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21st October 2020

For the Attention of Andy Hough
Place-shaping and Economic Growth
Harrogate Borough Council
PO Box 787
HARROGATE
HG1 9RW

Dear Andy

PLANNING APPLICATION REF. NO: 20/02973/EIAMAJ 21 & 38 ENGINEERS CLARO BARRACKS, CHATHAM ROAD, RIPON, NORTH YORKSHIRE HG4 2RD

We write to confirm and underline Ripon City Council's strong opposition to the current outline proposal.

In preparing this submission we have consulted extensively with local parishioners and other stakeholders.

Ripon City Council has never objected and does not object to the basic principle of redevelopment of the Barracks site but such development must not be to the detriment of existing residents amenity and the vitality of the city, as is the case here.

The current proposal would see a massive mixed-used development comprising 1300 homes, up to 60 extra care accommodation units, shops, community facilities, primary school and other buildings and structures. The site is simply unsuitable for the scale of the development proposed. Nor would it represent sustainable development which as National Planning Policy Framework states, '*The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*'. Furthermore, it is contrary to national and local planning policies, including the adopted Ripon Neighbourhood Plan.

You will be aware that there is substantial local opposition to the proposals. Including from local residents, Ripon Civic Society and many other community stakeholders, bodies and individuals. Ripon City Council strongly endorses these objections.

Whilst there would be some benefits with the proposal, notably through the provision of general and affordable housing and the reuse of the site, it is considered these are not sufficient, by a wide margin, to outweigh the significant harm the current proposal would cause.

We strongly urge that a decision on application should be deferred until such times as the issues raised by this Council and the wider community, including Ripon Civic Society, have been fully

addressed. Alternatively, if the applicant insists upon the application being determined in its current form it should be refused for the compelling reasons stated above.

This Council recently commissioned a specialist report from a Transport Consultant which is attached. The report identifies many concerns and includes suggestions as to how these concerns might be addressed.

We request that the application be deferred to enable further consideration of the issues raised, failing this, that it is refused in its current form.

Yours sincerely

Paula Benson

P M Benson
Clerk to the Council

c.c. by email

Member of Parliament
Harrogate Borough Council

NYCC

Rt. Hon. J Smith MP.
Mr W Sampson, Chief Executive
Cllr R Cooper
Cllr T Myatt
Cllr C Les
Cllr D MacKenzie
Ms. M Burnham, Area 6 Highways

RIPON BARRACKS

Planning Application Number 20/02973/EIAMAJ

A PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF THE TRANSPORT ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Report prepared on behalf of:

Ripon City Council
The Town Hall
Market Place South
Ripon
HG4 1DB

October 2020 (version 1.1)

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 THaT Consultancy (transport, highways and traffic consultants) have been appointed by Ripon City Council (RCC) to undertake a preliminary review of the transport aspects of the proposed redevelopment of Ripon Barracks. The redevelopment proposals are the subject of an outline planning application (Application No. 20/02973/EIAMAJ) submitted to Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) by the Secretary of State for Defence (the applicant). For the purposes of determining this planning application HBC is the local planning authority (LPA) and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) is the local highway authority (LHA).
- 1.2 At the time of writing (late September/early October 2020) there were 117 documents on HBC's planning portal relating to this planning application. Over 90 of these were submitted by the applicant either as part of, or in support of, the planning application.
- 1.3 The planning application is in outline with all matters except access reserved.
- 1.4 Our preliminary investigations as summarised in this report have focused on the following documents as submitted by the applicant:
- Transport Assessment (1252 pages)
 - Framework Travel Plan (52 pages)
 - Planning Statement (78 pages)
 - Planning Summary (14 pages)
 - Planning Obligations Heads of Terms (10 pages)
 - the various plans associated with the above documents

