Buckingham Road have pupil access points actually on the road. Furthermore, it is expected that the 85th percentile speed along the road would be more consistent with 30-40mph than 30mph. It is considered entirely appropriate that the road is assessed as UAP3 and not UAP4. This has been agreed with MKC and their consultant.

6.5 On the basis of UAP3, the section west of Newton Road, i.e. near to Chestnuts Primary School and Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School, is forecast to operate at 85% capacity (based on the dominant direction of flow). The section east of Shenley Road, near to Holne Chase Primary School, is forecast to operate at 112% capacity.

Table 1 Link Capacity - Buckingham Road

	TA 77/99	AM Peak			PM Peak		
		Eastbound	Westbound	ratio flow to capacity	Eastbound	Westbound	ratio flow to capacity
B4034 east of Tattenhoe Roundabout	1110	641	597	58%	584	505	53%
B4034 west of Newton Rd	900	766	399	**85%**	425	657	73%
B4034 east of Shenley Road	900	1008	566	**112%**	552	898	**100%**
B4034 west of Sherwood Drive	1300	1203	815	**93%**	905	1099	**85%**
B4034 south of Bletcham Way	3200	1950	1551	61%	1789	1833	57%
West of Water Eaton double mini-roundabout	1110	549	797	72%	589	498	53%

6.6 **Table 1** summarises the flow and capacity on a direction basis. The capacity of location 4 has been adjusted to be more representative of the link as has the capacity of location 5 which is a dual two lane capacity up until the immediate approach to the junction. These locations are however less critical or sensitive than the locations to the West of the corridor.

The capacities included with Table 9.12 of the TA (August 2016) are considered to be appropriate for the locations represented by the traffic flows. MKC has agreed to the capacities and the flows presented in the TA (August 2016) and consider them to be representative of the local area.

Within TA79/99, para 3.6 suggests that effective parking restrictions can lead to higher flow capacities along sections of road. There are significant sections of B4034 Buckingham Road with double yellow lines on both sides of the road, including the section 'east of Shenley Road'. As a consequence, some of the theoretical capacities shown above are likely to underestimate the actual available capacities..

The calculations of link capacity within the TA (August 2016) take no account of the sustainable travel benefits and the potential modal shift that would occur from the development as a result of the enhanced bus service provision to Central Milton Keynes. With enhanced cycle facilities at Bletchley Station there is also likely to be some modal shift to cycling from car use along the corridor also. When considered as a complete package, the impact of increased traffic along Buckingham Road is likely to be less than shown in the tables and cannot be considered to constitute a severe residual cumulative impact in accordance with paragraph 32 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6.7 Overall, purely in operational link capacity terms the development will result in significant pressure through West Bletchley. The impact on the community of additional traffic is however wider than purely operational capacity. The peak periods of demand will be coincident with school travel periods and there are a number of primary schools, located to the south of Buckingham Road, which will experience increased severance from the community that they serve to the north. The TA notes that there is scope for reassignment but the capacity appraisals on the wider network do not support this. Instead the TA needs to give greater consideration to the impact on the adjacent community and provide appropriate mitigation. This is not by way of link widening, which is dismissed within the TA, rather there is a need to address the community issues including amenity, severance and the environmental implications.

There is an existing controlled crossing point on B4034 Buckingham Road directly outside Holne Chase Primary School, providing a safe crossing facility and addressing severance for pedestrians accessing the school. There is also an existing controlled crossing point outside Chestnuts Primary School on B4034 Buckingham Road. There are uncontrolled crossing points at the junction of B4034 Buckingham Road/Newton Road for pedestrians travelling towards Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School from the west. It is therefore considered that there are safe crossing facilities addressing the issue of severance between the north and south sides of B4034 Buckingham Road.

7 NEWTON LONGVILLE

7.1 The TA identifies that mitigation is required to address the impact on the community at Newton Longville. The proposed mitigation includes the provision of a new gateway feature into the village, throttles within the village and amendments to the staggered crossroads (Bletchley Road – Whaddon Road – Stoke Road). These works however are insufficient to effect the required mitigation and could potentially make the route more attractive as a rat-run. Whilst it is understood that it is proposed to deliver the improvements by contribution rather than fixed physical works, it is essential that this is undertaken on the basis of a realistic scheme.

