

18/08330/FUL

Consultations and Notification Responses

Ward Councillor Preliminary Comments

Councillor McCarthy

Comments: This is an ugly building and is now very visible from the opposite hillside and replacement landscaping should be a condition of any approval. The impact upon the new spine road and landscape is also detrimental.

This application has raised many critical comments, especially with regard to its potential impact on nearby residential and community facilities. There are concerns regarding the continuing removal of landscaping and mature trees, all of which were conditioned to reduce the impact of development on the nearby AONB, from which the site is very visible.

So in view of the number of comments, mainly opposing the application I would like to call the application to committee to determine. I note the holding objections made by BCC in terms of traffic and pedestrian safety and the response by the applicant, however if you are minded to approve I would welcome the opportunity to discuss and determine the application in public. No mention has been made of the parked takeaway van which has a licence to operate at this proposed new junction and would seem to have an impact on visibility splays and therefore public safety. Has BCC taken this into consideration?

Councillor Paul Turner

Comments: The issue of the street trader has not been addressed. The trader has a licence and therefore is this going to be revoked to take account of the parking restrictions? I confirm once again that the trader has been using this site for decades. If the trader remains, it will impact on highway safety due to the increase in traffic on this part of the network, so until this issue is resolved, to permit the development would increase the likelihood of an accident, either to unsighted vehicles, or unsighted pedestrians. Visitors to the street trader also park on the double yellow lines and as far as I am aware this has never been enforced by County. The increase in traffic at this junction will lead to an increase in the likelihood of an accident if enforcement doesn't happen.

And what about Morrison's articulated lorries parking up in the evening waiting to unload? Not mentioned by Highways. Where are they going to go once the new egress is in place? Have Highways even acknowledged this situation and taken it into account. Maybe a few evenings of enforcement (one or two artics usually turn up about 9pm) might make Morrison's think again about the consequences of their application on their own deliveries.

All these issues need to be looked at together and remedies agreed before the situation is made worse by permitting this development.

Now that the residential units (68) and the commercial units on Bellfield Rd have been given planning permission, is this now a material consideration (the increased volumes of traffic), and if so, have these been taken into account in Highways evaluations?

I think this should be looked at in the round by committee.

Parish/Town Council Comments/Internal and External Consultees

High Wycombe Town Unparished – Disraeli Ward

Environmental Health (Commercial and Emergency Planning)

Comments: The applicant, in their submitted application and report, has failed to identify the street trader that operates on Bellfield Road. This street trader has operated from this location since 01/04/2005. The move to this location was facilitated by the Council as his previous trading location had to be vacated to allow the construction of the Eden Centre.

The street trader operates under a Consent issued by Wycombe District Council under section 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. The Consent allows the sale of Take Away Hot Food, 7 days a week with the following trading hours: Sundays to Wednesdays: 18:30 - 02:30, Thursdays: 18:30 - 03:00 Fridays and Saturdays: 18:30 - 04:00. The Consent allows trading on Bellfield Road, the exact location is not specified and I am aware that the consent holder has moved on a number of occasions to facilitate demolition and construction activities and the resulting new highway layouts.

The trader has generated very few complaints and none in respect of highway obstruction. The conditions attached to the Consent state that the Consent does not override any Regulations regarding parking. The Consent holder is therefore required to comply with all highway and parking restrictions in force.

Whilst accepting that the Consent does not override highway matters we would expect any plans to alter the highway layout to give due consideration and accommodate this long standing and very popular local business.

Environmental Health (Control of Pollution)

Comments: I have no objection to this application. It is expected that the splitting of the current traffic load into the Morrison's stores between Bellfield Road and the Parker Knoll Way roundabout will likely ease congestion along certain sections of the High Wycombe Air Quality Management Area (namely along the Glenister Road section). Currently all traffic wanting to travel North along the Hughenden Road has to join other traffic from the site that passes through the Parker Knoll Way/Glenister Road junction (often sitting for long periods of time idling at traffic lights) before having to drive along Glenister Road itself to start making positive journey progress when it reaches Hughenden Road. I would therefore support the application in view of the expected air quality improvements.

County Highway Authority

Initial Comments: I consider insufficient information to have been provided with regards to the Transport Assessment. The assessment of the impact upon the local highway network should be carried out at the network peak hours, rather than the peak hours of use of the site in order to assess the impact upon the local highway network at the point where the local highway network is most susceptible to impacts upon highway safety, congestion, and capacity.