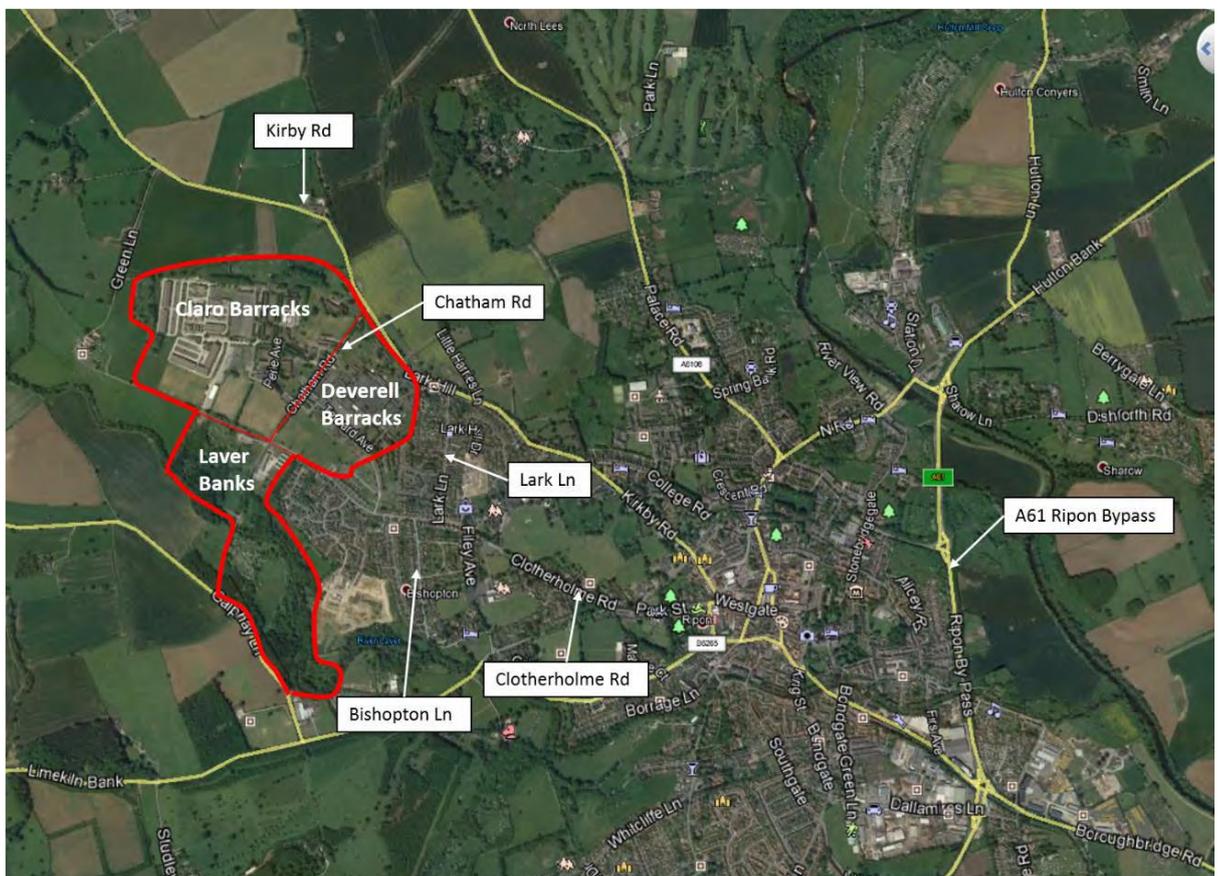
2 TOPIC: GENERAL SITE LOCATION AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The Application

- 2.1 At paragraph 10.3.2 in the “Summary and Conclusions” of the Transport Assessment the applicant states:

“The development site is well located in terms of access to the local, strategic and trunk road networks and the city of Ripon and its facilities and amenities. Generally, access to the proposed development from the surrounding areas on foot or by cycle is currently reasonable but with opportunities to improve pedestrian accessibility and cycle infrastructure in specific locations; it has a large residential and commercial catchment given its city centre periphery location.”

- 2.2 The site and its relationship to Ripon is shown in Figure 2 “Existing Site” of the Transport Assessment. This Figure is reproduced below for reference.



THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 2.3 In our opinion the application site does not represent a “city centre periphery location” but rather an edge of town location.
- 2.4 The site’s location on the north-western edge of the city means that it will, inevitably, be difficult to encourage a significant proportion of those living and working at the barracks site to use sustainable modes of travel in preference to the private car.
- 2.5 As noted by the applicant in Section 5.3 of the Transport Assessment most of the city centre is beyond the 2 km maximum walking distance for commuting/school travel suggested by the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) (see Figure 26 of the Transport Assessment). Bus services serving the site are currently extremely limited.
- 2.6 The fact that the proposals represent a mixed use development with housing, a local centre, a primary school, sports facilities and employment means that residents will not have to travel off-site to meet all of their day-to-day needs. However, it also means that the non-residential elements of the proposals will generate trips to/from the site in addition to the movement associated with the proposed new housing.
- 2.7 Later in this report we comment on the assumptions the applicant has made regarding trip generation and on the proposed provision for enhancing walking, cycling and public transport access to the site.
- 2.8 At paragraph 7.5 of the Planning Statement the applicant explains that:
“The Proposed Development will provide a high quality, sustainable extension to Ripon, redeveloping previously developed land and contributing to the vitality of Ripon, in accordance with policies DM 1 and DM 3” [these being the policies allocating the site for development in the Harrogate District Local Plan].
- 2.9 If this objective is to be achieved then, in our opinion, the measures to promote sustainable modes of travel in preference to the private car will need to be significantly improved beyond those currently proposed.
- 2.10 If robust sustainable transport measures are not secured at this stage in the planning process, then the likelihood is that the redevelopment proposals will simply create a

large car-based dormitory community on the north-western edge of the city. Inevitably much of the traffic generated by the site will pass through the City centre.

