

# SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

## Planning Committee

Supplementary Planning Application List to be considered at the meeting to be held on Monday, 15 February 2021 at 7.00pm on Zoom (Zoom code on main agenda)

### **1. OBSERVATIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Submitted WE 12.02.21 response to Cheshire East by 10.03.21

21/0599C 122 Congleton Road, Sandbach, CW11 1DN

Two storey rear house extension.

21/0665C 17 The Avenue, Sandbach, CW11 3BT

Rear single storey extension.

21/0540C Waitrose, Brookhouse Road, Sandbach, CW11 4BE

Provision of new rooftop plant, alterations to car park layout, new fence and gate to service yard, new canopy to eCommerce delivery area and refurbishment works including new glazing to café and a new external café seating area.

### **2. CONSULTATIONS**

#### **2.1 Cheshire East Contaminated Land Strategy consultation**

Information on the consultations is attached and available online at: [https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment/environmental\\_health/contaminated\\_land/contaminated\\_land.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment/environmental_health/contaminated_land/contaminated_land.aspx). The deadline for comment is 5pm on 26th March 2021.

#### **2.2 National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code Consultation**

Information on the consultations is attached and available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-and-national-model-design-code-consultation-proposals>. The deadline for comment is 5pm on 12th March 2021.

### **3. CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **3.1 A Resident**

Email received on 8<sup>th</sup> February containing comments on Capricorn Phase 2a revised highway arrangements (17/4838C).

#### **3.2 A Resident**

Email received on 10<sup>th</sup> February containing comments on amended Capricorn application (17/4838C).

#### **3.3 Cycling UK**

Email received on 13<sup>th</sup> February contains comments on the roundabout of amended Capricorn application (17/4838C).

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2.1

Good Afternoon

Cheshire East are pleased to share with you their draft Contaminated Land Strategy 2021 for consultation.

Our current strategy was adopted in 2015 and in this latest review, the strategy has been streamlined to append a lot of the background information (although necessary, the flow of the document was compromised previously), and to reflect changes in the Council's approach to land contamination assessment.

Consultation is now open and anyone is welcome to contribute. Details of the consultation can be found on our [website](#):

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment/environmental\\_health/contaminated\\_land/contaminated\\_land.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment/environmental_health/contaminated_land/contaminated_land.aspx). Please email any comments to [landquality@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:landquality@cheshireeast.gov.uk) **by 5pm on the 26 March 2021**. We have also put together some frequently asked questions on the website that you may also find helpful.

If you require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Many thanks

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Dear ChALC Member Council

We have been asked to forward the below e-briefing for your consideration.

**12 FEBRUARY 2021**

## **PC2-21 | MODEL DESIGN CODE**

### **Summary**

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have recently launched a consultation seeking views on proposals to create a new Office for Place which would involve each local planning authority drawing up its own design code in consultation with local people that developers would have to adhere to. This would involve some changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There is currently an eight-week consultation on the proposals which will close in late March. The main consultation document can be downloaded [here](#):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-and-national-model-design-code-consultation-proposals> .

### **Context**

The consultation itself follows directly from the Planning White Paper suite of consultations last summer. NALC responded to the Planning White Paper: Planning For The Future, Changes To The Current Planning System and Land Data consultations last Autumn (you will need to log into the members' area of the NALC website [here](#) to access these three responses).

The rationale, proposals and specific questions for this consultation, as well as the draft text updates to the NPPF and the annexed draft National Model Design Code (which is referenced in the main consultation questions) can be downloaded from [here](#):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-and-national-model-design-code-consultation-proposals/national-planning-policy-framework-and-national-model-design-code-consultation-proposals>.

In this consultation, the government is acting to implement some of the main recommendations from the [Building Better, Building Beautiful Report](#):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-with-beauty-report-of-the-building-better-building-beautiful-commission> .

For the expressions of interest to test out a new code - it would be advisable for county associations to contact the local planning authorities (LPA) in their area, to ascertain whether they are considering making a bid for pilot status and, if so, to emphasise to the LPA that the bid will be considerably strengthened if there is local council backing and involvement throughout.

### **NALC's current policy positions**

The following paragraphs outline NALC's current policy positions, account of which will steer the response which we are likely to make to this consultation.

