

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

District: Cherwell

Application no: 15/00831/F

Proposal: Proposed development of a new Waitrose food store with car parking and access arrangement onto Southam Road. Demolition of existing building.

Location: Land At Kraft Foods Southam Road Banbury

Purpose of document

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

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Officer's Name: Lisa Michelson

Officer's Title: Locality Manager

Date: 09 June 2015

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Transport

Recommendation:

Objection

The proposals do not demonstrate safe and suitable access to the site for all people (NPPF). This could potentially be overcome with different access arrangements.

Additionally the proposal does not fully demonstrate that traffic arising from the site can be accommodated safely and efficiently on the transport network, contrary to Policy SD1 of Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 3 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Key issues:

- Car park arrangements – safety of access junction
- Pedestrian and cycle access – cycle route, crossings
- Goods access
- Junction assessments
- Public transport provision

In the event that the access arrangements are redesigned and the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant permission, the following would be required:

Legal agreement required to secure:

- Contribution towards increasing capacity along the Hennef Way (A422) – M40 route
- The developer to procure a bus service from opening day until the service funded by the residential development to the north can be delivered.
- Contribution for two Premium Route bus stop pole/flag./information cases and two shelters at an indicative cost of £16,000.
- Provision a safe walking route across the A361 in the vicinity of the bus stops, via S278 agreement
- Improvement to bus hard-standing area on the northbound bus stop (west side of the Southam Road), to eliminate the grass verge area between the footway and the kerb), via S278 agreement
- Contribution to cover costs of reducing the speed limit on Southam Road from 40mph to 30mph

Conditions:

Standard conditions would need to be applied for:

- Approval of detail of access arrangements
- Approval of car parking and cycle parking detail
- Travel plan
- Construction traffic management plan

A condition would also be required regarding submission of and approval of proposals for bus service provision and bus service infrastructure provision.

Informatives:

Detailed comments:

Access arrangements:

Although the TA points out that OCC has previously agreed to the principle of a priority junction instead of the previously proposed roundabout, this was in principle only, and did not constitute approval of the location or design of a priority junction. I have concerns relating to the location, layout and capacity of the junction.

Within the application documents there is a report entitled 'Road Safety Audit Response', but the safety audit itself does not appear to be attached, and is not referred to in the TA. The Response summarises the safety auditor's comments and reveals that the auditor had concerns about the safety of the junction, recommending instead a roundabout or signalised junction (a roundabout had been proposed previously). No speed survey data has been supplied.

The junction is located around 20m north of Marley Way. Volume 6 Section 2 of the DRMB states that a minimum stagger of 60 metres is required for a major road with a speed limit of 40mph. Notwithstanding the reason for this given in DMRB which concerns movements by large trailers between the minor roads, which I agree is not relevant here, in my view there is a risk of conflict between vehicles exiting the proposed store access and those exiting and turning right into Marley Way. The modelling shows that vehicles turning right out of the store would experience significant delay at peak time, and given similar conditions likely at Marley Way, this could lead to risky manoeuvres by drivers. In my view the side roads are so close that the modelling should have treated this as one junction and assessed the impact on turning movements at Marley Way. Marley Way is extremely busy as it is the access into Halfords, B&Q, and industrial/warehouse units beyond.

The safety audit also mentions the need for widening the right turning lane but it is not clear how this would impact on the on-carriageway cycle lane on the east side of Southam Road. The access arrangements drawings are not particularly clear and do not show how the new road markings would tie in with existing features.

Tracking has been shown for the new goods vehicle access - this does not include right turning in and out. The access road appears to continue beyond the store's service yard towards the Kraft site and I have concerns that it could be used for additional traffic. It is noted that the proposed goods access does not include a right turning lane and the junction has not been modelled. It is noted that the TA does not include details of goods deliveries.

I also have concerns about the impact on cyclists using the shared facility on the west side of Southam Road. Both vehicle access junctions are very wide and could be difficult to cross. The design could potentially incorporate a splitter island, though this would need to be wide enough for cycles. Given this is a strategic cycle route linking residential areas to the north of

Banbury with the town centre, I would like to see priority given to cyclists crossing the junctions and details of how the needs of cyclists and pedestrians would be met.

