

APP/X0415/W/22/3303868 LITTLE CHALFONT**NOTE FROM LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL AND LITTLE CHALFONT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION****12 DECEMBER 2022****HIGHWAYS**

In our oral statement on 8 December we said that, in view of the advice in the Inspector's Note 2 of 2 December that interested parties should not be prejudiced by what has been agreed by the main parties, we would address a note by email to the Inspector outlining our continuing objections on highways grounds. These are as follows.

1. NPPF paragraph 112 states that applications for development should give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements. We are concerned that not enough attention has been given to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in the matters at paragraphs 3-13 below. Paragraphs 14-16 explain our concern about Roughwood Lane.
2. The highways modelling results in CD 1.44 from Motion, dated 18 November and posted on the Bucks Council planning website only on 5 December, were not available in time for us to obtain advice from our highways consultant. We have doubts about some of the assumptions which appear to have been used in the modelling, and shall continue to consider these.

Pedestrians in the village centre

3. Inadequate attention has been given to the convenience and safety of pedestrians, particularly the shoppers and schoolchildren who have to cross at the Cokes Lane and Burtons Lane junctions with the A404 to access the shops, station, and bus stops from Dr Challoner's School and the Snells Wood car park. No controlled crossings are available or proposed at either junction, so pedestrians have to take their chance in the traffic.
4. There is also a crossing over the A404 itself near the Cokes Lane junction with a central refuge, which is much used by elderly residents of the retirement flats at Halifax House and other parts of that complex on the north side of the A 404.
5. The proposed mitigation at the Cokes Lane and Burtons Lane junctions (Appendix F to CD 1.44) appears to deal only with the convenience of motorists, by slicing width away from the pavements to widen the roads. This will make conditions worse for the pedestrians referred to above.
6. We invite the Inspector, in considering the above problems for pedestrians, (i) to visit the junctions concerned at the busiest times, the morning or afternoon "school runs" at 0830 and 1530, and (ii) to take into account the likely traffic increases at the above junctions, not only from the developments listed in para 6.21 of the Council's Highways Proof of Evidence, but also from the 309 dwellings to be built close to Little Chalfont at Newland Park, Chalfont St Peter, under planning permission CH/2014/1964/FA. Residents from that development, which has been ignored in the application and appeal documentation (except in our submissions) will use Cokes Lane and the Little Chalfont village centre to access Chalfont and Latimer station, as London Underground fares are cheaper than those on the alternative rail route to London via Gerrards Cross.

Proposed cycle/pedestrian pathway in Burtons Lane

7. The proposed two-way shared cycle and pedestrian pathway in Burtons Lane is dangerous and not viable. In our view it should not be accepted as a contribution to the sustainability of the development.
8. The appellant accepts in paragraph 2.2 of CD 7.23 TN2 that a width of three metres cannot be maintained because of ‘pinch points’ by certain trees. The Council also mistakenly refers to this route (paragraph 7.14 of the Council’s Highways Appeal Proof) as measuring 3m in width, and justifies the scheme, which it concedes does not meet the requirements set out within LTN 1/20, on the questionable grounds that “it makes provision where there is currently no provision” (true only for pavement cycles). The reality is that, at the trees referred to above, and several other points where the existing path is inadequate, the path is restricted to **less than 2m** width, and at a lone streetlamp to **less than 1m**, both barely enough room for safe passage of a pushchair or wheelchair, so clearly inadequate for a two-way shared cycle and pedestrian pathway.

Pedestrians in Lodge Lane

9. No attention has been paid to the fact that the most popular local hiking and cycle routes are in the Chess Valley. Direct access to the Chess Valley from the site is due north up Lodge Lane, Church Grove East and Stony Lane. Access to the Chess Valley via the proposed foot/cycleway through the site to Oakington Avenue, or via the PROW in the wood opposite the site entrance, is indirect and lengthy. Hikers and cyclists from the site and elsewhere south heading to the Chess Valley would be exposed to risk from the greater traffic flows on Lodge Lane, without pavements or lighting.

Railway bridge foot/cycle way to Oakington Avenue

10. No response has appeared to our concern (in paragraph 61 of our objection of 19 January 2022) that the mouth of the path on Oakington Avenue would become an unauthorised pick up / drop off point for parents delivering and collecting children to any school on the site, and that there is no room for any drop-off provision. Oakington Avenue is already heavily used for pick up / drop off of children attending the existing primary school a little further down the road.

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (Appendix G to CD7.23 TN12)

11. Section 1.3 shows that a visit was carried out between 1pm and 3pm in the afternoon, the quietest time of day on local roads. Had the audit been done half an hour later, during the prolonged school run when traffic is chaotic in and near the village centre, the results could have been different.
12. Section 2.7 of the audit identifies a risk that cyclists using the proposed new Toucan crossing for access to the service road adjacent to Amersham Road may rejoin the carriageway at unsafe locations. The ‘Design Organisation Response’ quoted on page 41 that “Road markings and signage will be incorporated as necessary during the detailed design stage to ensure appropriate guidance for cyclists” does not address the problem that no safe points are available for cyclists heading towards the village centre to rejoin the carriageway from the service road.
13. The audit does not refer to the road safety issues, near the proposed bus-stop locations in Amersham Road, that were defined in the two appeal judgments concerning 1 Oakington Avenue (APP/X0415/W/18/3203607 and APP/X0415/D/20/3253104, mentioned in paragraph 53 of our submission of 19 January 2022, and in the last paragraph under ‘Mitigation’ in James Duncan’s consultation letter of 1 March 2022). Nor does the audit refer to the increased danger to pedestrians in the village centre, described above.

Roughwood Lane

14. The problem at Roughwood Lane, which we raised orally on 8 December, and which was described in paragraphs 8-10 of our written statement of 11 September, was not addressed by Mr Bell of Motion in his response on 8 December.
15. The problem, which is easily visible from a map, is that the present residents of Little Chalfont often travel via the B4442 to join the A413 which leads to the M40 and is a good route to London. Any residents on the proposed development, using either the Lodge Lane or Burtons Lane exits, will have a desired straight route to join the B4442 via the single track Roughwood Lane, instead of taking the circuitous route to join the B4442 via the often congested village centre and Cokes Lane. This will greatly worsen the existing problem on Roughwood Lane, where the drives of residents are used as passing places because of inadequate roadside passing places in this narrow winding road, signed as 'single track'. The Highways modelling appears to disregard this problem and reaches the false conclusion that the proposals will not lead to an increase in vehicular movements on Roughwood Lane.
16. If the Inspector has the opportunity, perhaps he would like to drive down Roughwood Lane, which is close to the site.

Little Chalfont Parish Council and Little Chalfont Community Association

12 December 2022