NALC agrees with the government that the planning system could be improved and should have more emphasis on building design, (we endorsed the recommendations in the report 'Living with beauty' published by the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission – as we said in our overarching statement in response to the Planning White Paper and Changes to the Current Planning System consultation last year.

The NALC Policy Committee on 6 October 2020 adopted a suite of planning positions including the following one directly relevant to this consultation: “NALC will support changes to the planning system which it perceives will strengthen the system and the voice of democracy and lead to better quality, appropriately sited developments. It will not support planning changes which it perceives will work in the opposite direction.”

#### **Other NALC Views:**

- We welcome the proposed change in the NPPF to the definition of 'sustainable development' and also the section covering the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paras. 7 and 11), the strengthened wording for turning down poor development (para. 133) and the integration of design codes (para. 109). The other aspect which can be supported are the proposals in respect of development in protected landscapes (para. 175).
- We are concerned about the restrictions that are proposed for the use of Article 4 Directions (para. 53).

In Chapter 12 we would advocate that the default for the expression of local character and design preferences should be through a neighbourhood plan (though we do not advocate that every community area should be required to go through the neighbourhood plan exercise). We are suggesting that if a neighbourhood plan has a policy on design or develops a design code - that this is the standard against which design will be measured in their area.

- Whilst NALC agrees that local-specific policies on beauty will be needed, the concept of Supplementary Planning Documents might provide a simpler solution, which could embrace individual village design statements and their urban equivalents. We think there is no reason why where Village Design Statements were adopted - they could not be updated and incorporated into the local design codes.

#### **Consultation Questions**

The main consultation questions NALC will be responding to in this consultation are as below and NALC seeks the views of county associations and member councils in response to these questions to help inform its own submission to MHCLG:

Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development

Q1. Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 2?

Chapter 3: Plan-making

Q2: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 3?

Chapter 4: Decision making

Q3: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 4? Which option relating to change of use to residential do you prefer and why?

Chapter 5: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Q4: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 5?

Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities

Q5: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 8?

Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport

Q6: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 9?

Chapter 11: Making effective use of land

Q7: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 11?

Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places

Q8: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 12?

Chapter 13: Protecting the Green Belt

Q9: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 13?

Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Q10: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 14?

Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Q11: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 15?

Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Q12: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 16?

Chapter 17: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Q13: Do you agree with the changes proposed in Chapter 17?

National Model Design Code

Q15: We would be grateful for your views on the National Model Design Code, in terms of:

- a) the content of the guidance
- b) the application and use of the guidance
- c) the approach to community engagement.

2.2

Public Sector Equality Duty

Q16. We would be grateful for your comments on any potential impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Your evidence

**Please email your responses to this consultation to [chris.borg@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:chris.borg@nalc.gov.uk) by 17.00 on Friday 12 March 2021.**



## Planning Application Number 17/4838c - Capricorn Phase 2a.

3.1

An update to this planning application has recently been posted on the Cheshire East Council planning portal.

The update contains, among other issues, significant revisions to the access arrangements at Junction 17 of the M6 motorway.

The proposed revisions to the arrangement at Junction 17 will have implications for users of this junction.

### **Junction 17 Revised Highway Arrangements.**

The proposed new arrangement will create a new roundabout situated at the A5022 Holmes Chapel Road junction. The right turn movement west bound from the A534 Congleton Road into the Holmes Chapel Road will be banned. Motorists wishing to make this movement will be required to travel westwards to the next roundabout and do a U turn.

An additional set of traffic signals will control the north bound Sandbach off slip exit.

The implications for users of this proposed arrangement will be further delays due to greater distances travelled and negotiating the second set of traffic signals both of which will add unnecessary cost to the users and likely to contribute to further air pollution in the current Air Quality Management Area at J17.

Approximately 30,000 vehicles use junction 17 every day. Roughly one third travel straight through on the A534 while two thirds access the M6 motorway either north or south bound.

Those travellers using the A534 straight through should have minimal extra delay except for that caused by the additional set of traffic lights. No significant distance travelled will be incurred.