- 2.11 Later in this report we comment on the junction capacity problems identified in the Transport Assessment that indicate that the highway mitigation measures (i.e. city centre junction improvements) formulated as part of the transport modelling undertaken in the development of the Local Plan cannot in fact accommodate the traffic forecast to be generated by the barracks development.
- 2.12 This is, of course, a fundamental problem with the application.
- 2.13 The traffic situation becomes even worse if the applicants' forecast modal split is considered unachievable and as a consequence the forecast vehicular traffic generation of the site is increased.

Recommendations

- 2.14 We recommend that the applicant (i.e. the Secretary of State for Defence) significantly improves the sustainable transport aspects of the current scheme so that this site stands as an exemplar of the Government's approach to sustainable development rather than representing a "do minimum" option.

3 TOPIC: HISTORIC NATURE OF RIPON'S HIGHWAY NETWORK

The Application

- 3.1 Perhaps not surprisingly given the site's relatively remote location on the north-western edge of the city the applicants detailed transport modelling routes all development generated traffic through the City centre.
- 3.2 The Local Plan identified the need for junction improvements at three junctions in the City centre in order to accommodate the traffic forecast to be generated by the Local Plan allocations which included the barracks site.
- 3.3 The applicants have subsequently undertaken detailed junction modelling of these junctions, and others, in the City centre. As noted previously this analysis has shown that two of the three junction improvement schemes formulated at the Local Plan stage cannot, in fact, safely accommodate the additional traffic likely to be generated by the barracks development.
- 3.4 The Transport Assessment explains that the applicant is in discussions with NYCC in an attempt to agree revised junction mitigation schemes.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 3.5 The highway network in Ripon City centre does not conform to present-day design standards in many respects. Junction layouts, and the links between those junctions, are often constrained by the historic street pattern and frontage development.
- 3.6 Our experience is that a minor breakdown in flow such as can be caused by an inconveniently parked vehicle or a queue at a junction can quickly lead to the city centre becoming gridlocked.
- 3.7 The traffic modelling work undertaken by the applicant, and the applicant's interpretation of that output, is entirely conventional. At paragraph 7.4.5 of the Transport Assessment when considering "individual junction assessments" the applicant states:

"RFC [ratio of flow to capacity] values between 0.00 and 0.85 are generally accepted as representing stable operating conditions, values between 0.85 and 1.00 represent variable operation (i.e. possible queues building up at the junction during the period

under consideration and increases in vehicle delay moving through the junction). RFC values in excess of 1.00 represent overloaded conditions (i.e. congested conditions)."

- 3.8 We agree with this summary.
- 3.9 However, it is not clear from the Transport Assessment whether or not the applicant has made any allowance in their assessment for the constraints that the historic road layout imposes on the free flow of traffic through the city centre. It would be useful, for example, for the forecast queue lengths to be shown graphically to enable a direct comparison to be made with the observed queue lengths presented in Appendix H. This will enable the potential interaction of queueing traffic on links between junctions to be better understood.

Recommendations

- 3.10 Present results of junction modelling graphically to enable a direct comparison to be made by the layperson with the observed queue lengths presented in Appendix H.

4 TOPIC: EXISTING CONDITIONS/BASELINE TRAFFIC FLOWS

The Application

- 4.1 The Transport Assessment is based upon a series of detailed traffic surveys undertaken in the first week of June 2019.
- 4.2 7 day automatic traffic count (ATC) data was collected at 17 locations and peak hour manual classified counts (MCC) were undertaken at 13 junctions on one day.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 4.3 Ideally traffic surveys should be undertaken in what are referred to as “neutral months”. Data collected during these months should be free from any seasonal variation and can therefore normally be used in traffic modelling work without any further adjustment.
- 4.4 The neutral months as defined by the Department for Transport are April, May, June, September and October.
- 4.5 The applicants’ surveys were undertaken in June during the first week of school after the summer half-term holiday.
- 4.6 Ripon Grammar School and Outwood Academy are both located on Clotherholme Road between the barracks site and the city centre. Ripon Grammar school has 922 pupils and Outwood Academy has 692 pupils. Both schools have sixth forms. A total of 1614 children therefore travel to/from school on Clotherholme Road. All of these journeys involve travel through the roads in the study area.
- 4.7 During the second half of the summer term (ie when the traffic surveys were undertaken) many children are taking exams and are often on study leave or working to revision timetables that do not involve them being in school for the normal school day.
- 4.8 The observed traffic flows recorded during the Applicants’ traffic surveys will therefore be lower than would normally be the case even though they were recorded during a neutral month. If the data had been collected in the first half of the summer term, or in September, then the count data would have been representative. It is not clear why the Applicant chose to undertake the surveys when they did.