The site plan is unclear on the detail of pedestrian and cycle access into the site. In my view there should be a section of cycle path leading from the junction into the car park at a safe point. The cycle parking provision is also unclear. To meet Oxfordshire Cycle Parking Standards there should be 17 stands for shoppers, and 1 stand per 12 staff. The cycle parking for shoppers should be close to the main entrance. The staff cycle parking appears to be accessed through the service yard – it should be close to the personnel door and avoid cyclists having to negotiate the yard if at all possible.

Further, the safety audit states that an assessment should be made of the need for pedestrian crossings over Southam Road, and this has not been carried out or mentioned in the TA. The designer's comment that this could be dealt with at the detailed design stage is not accepted. This is a full planning application and the need should in any case be considered as part of the access arrangements. Currently there is no formal crossing that would pick up pedestrian movements to the store from the east side of Southam Road. There are links through to the canal towpath and paths crossing Spiceball Park, via Marley Way. These are used as alternative quiet and direct routes to the town centre. Additionally people visiting retail units on the eastern side of Southam Road are likely to cross the road to Waitrose on foot for small quantities of shopping, rather than move their vehicle across to Waitrose car park. Therefore there will be far more crossing movements than currently. As there are cycle facilities on both sides of Southam Road a Toucan crossing should be considered.

Given the increase in activity resulting from the development, it is recommended that the speed limit on Southam Road would need to be reduced from 40mph to 30mph, and the developer would be expected to cover the costs of this change. Nevertheless, the design should be based on actual speeds and allow for the event that the speed reduction, which would be subject to consultation, may not be successfully implemented.

Strategy

The impact on the local road network is discussed in the Transport Assessment. Many of the assumptions are based on the TA supplied for the previous application, 12/00329/OUT, which was for a different scheme of various retail stores and a petrol filling station.

The development is expected to generate 182 trips in the am peak (2-way) and 432 trips in the pm peak. This is significantly less than the previous proposal, but I do not believe this in itself to be justification for not providing assessment of any junctions other than the access junction.

I also note that the same assumptions of pass-by, transferred and diverted trips has been used, when the mix of development may in fact change this balance. It is notable that there is no petrol station, and the Waitrose store is likely to generate more new trips from outside Banbury, as it has a different offer to the other supermarkets in the area.

Also, given the fact that the Saturday peak traffic in the area is greater than the weekday am peak, I feel that this period should also be assessed. This will be a peak time for turning movements at the access junction and Marley Way.

The traffic counts used date back to 2011, and notwithstanding previous agreement that these counts could be used in the previously proposed scheme's TA, in my view these should be updated with more recent data. As part of work to develop a new strategic transport model for Banbury, traffic counts were carried out by the county council in late 2014, which may mean surveys do not need to be repeated.

Even if the impact on the junctions not currently assessed is relatively small, there will be a cumulative impact with the quantum of other development in the area, and the development would be expected to contribute towards schemes to increase capacity.

Southam Road / Hennef Way Roundabout

Oxfordshire County Council's Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011 - 2030 states that the Banbury Area Strategy *"identifies a series of improvements to increase the overall capacity of transport networks and systems within the locality, enabling them to accommodate the additional trips generated by development; to adapt to their cumulative impact and to mitigate the local environmental impact of increased travel. Where schemes are needed to mitigate one particular development, the developer will be expected to either construct or provide funding for the scheme; where a scheme is required due to the impact of more than one development, each developer will be expected to make a contribution proportional to the scale of their impact."*

In accordance with Policy BAN 2 Oxfordshire County Council will strengthen connections between key residential and employment sites and the strategic transport network, including the M40 by *"Increasing capacity along the Hennef Way (A422) – M40 route, including modifications to the Ermont Way, Cherwell Street and Southam Road junctions. This will help to facilitate employment generation to the east of the town, including the additional 500 jobs expected with the expansion of the industrial area to the west of the M40, by improving access to the motorway network, via the M40."*

Therefore, through Cherwell District Council's Supplementary Planning Document July 2011, we request the following contribution to the above scheme.

£824 per 42m² of A1 floorspace
Proposed Development – 3576m²

$3576 / 42 = 85.14$

$85.14 * 824 = 70155.36$

Total Contribution to be made = £70,155.36

The same scheme will be featuring in Oxfordshire County Council's Fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) which is expected to be adopted later this year.