For those motorists wishing to access the A5022 Holmes Chapel Road from the Arclid direction, a significant delay will be caused as they will now have to travel an additional length of at least 450 metres and negotiate two sets of traffic signals. The number of motorists wishing to make this right turn movement will be relatively small compared to the total number of motorists using J17.

The greatest volume of traffic using this junction and attempting to access the motorway network will have to travel an additional distance of approximately 220 metres each. This amounts to a total daily additional distance of 4,400 kilometres or 2750 miles or annually (300 days) at 825,000 miles.

The additional minimum cost of this is estimated to be £1250 per day or annually (300 days) to be £375,000 assuming current vehicle mileage rates and no cost is attributed to wages or delayed time.

Traffic statistics indicate that 4.5% of traffic will be HGV's including Buses and coaches. Presumably these vehicles will have commercial rates attached for wages. For simplicity, it is assumed that vehicle speeds negotiating the additional distances within the junction will be relatively low considering that traffic signals are included and are estimated between 10 and 20 mph.

4.5% of 825,000 miles equates to 37125 additional miles travelled annually by commercial traffic. At 15 mph and a minimum wage rate of £10 per hour, the additional commercial annual cost would be just under £25,000. To this can be added some commercial costs due to Taxis or other non HGV traffic commercial costs.

It would appear that an additional annual cost to users of Junction 17 would be in the order of at least £400,000 if the revised junction arrangements are adopted by Cheshire East Council. Whole life costs (thirty years) is estimated to be at least £12 million.

It would appear that the revised arrangement is required to provide an addition length for queueing traffic on the A534 western approach at peak times, particularly in the evening peak.

While the proposed revised junction arrangements may be an engineering solution to the traffic problems arising from the proposed development, it is not considered to be the most appropriate engineering solution.

An alternative would be to widen the existing over bridge to increase traffic capacity by a similar amount. The developer considers this to be a more expensive solution especially as it may require third party land to implement the bridge widening and associated second roundabout. However, the reduction in cost of not having to provide the length of dual carriageway on the A534 could be used as a contribution to the bridge widening.

It is of considerable concern that the travelling public, particularly the Sandbach travelling public, should be required to contribute annually to this development proposal and is considered to be an unnecessary burden on the travelling public.

In policy terms, it may be considered that the proposal is contrary to the NPPF in that it has a severe impact on traffic.

### **Air Quality.**

The proposed revised highway arrangements at Junction 17 will mean that all traffic attempting to access the M6 motorway at J17 will have to travel an additional distance and to negotiate the new roundabout at the A5022 Holmes Chapel Road junction. This will involve 20,000 vehicles daily. The implication for air quality will be additional pollution due to the additional distances travelled and also the additional 20,000 vehicles which will have to negotiate the new roundabout situated at the current Brickhouse Farm Air Quality Management Area.

In policy terms, it may be considered that the proposal is contrary to Local Plan and the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan environmental policies in that it increases air pollution through an Air Quality Management Area without mitigation.

### **Viability.**

The developer proposal indicates that a secondary access is required on the A534 Old Mill Road nearer to The Hill junction.

During the Sandbach public inquiry into the Local Plan in October 2016, the developer successfully argued that, due to the additional cost of £5 million pounds for a bridge over a stream, the development would not be viable unless additional housing units were included at the expense of commercial development.

The proposed secondary access on to The Old Mill Road will be downstream of the initial Local Plan proposal and at a greater depth. A significant embankment will be required to support the carriageway. The additional length of carriageway across the wild life corridor is also significant. The additional cost to the developer will be in excess of the £5 million required for the first bridge and may be as much as £10 million.

The additional cost of providing this secondary access may make the Phase 2a commercial development proposal unviable.

The viability of this proposal should be clarified before approval to avoid any subsequent amendment similar to that proposed at the Sandbach Local Plan Inquiry in 2016.

Highway policies restrict access on to the strategic Trunk Road network.

In policy terms, it is considered that the additional access is unnecessary and may make the development proposal unviable. It will also be contrary to Local Plan and the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan highway and environmental policies.

It is suggested that the additional unnecessary cost of the secondary access should be used to contribute to the widening of the over bridge at J17.

3.1

### **Summary.**

It is considered that the revised highway arrangements at Junction 17 of the M6 motorway will place a substantial unnecessary financial and traffic delay burden on the travelling public and will therefore be contrary to the NPPF in that it has a severe impact on the highway.