4.9 The dates when the count data was collected is a particular issue in this case for the following reasons:

- There is an unusually high number of school children concentrated within the study area. Indeed, Ripon Grammar School and Outwood Academy are the only schools in Ripon where pupils can sit GCSE and A-level exams; and
- Small changes in observed and forecast traffic flows can have a significant impact on the assessment of a junction, particularly when, as is the case in this study, many junctions are forecast to be operating at, or close to, capacity.

Recommendations

4.10 We recommend that new baseline traffic data should be collected during a time that is completely free from seasonal impacts and those impacts associated with exam time and school holidays. The traffic modelling should then be repeated using the new baseline flows (and also taking in to account the other comments we have made in this report regarding trip rates etc.)

5 TOPIC: GALPHAY LANE

The Application

- 5.1 In paragraph 3.7.1 and 3.7.2 of the Transport Assessment the applicants comment on “road network changes” in Ripon. These paragraphs are reproduced below:

“3.7.1 Although Ripon city centre has a traditionally compact road network, various measures have been adopted in recent years to try and alleviate pressure and congestion in the city centre. Firstly, the A61 Ripon Bypass was successfully delivered in 1996 and has been effective in re-routing traffic away from the city centre. Secondly, Marshall Way was opened in the late 2000’s and has also relieved pressure upon the city centre, being delivered through a combination of NYCC and private developer funding.

3.7.2 Various other road network changes have been promoted over the years such as a new highway linking Somerset Row to Kirkby Road and more recently a vehicular link linking Clotherholme Road to Galphay Lane. Neither of these proposals are policy led and neither are identified as being necessary to mitigate the impact of the redevelopment of the Ripon Barracks site.”

- 5.2 A potential vehicular link between Clotherholme Road and Galphay Lane is not mentioned again.
- 5.3 Galphay Lane is only mentioned in the context of providing a pedestrian/cycle route through Laver Bank linking Clotherholme Road and Galphay Lane.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 5.4 We understand that Galphay Lane has been promoted by RCC and various residents as a potential alternative access to the barracks development.
- 5.5 Ripon Neighbourhood Plan Community Action B4 Clotherholme Development Strategy states:

“Upon release of the Claro Barracks built up and technical areas:

- *The opening to public use of the existing military highway, including the River Laver bridge, to Galphay Lane and the financing of any costs required to bring this highway*

to adoptable standards and improvements as may be required to the junction of Galphay Lane and Studley Road (B6265)”

- 5.6 It would appear that the applicants have, so far, dismissed Galphay Lane as a potential vehicular access to the barracks site on the basis that:
- it is not needed because Clothholme Road and Kirkby Road can satisfactorily cater for all development generated traffic; and
 - it is not a policy requirement of either the Harrogate District Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan, albeit it is included as a community action, but this does not carry the same status as a policy.
- 5.7 The applicants transport modelling has, however, identified serious traffic capacity issues in the City centre that are, as yet, unresolved.
- 5.8 Galphay Lane represents a potential alternative route between the site and the B6265 (Studley Road/Skellbank). This may result in the rerouting of some of the development generated traffic. The revised traffic patterns could relieve pressure on the City centre junctions.

Recommendations

- 5.9 Given that the applicants transport assessment has identified serious junction capacity problems in the City Centre we suggest that the creation of a vehicle link between Clothholme Road and Galphay Lane should be investigated in detail to establish whether or not it represents a viable alternative.

6 TOPIC: PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Application

- 6.1 The development proposals include a 2 form entry Primary School with an anticipated pupil intake of 420 at full capacity. (Transport Assessment paragraph 5.2.2)
- 6.2 The potential traffic generated by the school has been assumed to be “travel within the site” and therefore has not been taken into account in the Transport Assessment.
- 6.3 However, paragraph 7.45 of the Planning Statement explains that:
- “The Proposed Development generates a total primary school pupil yield of 287. This pupil yield is greater than the 210 capacity of a 1FE primary school, but significantly less than the 420 capacity of a 2FE school. Working with NYCC, the Applicant has agreed to provide land for a 2FE school with a total potential capacity of 420 pupils. This additional potential capacity means that the school has potential to provide for the wider Ripon catchment beyond the Proposed Development.”*
- 6.4 Paragraphs 2.9-2.11 of the Planning Obligations Heads of Terms document deal with “Obligations with North Yorkshire County Council” these paragraphs deal with “education” and state:
- “Education*
- 2.9 To allocate an area of land (1.8ha) to provide a 2 form entry primary school.*
- 2.10 Contribution to primary school provision up until the opening of the onsite primary school.*
- 2.11 Contribution to secondary school provision.”*
- 6.5 It would appear therefore that whilst the applicant will allocate land for the primary school within the site it will be up to NYCC to build the school. Until the school is actually built children will have to travel off-site.
- 6.6 Even in 2035 when the development is built out the school if actually built will have 32% (133 pupil places) spare capacity. These places will be filled by children from the wider area.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 6.7 It would appear that the Transport Assessment does not tie into the wider commitments made by the Applicant with respect to the primary school.