Air quality

The assessment of air quality on the nearby AQMA is welcomed. The impact is not considered significant based on increased traffic volumes. However, this should be checked by Cherwell District Council's Environmental Protection team.

It is noted that no assessment has been made of the impact on Hennef Way AQMA.

Public transport

There is only minimal public transport currently available along the Southam Road, consisting of very infrequent interurban services from Leamington Spa and Cropredy (but not in the opposite direction), and off-peak journeys on the Council's financially supported route B10 to/from Hanwell Fields. Bus service B10 currently operates once per hour, Mondays to Saturdays between 0830 and 1630 approximately (into Banbury) and from 0915 to 1645 (from Banbury). Bus services 277 operates along the Southam Road inbound only, twice per day. The future of county council subsidies to both services cannot be guaranteed.

The Council's Local Transport Plan provides the policy background for much improved bus services in Banbury (the 'Banbury Bus Strategy'), as a means of increasing the proportion of people travelling by bus, and therefore reducing the currently very high proportion of car use for journeys wholly within the town, which causes significant traffic congestion.

A new bus service is proposed along Southam Road, linking new residential developments (and being funded by that developer) to the north of the Noral Way roundabout. The initial specification for this bus service is for it to operate twice per hour along Southam Road, linking with the Town Centre. The trigger point for delivery of the bus service is after the 50th dwelling. Work is proceeding with delivering this residential site.

The proposed development must ensure that a credible level of service of bus service is available to and from bus stops adjacent to the new store, from opening day until the date when the new bus service from the Southam Road residential area commences. This is so that staff and shoppers can make a sustainable choice of transport to the site from day one, rather than develop a habit of getting there by car.

This service will operate to the Town Centre (bus station or Bridge Street) where interchange is available to all parts of Banbury and to villages and towns beyond.

This service will consist of a vehicle which can be identified as a public service vehicle (ideally with a minimum of 28 seats) operating twice per hour in both directions between 0700 and 1900 Mondays to Saturdays. The service will operate from opening date of the store until the start date of the new bus service from the Southam Road residential development, or for two years, whichever is the earlier. Should bus service B10 continue to operate in a similar manner to the current service, then the specification would be reduced to one additional bus per hour (at a time past the hour which results in even-spacing of the timetable) for those hours which the B10 Hanwell Fields to Banbury Town Centre operates. The absolute maximum exposure of the developer to procure this bus service will be £300,000.

Whilst there are two bus stop flags located on the Southam Road, to the north of the site, the quality of the infrastructure is extremely poor, and not suitable for more than extremely marginal use. Significant improvements are required by the developer, through

- Funding for two Premium Route bus stop pole/flag./information cases and two shelters at an indicative cost of £16,000.
- Improvements to the bus hard-standing area on the northbound bus stop (west side of the Southam Road), to eliminate the grass verge area between the footway and the kerb).

The developer will be required to liaise with Banbury Town Council regarding the style of bus shelter to be procured, along with confirmation that the Town Council will take on the ongoing liability for maintenance.

Travel plan

A travel plan has been submitted with the application. At this stage I have a few suggestions for improvements:

- Oxfordshire Liftshare is promoted as the car share provider of choice <https://oxfordshire.liftshare.com/> so contact details should be included
- Incentives could be offered to staff that walk or cycle to and from work on a regular basis. As the cost of providing a parking space is around £2,000 per year this makes economic sense where space is limited.
- For customers who walk or cycle to the shop and spend over a certain amount Waitrose could consider offering free home delivery as this is often a barrier to customers walking and cycling.

The finalisation of the travel plan could be dealt with by condition.

Drainage

The submitted drainage plan is shown as preliminary. The calculation seems to support the greenfield run-off rate discharging from the site and mitigation measures are in place to avoid flooding of buildings on the site and adjacent lands / buildings during 1 in 100 year storm events + CC.

The final design for surface water drainage along with full calculations will need to be submitted and approved by the Lead Flood Authority prior to commencement of the development.

Officer's Name: Joy White

Officer's Title: Principal Transport Planner

Date: 08 June 2015