An alternative engineering solution obviating the need to burden the travelling public exists.

Air quality will be unnecessarily compromised due to the additional 20,000 vehicles per day having to travel through the existing Brickhouse Farm Air Quality Management Area.

The viability of the proposal may be compromised due to the unnecessary secondary access on to The Old Mill Road.

Highway policy restricts access on to the Trunk Road network.

The costs associated with the secondary access and the length of dual carriageway required under the revised J17 highway arrangement could be used to contribute to the cost of widening the M6 over bridge.

Sandbach Town Council may wish to consider the above points.

R Hamilton. BSc. CEng. MICE. MBA.

8th February 2021.

## **Planning Application Number 17/4838c - Capricorn Phase 2a.**

### **Cycling Supplementary.**

Further to my previous comments regarding the proposed updated highway arrangements recently posted on the CEC Planning Portal, I would make the following comment regarding cycling provision.

### **Cycling Provision.**

I have not attempted to analyse the provisions made for cycling or pedestrians in any detail in the updated highway arrangements but will leave these to others. However, I would offer one obvious concern. Cyclists approaching the Holmes Chapel Road junction from the Arclid direction and wishing to turn right into the A5022 will legally be required to follow the same route as vehicles - follow the A534 to the roundabout on the western side of the bridge and do a u turn before crossing the bridge again, having to travel through two sets of traffic signals.

It is more likely that cyclists will dismount and attempt to cross the A534 on foot and then proceed into the A5022.

Either way, this will be more dangerous movement to attempt as traffic volumes will be significantly increased and verges are limited in width.

Richard Hamilton. BSc. CEng. MICE. MBA.

9th February 2021.

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# 3.2

## Objection to Planning Application 17/4838C

I wish to object to this planning application in accordance with the revised information posted on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 on the Cheshire East planning portal, open for consultation until 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

I object on two primary counts:

1. The spine road access onto Old Mill Road
2. Insufficient and incorrect transport information to assess the impact of this application on the local road network.

### Spine Road Access onto Old Mill Road

This secondary access onto Old Mill Road cuts through the Sandbach Wildlife Corridor, in particular Filter Bed Wood, in contravention of the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan. This piece of environmental vandalism cannot be justified as essential, being merely for the convenience of the users of the industrial park.

Existing local business and retail parks, such as the Electra Way business park and the Grand Junction Retail Park in Crewe both exist and have operated for many years with a single access into the site. This does result in some increased queuing seeking to exit the site at peak times, but provides an appropriate balance between users of these sites and other users of the local road network.

In interim submissions to Highways England, the developer's transport consultant carried out sensitivity studies with a single access/egress onto the main roundabout immediately to the West of M6 Junction 17. These sensitivity studies showed a relatively small impact, with slightly longer queues at peak times of vehicles seeking to exit the site.

A large number of objections to this spine road have been made and registered with Cheshire East Council since the original application in 2018, including from consultees such as Sandbach Town Council. The developer should explain why these objections have been so unceremoniously ignored.

### Insufficient and Incorrect Transport Information

There are three primary traffic impacts that are of concern:

1. That the traffic network around M6 Junction 17 may not avoid sliproad queuing back onto the M6 mainline, because of the increased traffic from the Capricorn site arising under Phase 2A (the subject of this application)
2. That traffic could block back from the traffic lights at the bottom of the Hill (A533/A534 junction) as far as Junction 17 potentially leading to the same queuing problems.
3. That in solving problems 1. and 2. the residual impact on the A534 Old Mill Road/Middlewich Road corridor is severe in contravention of even this high bar set under the NPPF.

The revised transport assessment (over 500 pages of it) seeks to address points 1 and 2 (whether or not to the satisfaction of Highways England no doubt will become clear in time) but essentially 'waves its hands' with respect to point 3.

The revised traffic arrangement for the access roundabout includes a set of traffic lights to enable traffic exiting the M6 northbound at Junction 17 to exit without the potential to queue back onto the main line. There appears to be no assessment of how these traffic lights would operate in conjunction with the similar set of traffic lights retained on the southbound sliproad junction, nor what deleterious impact they would have on the congestion along the A534 Old Mill Road corridor.

