

UPDATES

for Committee Meeting to be held on 10/09/2021

- (6) LAND EAST OF DOWNEND ROAD
PLANNING APPEAL REFERENCE APP/A1720/W/21/3272188

Inquiry restart 14th September

On 3rd September Officers wrote to the Planning Inspectorate to request that the adjourned inquiry be delayed to allow further time for members of the public to comment on the revised proposals from the Appellant.

A response was received on 6th September to say that the Planning Inspector considered the revised proposals to represent minor amendments to the appeal scheme. As such their consideration would not offend the so-called Wheatcroft principles in terms of prejudicing the interests of interested parties. The Inspector declined to delay the resumption of the Inquiry which remains scheduled to restart on 14th September.

Update on Appeal Submissions

On 8th September the Appellant Miller Homes Ltd submitted the revised proposals described at paragraphs 16 & 17 of the Officer committee report to the Planning Inspectorate and asked that these amendments be put before the Inspector for her consideration. The Appellant confirmed that they are willing to deliver these amendments to the scheme if they are considered, either by the Council or by the Inspector, to be necessary to address the issue of pedestrian safety relating to the crossing of Downend Road.

The submission to the Planning Inspectorate is the same as the earlier submission to the Council with accompanying drawings (including Appendix B to the committee report and a tracking plan) and junction modelling information.

The Appellant has also provided the Inspector with an addendum Agreed Statement on Transport Matters (ASoTM) signed by the Appellant and highway authority Hampshire County Council which states that the original proposed improvement to Downend Road bridge remains acceptable and:

“the alternative improvement scheme... introducing pedestrian crossing facilities within the traffic signal junction is also acceptable, and would:

- *Deliver safe and suitable access for all users of Downend Road; and*
- *Operate acceptably and within capacity and would not create any unacceptable queuing and/or delay on the local highway network.”*

Representations

Local residents and other interested parties were notified in writing on 3rd September of the Appellant’s proposed revisions to provide controlled pedestrian crossing points at the Downend Road bridge. They were invited to make any comments relating solely to the revised bridge proposals by 9th September.

In response 16 emails have been received. A number of these emails contain comments which are not related to the bridge proposals or relate to other planning matters raised previously. A summary of the points made in relation to the proposed amendments is below:

In relation to queuing and delay:

- The proposals will add to queuing and delay
- Delays will lead to “rat running” in nearby roads
- Temporary traffic lights recently caused queuing and delays in both directions
- Hatched areas should be put at junctions to other side roads to prevent queuing across those roads
- The impact will be compounded by development on the west side of Downend Road
- The queuing and delay will also affect air quality

In relation to the physical design of the bridge improvements:

- What is the height of the footpath above the carriageway/kerb height? Is this safe?
- A protective barrier at the edge of the new footpath including either side of the bridge should be installed
- The proposed drawing is very basic and confusing
- There is no run-off area for cars that meet in the middle of the proposed layout
- The width of the carriageway is only 3 metres

In relation to the safety of cyclists:

- Concern that a 'modicum of safety' for cyclists is considered adequate
- A knowledgeable body such as Cycling UK should be consulted
- The bridge is relatively safe for cyclists at present due to two way traffic movement discouraging overtaking
- Cyclists could be squeezed by traffic trying to pass them at the bridge if trying to beat a red light

Other points:

- Appellant has shown how an articulated goods vehicle would travel through the junction but the bridge should not be used by articulated goods vehicles
- This is not in accordance with the draft local plan which requires a new pedestrian footbridge
- Is HCC's knowledge sufficient to make a judgement on the bridge improvements?

Positive comments:

- The provision of the controlled pedestrian crossings will add to the overall safety of pedestrians and in particular students making their way to Cams Hill School
- Removal of pedestrian refuge in centre of road is a good idea
- The proposed movement of the stop lines each side of the bridge to introduce pedestrian crossings may be safer but will lead to further delay