Recommendations

- 6.8 We recommend that the Transport Assessment should be modified to allow for primary schoolchildren travelling off-site until such time as the school is built and then to allow for 32% of children to travel to the site from the wider Ripon area.

7 TOPIC: 15% REDUCTION IN RESIDENTIAL TRIP GENERATION

The Application

7.1 The applicant has reduced the trip generation of the residential element of the scheme by 15%.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

7.2 As far as we can tell the applicant has reduced the forecast trip generation of the residential element of the scheme by 15% because the following amenities will be provided within the site:

- primary school
- retail and food/drink facilities
- community facilities
- employment facilities
- leisure space

7.3 As far as we can tell there is no justification for the figure of 15%.

Recommendations

7.4 We recommend that the applicant either provides robust evidence to support the 15% reduction or they do not apply the reduction at all.

8 TOPIC: WALKING AND CYCLING

The Application

8.1 The applicant proposes to provide a network of high quality walking and cycling routes within the site. As part of the Local Plan the applicant is also required to contribute to cycling and walking provision to improve connections from the barracks to the centre of Ripon. The applicant has prepared drawings showing dropped kerbs and tactile paving at various side road crossings, minor footway widening and the provision of on-carriageway cycle lanes.

8.2 Paragraph 8.10.6 of the Transport Assessment states:

“The Applicant expects to pay an appropriate contribution which we believe will adequately mitigate specific impacts and deliver a targeted outcome to meet the policy requirement for this site.”

8.3 At paragraph 8.10.3 of the Transport Assessment the applicant states that:

“The applicant considers that this requirement [i.e. contributing to cycling and walking provision between the barracks and the centre Ripon] can be achieved through a contribution through a S106 agreement in preference to a scheme that we would deliver through a condition.”

8.4 The Planning Obligations Heads of Terms document does not provide any specific details of what is proposed.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

8.5 In our opinion this level of commitment is inadequate. In Table 29 of the Transport Assessment the applicant says that the development will generate between 310-323 pedestrian movements in the peak hours and between 45-47 bicycle movements per hour.

8.6 Encouraging people to walk and/or cycle in preference to using the car depends upon the distances involved and the quality of the routes. Whilst the applicant cannot do anything about the fact that the application site is located so far from the city centre, they can do something about the quality of the routes between the site and the city centre.

Recommendations

- 8.7 We recommend that the applicant commits to providing significant pedestrian and cycle improvements between the site and the City centre.

9 TOPIC: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Application

9.1 The Local Plan requires the following infrastructure requirements:

“Contributing to service and infrastructure provision to link to the 36 Service (Ripon, Harrogate, Leeds)”

9.2 Paragraph 8.12.2 of the Transport Assessment states:

“This requirement is also set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (August 2018). The applicant considers that this requirement can be achieved through a contribution through a S106 agreement in preference to a scheme that we would deliver on the ground.”

9.3 The Planning Obligations Heads of Terms Document includes no detail other than the statement at paragraph 2.21 “contribution to bus services”.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

9.4 Again, we consider this level of commitment on the part of the applicant inadequate. Particularly given that the bus station in the City centre is not within walking distance of the site and there are only 5 bus services per weekday between the site and the City centre, and none of the services operate in the peak hours.

Recommendations

9.5 We strongly suggest that the applicant should make firm commitments at this stage in the planning process to ensure that the site will be adequately served by bus.

10 TOPIC: FRAMEWORK TRAVEL PLAN

The Application

- 10.1 A conventional framework travel plan has been submitted as part of the planning application. Much of the content of the framework travel plan is taken directly from the Transport Assessment.
- 10.2 Homes England will appoint a travel plan manager. Each “significant occupier” will nominate their own travel plan coordinator who will then develop and implement their individual travel plan with assistance from the travel plan manager.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 10.3 The success of any travel plan is dependent upon the commitment, and degree of support, from all “stakeholders”.
- 10.4 The framework travel plan does not include any penalties or dis-benefits if modal shift targets are not achieved.

Recommendations

- 10.5 None.

11 TOPIC: TRIP DISTRIBUTION AND ASSIGNMENT/SENSITIVITY TESTING

The Application

- 11.1 The Transport Assessment is based on a single geographical distribution of development generated traffic which has been derived from the 2011 journey to work Census data.
- 11.2 The assignment of development generated traffic onto the local highway network was undertaken using professional judgement.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 11.3 The basic approach followed by the applicant is, in our opinion, acceptable.

Recommendations

- 11.4 However, given the problems identified in the applicants junction modelling we suggest that some form of sensitivity testing is undertaken to determine whether or not relatively small changes in forecast flows would have any significant impact on the outcome of the junction modelling.

