

Technical Note – B&Q Objection

Introduction

- 1.1 Mayer Brown Ltd has prepared this Technical Note in response to the objection dated 1st March 2021 and prepared by IMA Transport Planning Transport on behalf of B&Q.
- 1.2 The objection relates to the proposals and Transport Assessment (TA) prepared by Mayer Brown that was submitted as part of Havant Borough Council planning application APP/20/01221, relating to the development of land west of B&Q, Purbrook Way, Havant to construct a Lidl foodstore.
- 1.3 Planning permission seeks permission to construct a 1,899sqm Lidl foodstore with vehicle access for customers, staff and deliveries provided via a new simple priority junction arrangement along the western edge of the site, from the private access road currently serving the adjacent B&Q store. Parking provision for 132 cars will be provided onsite, including designated disabled, parent & child and electric vehicle spaces.

B&Q Highways Objection

- 1.4 The B&Q highways objection summarises that concerns with the application relate to the potential impact on the operation of the B&Q store in terms of its access and also on the operation of the adjacent highway network.
- 1.5 B&Q has no objection to the principle of providing a discount foodstore in this location and considers that if the private access road is widened to c. 9.5m between the roundabout and the Lidl access to provide a right turn lane, then their access concerns would be addressed.
- 1.6 Salient issues raised within the objection have been considered and addressed accordingly in turn within this Technical Note.

Vehicular Access Arrangement

Vehicles turning right into the Lidl store will need to give way to traffic emerging from the B&Q, and when this happens, traffic will block back towards the roundabout.

- 1.7 Junction capacity modelling undertaken for the Lidl site access and outlined in Section 5 of the TA indicates that the proposed Lidl access arrangement will operate well within capacity during network peak periods, with no significant queuing predicted for right turning traffic.
- 1.8 Consequently, the proposed access arrangement is considered appropriate without adversely affecting northbound traffic flows along the private access road and hence, predicted to have no material adverse impact upon operation of the roundabout to the south.
- 1.9 Regarding expected queuing along the private access road from the Purbrook Way roundabout, junction capacity modelling outputs included within the TA indicates that queuing is expected to extend to a maximum of c. 6 vehicles during network peak periods, which extends just short of the proposed Lidl site access.
- 1.10 Nonetheless, as outlined at para 3.10 of the TA, KEEP CLEAR markings at the site access will be provided to ensure that if queuing along the private access arm from the Purbrook Way roundabout extends back to the Lidl access, adequate space will be maintained to enable vehicles to continue to turn right into the site and maintain free flowing movement northbound along the private access road towards the B&Q site.

At busier trading times (for example Easter), the demand for B&Q's car park has exceeded capacity with resultant queuing back from it to the roundabout. Should this happen, then the reverse of the above would happen, namely that traffic to the B&Q would block access to Lidl – and of course this would exacerbate the queuing further, or worse lead to cars headed for Lidl driving on the wrong side of the road to nip past the queue, with potential road safety consequences.

- 1.11 Initial post submission discussions with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Highways England, who have submitted a formal no objection response to the development proposals, have not resulted in any specific issues being raised in relation to queueing from the B&Q site extending back to Purbrook Way roundabout.
- 1.12 Consequently, it can only be assumed that this queuing back from the B&Q car park is associated with an abnormal / short lived event, and that the provision of a right turn lane would not necessarily address this if queuing extends to the roundabout.

Internal Arrangement

The access road into Lidl would only be 16m long (so just under 3 cars length or the length of an articulated vehicle) at which point there is not only a split in traffic movements, but also parking spaces. These parking spaces are likely to be prime spaces being close to the store entrance.

At such decision points experience shows drivers will stop/hesitate to make decisions on whether there is a space available/which way to go. So some backing back from this point is, on occasions, inevitable, particularly at busy times within the car park.