I also have concerns over the distribution of the vehicular trips onto the network. The vehicles estimated to utilise the new egress are 75% of the northbound trips, and none of the southbound trips. I do not consider it likely that vehicles travelling in a southbound direction, but parked adjacent to the proposed egress to utilise the existing egress which would involve travelling back through the car park and along the access road. Vehicles leaving from the new access travelling southbound are likely to impact upon the flows of the Hughenden Road arm of the roundabout and I would require this to be realistically addressed in the Arcady modelling.

I would consider approximately half of the vehicle trips leaving the site and travelling southbound along Glenisters Road from Peter Knoll way to utilise the new access. This would result in 50 vehicles during the Friday Morrison's peak and 60 vehicles during the Saturday Morrison's peak from the information submitted in Appendix BGH 7. I note that these numbers will be different during the network peak hours. Vehicular flows from Bellfield Road to Temple End, Glenisters Avenue, and back to Bellfield Road would impact upon the other arms of the junction, especially the Hughenden Road arm which could be materially detrimentally impacted by such flows. Amended information should be provided regarding assessment of southbound vehicles utilising the new access.

I consider the distribution of vehicular trips allocating no vehicles leaving the site along Hughenden Avenue to be an unlikely situation, however this assessment is not likely to have resulted in a lesser detrimental impact upon the assessed junction, as less vehicles using the junction turning left into Hughenden Road would have a minimal impact upon the other arms and would likely lead to less queuing on the Bellfield Road arm. The applicant may wish to address this assessment.

The first request regarded the peak hours utilised. Having assessed the additional information provided I am satisfied that the assessments reflect the network peak hours and the peak uses of the site. The applicant has now assessed three peak hour periods, demonstrating the impact upon the public highway.

The second request was to reassess the allocation of vehicle trips to the existing and proposed application site egresses and distribution onto the public highway network. I note that the Appendix BGH2 has not demonstrated half of vehicles trips assigned to each egress, as the percentage of vehicles exiting through the Bellfield Road egress is around 32.8 percent of the total vehicles trips egressing the site for the Friday.

However, having assessed the number of vehicular movements in question, the limited impact upon the functioning of the junction currently demonstrated, and the reduction in queues along the Glenisters Road arm of the junction associated to lower vehicular movements from the existing Parker Knoll Way site egress, if this was reassessed to assign half of vehicular movements to the proposed access the impact would not result in a severe impact upon the operation of the junction.

The third request regarded the roundabout junction geometry. I note that whilst the applicant disagrees with the assessment, amended roundabout geometry that has been previously accepted by the Highway Authority was used for the revised operational assessment.

The fourth request regarded the use of HGV percentages. I disagree with the applicant's statement on not inputting HGV vehicle percentages as required by the Arcady software, as this bypasses a specific input that is designed into the program instead of counting two PCUs per heavy goods vehicle. I have not come across any suggestion prior to this that there is a fault with the software that results in HGVs being double counted as a result of the correct inputting of information. As such this is an issue resulting from the applicant deciding to input the information incorrectly.

The above point notwithstanding, given the limited impact on the highway demonstrated by the amended information, and the fact that this application will not result in an increase of HGV movements associated with the site, I do not believe that a further analysis properly taking account of HGVs would result in demonstration of a materially different impact upon the public highway. Therefore given the specific conditions of this application, I do not believe that a further analysis of the HGV proportion is necessary at this stage.

The fifth request was to demonstrate pedestrian visibility splays of 2 x 2 metres to either side at the proposed site egress. Also requested was the proposal of a "Pedestrians Crossing" sign for erection within the site as an additional measure. These two mitigation measures to ensure pedestrian safety have been confirmed by the applicant, and I believe that they can be secured by way of condition.

Having assessed the submitted amended Arcady analysis of the junction, I do not consider the impact to result in a severe impact upon the functioning of the roundabout junction adjacent the application site. The impact upon the junction and junction arms is similar across the three assessed peak hours. I note the increases in Ratio to Flow Capacity and Delay on Hughenden Road and Temple End, these increases are minor.

Whilst there is an increase in Ratio to Flow Capacity and delay demonstrated upon Bellfield Road, I note that the existing level is below that of Glenisters Road from which the vehicles would be reassigned as a result of the creation of the new access. The increase demonstrated is not considered to constitute a severe impact, and the assessment is robust as the assessment considers a worst case scenario in which all vehicles travel through the roundabout junction.