12 TOPIC: SITE ACCESS JUNCTIONS ON CLOTHERHOLME ROAD & KIRKBY ROAD

The Application

- 12.1 The two new site access junctions proposed on Kirkby Road and the two new site access junctions proposed on Clotherholme Road are all predicted to operate satisfactorily in 2035.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 12.2 We agree with the applicants findings subject to the caveat that we have not undertaken a detailed review of the modelling process.

Recommendations

- 12.3 None.

13 TOPIC: CLOCKTOWER JUNCTION

The Application

- 13.1 The proposed mitigation scheme formulated by Jacobs on behalf of HBC when preparing the Local Plan is predicted to operate within capacity in 2035 taking into account committed developments and the barracks development.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 13.2 We agree with the applicants findings subject to the caveat that we have not undertaken a detailed review of the modelling process.

Recommendations

- 13.3 None.

14 TOPIC: COLTSGATE HILL JUNCTION

The Application

14.1 The proposed mitigation scheme formulated by Jacobs on behalf of HBC when preparing the Local Plan is predicted to operate within capacity in 2035 taking into account committed developments but excluding the barracks development. When the barracks development is taken into account the junction would “be nearing capacity” in 2035. The applicant has therefore proposed alternative mitigation by removing the traffic signals and creating a mini roundabout.

14.2 Paragraph 7.12.9 of the Transport Assessment explains that:

“During ongoing work with NYCC it is becoming clearer that a signalised junction is their preferred option for this location and therefore we will continue to work with NYCC to find the most appropriate solution. The draft junction below (similar to the junction mitigation proposed within the Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan) shows a high level example of a signalised junction which could be provided within highway and which would also deliver the appropriate level of mitigation required.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

14.3 The Local Plan mitigation layout has a minimum practical reserve capacity of 37.7% without the barracks development. This falls to just 0.2% when the barracks development is taken into account. To all intents and purposes the junction is forecast to be operating at capacity and revised proposals are therefore needed.

Recommendations

14.4 We strongly recommend that a revised junction layout is agreed between all parties before planning permission is granted.

15 TOPIC: SKELLGATE JUNCTION

The Application

15.1 The Local Plan mitigation scheme is forecast to operate significantly over capacity without the barracks development. The additional traffic associated with the barracks development simply makes the situation worse.

15.2 Paragraph 7.13.7 of the Transport Assessment states:

“Homes England will continue to work with NYCC to develop the most appropriate junction design for this location in order to deliver the most appropriate junction for this location.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

15.3 Revised junction proposals are clearly required.

Recommendations

15.4 We strongly recommend that a revised junction layout is agreed between all parties before planning permission is granted.

16 TOPIC: KIRKBY ROAD/COLLEGE ROAD

The Application

- 16.1 The junction will operate with spare capacity in 2035 taking into account committed developments and the barracks development.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 16.2 We agree with the applicants findings subject to the caveat that we have not undertaken a detailed review of the modelling process.

Recommendations

- 16.3 None.

17 TOPIC: CLOTHERHOLME ROAD/STUDLEY ROAD/PARK STREET

The Application

17.1 Paragraph 7.15.3 of the Transport Assessment states:

“The results indicate that the junction operates within capacity in the future year 2035 with traffic from committed developments and the development itself.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

17.2 The model output shows that in 2035 taking into account committed developments and the barracks development the mini roundabout is forecast to be operating at above 90% capacity in the AM peak hour.

Recommendations

17.3 We recommend that the applicants investigate the possibility of improving this junction to benefit all road users, but particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

17.4 It is possible that creating an access onto Galphay Lane would reduce traffic flows through this junction thereby avoiding the need for junction improvements.

18 TOPIC: BLOSSOMGATE/WESTGATE JUNCTION

The Application

18.1 The existing priority junction is forecast to operate satisfactorily in 2035 with committed developments, but without the barracks development. The barracks development takes the junction significantly over capacity.

18.2 The applicants therefore propose to signalise the existing junction and link it to the High Skellgate/Market Place junction.

18.3 Paragraph 7.16.5 of the Transport Assessment states:

“The results of the assessment indicate that when the junction is assessed for the future year 2035 with traffic from committed developments and the development itself with the junction mitigation, it is predicted to operate within capacity.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

18.4 Our initial review of the applicants’ submission seems to suggest that the signalised junction would still be operating over capacity in 2035 when committed developments and the barracks scheme are taken into account.

Recommendations

18.5 We recommend that further investigations are undertaken.

19 TOPIC: PARK STREET/FIRBY LANE

The Application

- 19.1 The applicants modelling shows at this junction will operate satisfactorily 2035 with committed developments but without the barracks scheme. The junction will be significantly over capacity in the AM peak once traffic from the barracks development is taken into account.
- 19.2 The applicant argues that because this junction is located in close proximity to the proposed signalisation of the Blossomgate/Westgate junction the platooning of traffic that will occur as a result of the signalisation will create gaps at the Park Street/Firby Lane junction which will enable turning movements to take place. On this basis the applicant concludes that the junction will operate satisfactorily, and further modelling is not required.