A comprehensive traffic calming scheme to reduce the speed of traffic through the village through the introduction of a number of carriageway ‘pinch points’ and enhanced ‘gateway’ features would not make the route more attractive as a ‘rat run’. The purpose of introducing a comprehensive traffic scheme is twofold: i) to deter ‘through traffic’ by increasing journey times; and ii) to reduce the 85th percentile vehicle speeds to 40kph (25mph) or less.

A financial contribution will be secured as a Section 106 obligation and would be equivalent to the cost of the agreed traffic calming scheme. The detail of the proposed scheme that would eventually be promoted by BCC (not the Applicant) would ultimately be subject to extensive consultation with key stakeholders and local residents. Further to subsequent discussions with BCC, the proposed traffic calming scheme is currently being revised to include additional features along Whaddon Road and further modifications to the ‘gateways’.

7.2 The approach into the village along Whaddon Road is generally fairly open and therefore the built environment offers limited reinforcement to future traffic calming measures. On the whole on this initial section the carriageway is a reasonable width, the alignment is good, the houses are set back from the road, and there is good forward visibility. The TA asserts that the Whaddon Road is notionally capable of accommodating more traffic but this does not reflect existing safety and amenity issues with the village. Such issues have been identified in the existing context and Newton Longville Parish Council and Buckinghamshire County Council are working together to address them through traffic calming. The applicant proposes throttles within the village but these are generally too widely spaced to significantly constrain traffic flows through the village. Junction treatments would in general be more effective. These would typically need to be provided every 70-80m to provide effective vehicle speed restraint.

Existing issues within the village are acknowledged, however it is not the responsibility of the development to resolve pre-existing issues. It is acknowledged that the introduction of additional traffic as a result of the development may exacerbate the existing issues, hence the provision of a s106 contribution towards the implementation of a comprehensive traffic calming scheme for the village. BCC will consult widely with key stakeholders and local residents prior to the implementation of any traffic calming scheme within the village.

7.3 The staggered crossroads with the village is currently a constraint to traffic flows through the village as the main desire line through the junction must give-way to minor arm traffic. Visibility at the junction is very poor and therefore drivers have to proceed with caution. The changes of the layout will rebalance the priorities at this junction potentially making the route more attractive to inappropriate through traffic. More crucially however it is not clear whether the visibility constraints at the junction can be overcome within highway land. The visibility requirements at a mini-roundabout are generally greater than a T-junction as traffic does not necessarily slow to the same degree as for a give-way junction. The combination of increased traffic flow, constrained visibility and rebalanced priorities presents the risk that the west - east flow do not give way to north – south movements thereby leading to greater conflict. It is clear therefore that greater consideration need to be given to this location, including a full technical audit to identify departures from standard, vehicle tracking plots and an independent Road Safety Audit, to ensure that a deliverable solution, delivered in full by the proposed contribution, can be secured.

The improvement to the Newton Longville Crossroads junction is proposed to ease potential queuing that could occur as a result of the proposed development. However, as detailed in Table 9.30 and Table 9.31 of the TA (August 2016) the junction is not forecast to operate over capacity in any scenario, with minimal queuing on all arms. In the AM peak, it is predicted that there could be a queue of 8 vehicles on Stoke Road. This level of impact cannot be considered to be severe pre-mitigation. However, a s106 contribution will be made towards the improvement of the junction to ease local safety concerns as a result of additional traffic on the 'minor' arms (Whaddon Road and Stoke Road). The junction improvement could consist of converting the junction into a mini-roundabout as suggested, but could also consist of alternative measures, which is for BCC to determine.

Any junction to be implemented will be designed in detail to current standards prior to implementation, and will be subject to vehicle swept path analysis and Road Safety Audits in the normal way.

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8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Ultimately the acceptability of development proposals in the current planning policy context on transport grounds is whether the cumulative residual impact of the development is severe. There are a number of interpretations as to what constitutes a severe impact which may include a significant delay, a significant safety impact or a significant impact to the amenity or environment around sensitive receptors. At present the TA does not adequately assess those impacts and without appropriate mitigation it is clear that the impacts will be severe.

The TA (August 2016) provides a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the development on both the local and strategic highway network. The detail of the assessments is agreed with Highways England, BCC and MKC and their respective consultants. A comprehensive mitigation package to the satisfaction of BCC and MKC is included as part of the proposed development to ensure that the residual cumulative impact of the development is not severe.