Along the Glenisters Road arm of the roundabout junction there is a reduction in Ratio to Flow Capacity and Delay, likely resulting from the reduction of vehicular trips along this arm due to the vehicular trips that would egress the site at the proposed Bellfield Road egress.

Finally, to address a concern raised regarding a street trader that operates within the vicinity of the site. Having assessed the information provided, I note that Bellfield Road is subject to parking and waiting restrictions within the vicinity of the proposed site egress, and that if the street trader is parked upon these parking and waiting restrictions it would be an enforcement issue rather than a planning issue. Information provided by the Environmental Health team has confirmed that the Consent does not override highways matters such as the enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions.

Mindful of the above, I consider sufficient information to have been submitted for the Highway Authority to assess the impact of the proposed development and to provide a substantive response. I have no objection to the proposed development, subject to the suggested conditions and informative points.

Final Comments: In terms of the two developments that gain access onto Bellfield Way, I have considered both in my assessment of the application. The modelling of the two applications has been compared, which formed a part of the basis for the request to amend the geometry that the applicant used for the Arcady junction assessment. Whether assessed individually or cumulatively, the impacts of this development are not considered to have an impact upon the local highway network to which we could object.

I believe that I have addressed the matter of the street trader as far as my remit allows. I cannot comment upon the administration of the licence for the street trader. However, there are parking and waiting restrictions along the length of the demonstrated visibility splays, and a refusal on the basis of parking and waiting in this area obstructing visibility splays would be most unlikely to be supported at appeal. Such an objection would be further undermined by the conditions of the licence, which state that it does not provide an exemption from parking and waiting restrictions, and is therefore clear about the conditions of the licence.

The matter of articulated lorries parking in areas of restriction in the evening appears to have already been answered by the applicant, and there is no further information that I could provide beyond the confirmation that the location benefits from the required visibility splays. Given the information provided by the applicant and the presence of parking and waiting restrictions, this is identified as an enforcement matter outside the scope of this application. Similar to the street trader, this is not a material consideration which I can apportion any material weight to.

I have contacted Transport for Buckinghamshire, who will hopefully have further information which can be supplied regarding official channels to report on-street parking if possible to contact the team responsible for the enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions. Especially to identify any existing issues with recurring violations of parking and waiting restrictions.

With regards to pedestrian safety, the access has demonstrated the required 2 x 2 metre visibility splays for pedestrians at the proposed egress point. The applicant has also committed to the provision of signs to be secured by way of condition to provide visual prompts to drivers in addition to the available visibility splays. This provides the required built safety features and additional mitigation that can be secured by way of condition.

Mindful of the above, I can confirm that the cumulative impacts of the development upon the local highway network have been considered by the Highway Authority. However the concern regarding the food vendor licence is a matter outside of the Highway Authority's remit, and the matters relating to parking upon parking and waiting restrictions are enforcement matters that are not a material consideration in the assessment of a planning application.

I hope that this provides further clarification, however if there are any further questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Representations

A total of 21 representations have been received, including a letter on behalf of the ExtraCare Charitable Trust, objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Increase in traffic using Bellfield Road and Hughenden Boulevard,
- Impact upon the safety and convenience of pedestrians, especially those with mobility difficulties,
- Request for a safe pedestrian crossing point such as a zebra or light controlled crossing, and warning signage for drivers.

The High Wycombe Society have concerns regarding this application due to the potential degradation of facilities for pedestrians & pedal cyclists using the Hughenden Boulevard. The path on the western side of Hughenden Boulevard ends by the Spindle & Thread public house and the public are required to cross the road here for the continuation of the public footpath, or alternatively use the paths which is not a public right of way through the grounds of the Spindle & Thread public house and then onto Bellfield Road. Pedestrians then need to cross Bellfield Road and with the additional traffic from the proposed egress point from the Morrison's car park plus service vehicles from the industrial area on Bellfield's and the superstores own service yard. This will also be exacerbated by the proposed development by Wycombe District Council on the former Sainsbury's temporary store car park (17/08464/R9OUT & 18/05323/R9FUL), this also needs to be reviewed in-line with the planning application 18/06945/R9FUL regarding changes to Bellfield Road. The Transport Statements provided by the developers do not indicate any vehicles exiting via the proposed egress point and using the Hughenden Boulevard when this route is an obvious route for heading up to Downley via Hughenden Avenue.