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 19.3 We disagree with the applicants assessment.

Recommendations

- 19.4 We recommend that further work be undertaken in respect of this junction.

20 TOPIC: SOMERSET ROAD/FIRBY LANE

The Application

20.1 Paragraph 7.18.3 of the Transport Assessment states:

“The results show the junction would operate with spare capacity in the future year of 2035 when accounting for traffic from committed developments and the development itself.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

20.2 The modelling shows the junction to be operating at 93% of capacity in the AM peak when development generated traffic is taken into account.

Recommendations

20.3 None.

21 TOPIC: WATER SKELLGATE/BEDERN BANK/BONDGATE GREEN/KING STREET

The Application

21.1 Paragraph 7.19.3 of the Transport Assessment states:

“The results show the junction would continue to operate with spare capacity in the future year of 2035 when accounting for traffic from committed developments and the development itself.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

21.2 We agree with the applicants findings subject to the caveat that we have not undertaken a detailed review of the modelling process.

Recommendations

21.3 None.

22 TOPIC: BLOSSOMGATE/MARSHALL WAY

The Application

22.1 Paragraph 7.20.3 of the Transport Assessment states:

“The results show the junction would operate with spare capacity in the future year of 2035 when accounting for traffic from committed developments and the development itself.”

THaT Consultancy Commentary

22.2 The maximum utilisation of capacity at this junction in 2035 increases from 61% without the barracks development to 95% when the barracks development is taken into consideration.

Recommendations

22.3 None.

23 TOPIC: JUNCTION PERFORMANCE: THE APPLICANTS' CONCLUSIONS

The Application

- 23.1 At paragraph 7.21.5 of the Transport Assessment the applicants present their conclusions regarding the impact of the barracks development on junctions in Ripon. They say:

"A final summary of junction performance from the scenarios assessed is provided in Table 64. It can be concluded that all junctions are ultimately forecast to operate within capacity when accounting for flows from committed developments, the development itself and any potential mitigation required in the future year of 2035."

THaT Consultancy Commentary

- 23.2 We cannot reconcile this conclusion with the detailed modelling work presented in this section of the Transport Assessment.
- 23.3 Even if junctions forecast to be operating at close to or slightly over capacity were considered to be acceptable (and in our opinion that should not be the case) this still leaves the Skellgate junction and the Coltsgate Hill junction to be resolved.

Recommendations

- 23.4 We strongly recommend that the applicant revisits the junction modelling, perhaps in conjunction with some sensitivity testing and the possible opening of a vehicular route between Clotherholme Road and Galphay Lane.

24 ASSESSMENT AGAINST RELEVANT TRANSPORT PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

24.1 The planning system requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

24.2 The statutory development plan comprises:

- Harrogate District Local Plan (adopted March 2020); and
- Ripon Neighbourhood Plan to 2030 (made April 2019).

24.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

24.4 Both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan have recently been adopted and are therefore up-to-date. Both Plans support the general principle of the redevelopment of Ripon barracks as currently proposed.

Harrogate District Local Plan

24.5 The applicant worked closely with HBC and NYCC to promote the inclusion of the barracks site in the emerging Local Plan. The proposals for the barracks development (albeit with a different development mix) were included in the transport modelling work undertaken during the preparation of the Local Plan.

24.6 The transport modelling work was undertaken on behalf of HBC by Jacobs. This work identified the need for highway mitigation at three junctions in the city centre. Jacobs subsequently prepared mitigation schemes for the following junctions:

- The Clocktower signal controlled junction
- Coltsgate Hill signal controlled junction
- Skellgate signal controlled junction

24.7 Interestingly the modelling work presented in the Applicants' Transport Assessment suggests that the highway mitigation schemes at Coltsgate Hill and Skellgate that form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, and upon which the local plan allocations were subsequently made, will not be able to satisfactorily accommodate development generated traffic.

24.8 The applicants say that they are working with NYCC to develop alternative mitigation schemes.

24.9 With regard to the Coltsgate Hill junction, and apparently after having suggested a mini roundabout rather than the signal controlled junction proposed in the evidence base to the Local Plan, paragraph 7.12.9 of the Transport Assessment states:

“During ongoing work with NYCC it is becoming clearer that a signalised junction is their preferred option for this location and therefore we will continue to work with NYCC to find the most appropriate solution. The draft junction below (similar to the junction mitigation proposed within the Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan) shows a high level example of a signalised junction which could be provided within highway and which would also deliver the appropriate level of mitigation required.”

24.10 The Applicant summarises the current position with regard to the Skellgate junction at paragraphs 7.13.6-7 of the Transport Assessment, which state:

“7.13.6 The results for this Local Plan mitigation layout show that the junction is still predicted to operate beyond its theoretical capacity.