8.2 The testing undertaken by Mouchel identifies a number of locations where interventions are warranted such that they conclude that the impacts of the proposals are acceptable in the planning context. There are however significant concerns as to whether the proposed accesses can be considered safe and suitable where either a road safety audit has not been undertaken or where there are concerns raised by the auditors to which there has been inadequate response. There are also significant concerns about the modelling of individual junctions. The Bottledump roundabout is one such location where the modelling is not sufficiently thorough or reflective of local conditions and the imbalance between capacity and demand is sufficient to be likely to give rise to reassignment of traffic onto unsuitable routes. As a consequence the overall trip assignment assumptions are questionable. This has a material bearing on the acceptability of the proposals both on West Bletchley and Newton Longville.

All proposed access points have been designed to meet current standards and have been subjected to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. Minor amendments to the designs were made to incorporate comments from the auditors. The Road Safety Audits and Designer's Responses are included within Appendix I of the TA (August 2016).

The geometric inputs to the junction assessments completed within the TA (August 2016) were agreed with BCC and MKC prior to completion. It is considered that the modelling is robust and is reflective of local conditions. The trips assignment assumptions are taken from the MKC Milton Keynes Model, as agreed with MKC, BCC and Highways England.

8.3 The traffic forecasts presented in the TA show that the traffic demand will exceed link capacity through the adjacent community of West Bletchley. There are a number of primary schools located to the south of Buckingham Road that are likely to be affected by such increases in flows with resulting severance from the community that they serve. There is no mitigation proposed to address this.

The two-way link capacity will not exceed capacity along B4034 Buckingham Road. There are existing controlled crossing points in the vicinity of the two schools with frontages along Buckingham Road to convey pedestrians safely across the road, and to reduce severance between the north and south sides of the road. BCC and MKC have not requested any further mitigation along B4034 Buckingham Road.

8.4 Finally, the impact on the village of Newton Longville is unresolved. The proposed development will significantly increase demand through the village. This is facilitated by the proposal to form a mini-roundabout within the village which will rebalance priorities in favour of through traffic but which in all likelihood is not deliverable within the available highway land as proposed due to visibility requirements. As it currently stands, a contribution is proposed to undertake works within the village, but insufficient appraisal has been undertaken to identify a scheme and therefore assess whether the contribution is appropriate, whether the works will be implemented in a timely manner or what the residual impact on Newton Longville after these works have been undertaken will be.

A s106 contribution will be provided towards a junction improvement at the Newton Longville Crossroads. The final form of the junction improvement will be for BCC to determine, however it is entirely possible to design a mini-roundabout scheme to standard with appropriate visibilities within highway land at this location.

Further work is underway to design a comprehensive traffic calming scheme for Newton Longville. A s106 contribution will be provided towards the traffic calming scheme, and the detail of the final scheme to be implemented will be for BCC to determine in consultation with key stakeholders and local residents.

8.5 Overall it is concluded that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development will not give rise to residual cumulative impacts that are severe. The proposals are therefore contrary to Policy and the application should be refused until such time that the issues raised above have been addressed.

The TA (August 2016) provides a comprehensive, robust assessment of the impacts of the proposed development on the local highway network and surrounding villages. A comprehensive mitigation package is proposed, following which the residual cumulative impact of the development cannot be considered to be severe. Therefore, the proposals are in line with policy and there is no reason for the application to be refused on either highway or transport grounds.

8.6 In summary the key issues are:

- The suitability of the proposed site access arrangements to provide safe access to the site has not been demonstrated;
  Stage 1 Road Safety Audits have been completed and all issues/concerns have been addressed.

- The assessment of the off-site junction impacts has not reflected local conditions and is insufficient to assess future conditions;
  The junction assessments were completed according to the methodologies and inputs agreed with MKC and BCC, and are considered to be reflective of local conditions. They are therefore appropriate for use to assess future conditions.

- At present the TA does not adequately assess those impacts and without appropriate mitigation it is clear that the impacts will be severe; and,
  A comprehensive mitigation package is proposed to ensure the residual cumulative impacts of the development are not severe in line with paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

- There is doubt as to whether the S106 schemes required to mitigate the development can be delivered within land under control of the applicant.

All the proposed highway improvements to be secured by way of an equivalent Section 106 financial contribution as indicated by the concept designs can be accommodated within either highway land or land under control of the applicant.

Summary

The review of the transport implications of the proposed development provided by West Bletchley Council and Newton Longville Parish Council has been considered and responses raised to all points.

All points raised are items that have already been addressed with either BCC, MKC, Highways England, or all three authorities. There are no additional transport/highway related matters that would otherwise prevent the granting of planning permission.

End.