- 1.13 In relation to prime spaces onsite, the parking provision closest to the vehicular access are some of the furthest from the store entrance and are not considered prime spaces, as these are less convenient than parking spaces / aisles in the immediate vicinity of the store entrance.
- 1.14 The parking assessment outlined within Section 6 of the TA indicated a predicted peak parking demand of 97 spaces during weekdays and 95 spaces on a Saturday, equivalent to the car park operating at around 73% of capacity during peak periods with c. 30 spaces or more unoccupied. It is envisaged that the least convenient spaces and hence spaces least likely to be utilised are those in the vicinity of the site access and running along the western perimeter of the site.
- 1.15 In relation to delivery vehicles, in addition to the proposed Lidl store having low delivery numbers (2 - 3 HGV deliveries per day), swept path analysis appended to the TA illustrates that on both entry to and exit from the site that HGVs would travel away from prime spaces and busier customer traffic circulation routes close to store entrance, resulting in HGVs more easily clearing the site access and reduced potential conflict with customer traffic.
- 1.16 Additionally, it should be noted that Lidl typically avoid deliveries arriving at site during busier store periods to reduce potential vehicular conflict onsite and ensure appropriate levels of staff are available to assist with deliveries when they arrive. Consequently, when deliveries do occur, parking demand levels onsite are typically below that experienced during peak store periods.

Baseline Traffic Flows

In terms of the overall traffic assessment, we find it strange that, having been advised that pre-Covid traffic count data should be used, and having identified that 2016 data is available from the on-going College Road, Campdown planning application, the traffic assessment is based on 2020 flows factored using the College Road Campdown surveys. This seems a strange approach rather than simply using the College Road Campdown surveys appropriately growthed and appears to give different, more optimistic results relating to the assessment of the highway network than those provided for College Road Campdown.

- 1.17 Justification for the approach taken regarding baseline traffic data is outlined within paragraph 5.6 – 5.14 of the TA. In summary, following comparison of September 2020 survey data with growthed 2016 survey data utilised for the College Road Campdown development, uplift factors were applied to the September 2020 data to be comparable with growthed historic data.
- 1.18 This methodology was primarily taken in order that the baseline flows did not consist of a hybrid mix of survey sources, with certain junctions and days / peaks covered within the TA not included as part of the College Road Campdown development.
- 1.19 As noted within para 5.12 of the TA, in relation to vehicles accessing the B&Q site, the 2020 surveys indicated that vehicles movements to / from B&Q were 30% to 45% greater than the growthed 2016 data. Following the subsequent uplift factors being applied to the 2020 data this further increased to 50% to 60% greater than growthed 2016 data. Therefore, in relation to data utilised for the TA modelling of the Lidl access it is considered a highly robust assessment.
- 1.20 Following review of the TA, including the approach taken in relation to baseline traffic, Highways England raised no concerns with a formal no objection response submitted. Likewise, post submission discussions with HCC Highways have been undertaken where it was specifically confirmed that they considered the justification / methodology outlined within the TA regarding the baseline traffic data to be appropriate.

No cumulative assessment taking into account the College Road Campdown development appears to have been undertaken

- 1.21 As outlined within paragraph 5.17 - 5.19 of the TA, the College Road Campdown development was included as committed development within 2025 future year baseline traffic flows with predicted trips associated with this development extracted from the supporting TA dated November 2019 and prepared by Paul Basham Associates.

Summary

- 1.22 The above has been produced in response to the objections prepared by IMA Transport Planning Transport on behalf of B&Q regarding the provision of a Lidl foodstore off Purbrook Way, Havant.
- 1.23 Salient points dealt within this note are summarised below:
- **Vehicular Access Arrangement** – detailed junction capacity modelling and the proposed access arrangement design has been considered in relation to potential queuing / delay on the private access road, with the proposed access arrangement considered to be appropriate to negate adversely affecting northbound traffic flows along the private access road and hence predicted to have no material adverse impact upon operation of the roundabout to the south.
 - **Internal Arrangement** – it is considered that appropriate levels of parking are provided to serve the Lidl store to accommodate predicted demand and reduce customers potentially waiting to find a spare space onsite. Spaces in the vicinity of the site access are expected to be less frequented compared to prime customer spaces in the vicinity of the store entrance.
 - **Baseline Traffic Flows** – Justification and methodology in relation to baseline traffic flows and committed development outlined within the TA is considered appropriate, with both Hampshire County Council highways and Highways England raising no concerns with this.
- 1.24 In conclusion, it is considered that suitable justification is provided within the TA relating to the proposed access arrangement, internal site layout and highway impact assessment methodology to address the points raised by B&Q.
- 1.25 In relation to existing issues relating the operation of the B&Q site and resulting detrimental impact upon the local highway network, it is suggested that remedial measures should be considered to address existing B&Q parking demand / capacity issues through engagement with the local planning and highway authority as appropriate.

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