7.13.7 Homes England will continue to work with NYCC to develop the most appropriate junction design for this location in order to deliver the most appropriate junction for this location.”

24.11 It is clear, therefore, that:

- the detailed work undertaken by the Applicants in the preparation of the Transport Assessment has shown that two of the three highway mitigation schemes proposed in the Local Plan cannot satisfactorily cater for the Local Plan allocations; and
- despite extensive efforts on the part of the Applicants these matters remain unresolved.

24.12 We are surprised that an application of this type and scale should have been submitted with major highway/transport issues unresolved. This is despite the fact that the application has been prepared in close cooperation with HBC and NYCC over

a period of several years as summarised in Paragraph 5.8 of the Planning Statement (July 2020) which states:

“The pre-application process was undertaken with HBC and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) to develop the proposals for the Site. The meetings involved planning and technical officers from HBC and NYCC and took place on a 2-weekly basis between January 2019 and October 2019. Further meetings have taken place regularly with officers from HBC and NYCC throughout 2020. Officers have also visited the Site.”

24.13 We note that the traffic surveys that form the basis of the transport modelling work presented in the Transport Assessment were collected in June 2019, and that the final computer modelling that is included in the Transport Assessment was undertaken in the latter part of 2019.

24.14 Paragraph 10.3.19 in the “Summary and Conclusions” section of the Transport Assessment states:

“A final summary of junction performance concluded that all junctions are ultimately forecast to operate within capacity when accounting for flows from committed developments, the development itself and any potential mitigation required in the future year of 2035. The applicant will continue to work with NYCC to develop the most appropriate junction designs in order to deliver the most appropriate junction solutions for each of the four junctions to benefit the city centre as a whole.”

24.15 We cannot reconcile the first sentence of this paragraph with the detailed analysis presented in the Transport Assessment and the extracts from the Transport Assessment presented above.

24.16 Our review of the sustainable transport measures included as part of the planning application has led us to conclude that the measures need to be significantly improved beyond those currently proposed. If this is not done at this stage in the planning process, then it is likely that the redevelopment proposals will simply create a large car-based dormitory community on the north-western edge of the city.

24.17 It is clear that despite the applicant working in close consultation with both HBC and NYCC there are still significant unresolved highway and transport issues that cannot be satisfactorily covered by condition or legal agreement .

Ripon Neighbourhood Plan to 2030

24.18 Ripon Neighbourhood Plan Community Action B4 Clothholme Development Strategy states:

“Upon release of the Claro Barracks built up and technical areas:

- *The opening to public use of the existing military highway, including the River Laver bridge, to Galphay Lane and the financing of any costs required to bring this highway to adoptable standards and improvements as may be required to the junction of Galphay Lane and Studley Road (B6265)”*

24.19 It would appear that the applicants have, so far, dismissed Galphay Lane as a potential vehicular access to the barracks site on the basis that:

- it is not needed because Clothholme Road and Kirkby Road can satisfactorily cater for all development generated traffic; and
- it is not a policy requirement of either the Harrogate District Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan, albeit it is included as a community action, but this does not carry the same status as a policy.

24.20 The applicants transport modelling has, however, identified serious traffic capacity issues in the City centre that are, as yet, unresolved.

24.21 Galphay Lane represents a potential alternative route between the site and the B6265 (Studley Road/Skellbank). This may result in the rerouting of some of the development generated traffic. The revised traffic patterns could relieve pressure on the City centre junctions.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019)

24.22 The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and explains how these should be applied. Section 9 “Promoting Sustainable Transport” explains how transport issues should be considered in the planning system. Paragraphs 108-109 explain how development proposals should be considered.

24.23 Paragraph 108 states:

“In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be-or have been-taken up, given the type of development and its location;

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and

c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”

24.24 It is clear from our investigations as summarised in this report that although suitable access can be provided to the site from Clotherholme Road and Kirkby Road the applicant has not fully addressed sustainable transport issues. The Transport Assessment clearly demonstrates that the development proposals will have a significant impact on the local transport network in terms of capacity and congestion. These factors will, in turn, have an adverse impact on highway safety. Satisfactory mitigation schemes have not yet been formulated.

24.25 Clearly, therefore, the proposals as currently formulated conflict with Paragraph 108 of NPPF.

24.26 Paragraph 109 goes on to state:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

24.27 The modelling work presented in the Transport Assessment clearly demonstrates that the residual cumulative impacts of development generated traffic on the road network will be severe.

24.28 The proposals therefore conflict with Paragraph 109 of NPPF.

Comment

24.29 Our investigations therefore lead us to conclude that even though the Ripon barracks site is allocated for development in the Local Plan the proposals as currently formulated are unacceptable on highway and transport grounds. This being the case they do not comply with the Development Plan nor with the requirements of the NPPF which is a material consideration when determining planning applications.