Although the 500 pages of transport assessment make reference to VISSIM microsimulation modelling, no information arising from this modelling is provided. We understood that the VISSIM model referred to, which I understand is the one developed by Mouchel on behalf of Highways England in 2016, was no longer available for use. This is the model used to assess the impact (in May 2017) of the revised roundabout design for Capricorn Phase 1 in support of approved application 16/5850C. This showed at peak times queues back from this roundabout along the A534 of over 1 kilometre, almost back to The Hill traffic lights. This obviously did not include the impact of the increased traffic arising from Phase 2A. Therefore, all we can see is that the queues at peak times are anticipated to be greater, but by how much is unknown. This is before we take into consideration the impact of introducing traffic lights on this roundabout which is likely to lead to even longer queues but by how much is again unknown.

In summary, the developer has provided insufficient information to justify that the impact on the Old Mill Road corridor is not severe.

A significant part of the revised assessment has included a proposed redesign of the setup at The Hill traffic lights, over and above that developed by Jacobs for Cheshire East Council. We assume the rationale was to avoid the potential for queue block back from these traffic lights towards M6 Junction 17 at peak times.

The developer's transport consultant continues to maintain that traffic approaching along Old Mill Road westbound from M6 Junction 17 will use both approach lanes significantly. This contradicts the feedback provided by Highways England.

The developer's consultant is wrong.

In the first place, the majority of westbound traffic is either seeking to turn left up the A533 or to follow the A534 onto the Wheelock bypass at the roundabout immediately following. All this traffic will favour using the left hand lane, to avoid having to 'butt in' from the right hand lane immediately following the traffic lights.

Secondly, traffic tends to avoid the right hand lane to avoid getting stuck behind a vehicle waiting to turn right up Sandbach High Street. Initially, vehicles tend to queue back along the left hand lane if they are near enough to the lights to get through when next on green. It only tends to be once this length of queue is exceeded that a relatively small number 'take the chance' on the right hand lane. The ability to do this 'from further back' is limited because of the limited length of the two lane setup, so that vehicles seeking to do this are in danger of meeting oncoming traffic.

So, the queuing back from this junction will be significantly greater than presented. If it reaches back to the spine road access (subject of a parallel objection) then it is likely to be even greater as traffic exiting the development will preferentially join the queue. This effect has been observed at the

Congleton Road junction with the A534 and was included explicitly in Mouchel 2016 revised VISSIM model.

So, for these two reasons, the applicant has not justified that queues will not reach back to M6 Junction 17.

### Other Concerns

1. The redesign of the traffic light scheme at the bottom of The Hill reduces the provision of periods for transition by pedestrians and other non-vehicle users, such as cyclists. It is essential that sufficient time is provided for pedestrians to cross safely, including those with disabilities, including reduced mobility and eyesight and hearing issues. If this includes the use of refuges partway across the highway, then these must be of sufficient size to accommodate buggies, walking aids, bicycles etc. for the number of users during each traffic light cycle. This should be future-proofed to allow for significantly increased non-vehicle movements to and from Sandbach Town centre.
2. The redesign of the traffic light scheme at the bottom of The Hill needs to include measures identified in the draft local transportation plan for Sandbach, currently going through public consultation. This specifically includes enabling cyclists to get between the joint walking/cycleway along Old Mill Road and the bottom of Sandbach High street in both directions. The cyclist exit from Sandbach High Street, including turning right towards the Waitrose roundabout must be retained.
3. Previous studies eg in support of the Local Plan have included an enhancement of the Waitrose roundabout. This is included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Sandbach. It is anticipated that this would be realised by a S278 agreement with the developer of the Old Mill Quarter, with an access onto this roundabout. This is looking increasingly uncertain, given the number of development applications for this site that have been rejected, with the latest only partly overturned on appeal. Cheshire East need to determine how this enhancement will be delivered if this development does not come forward. Otherwise, there is a risk that the current roundabout will be the limiting factor in the Old Mill Road corridor, whatever enhancements are made to the traffic light scheme at the bottom of The Hill.

### Summary of Objections

1. The spine road access onto Old Mill Road contravenes the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan as it destroys part of the Sandbach wildlife corridor without being necessary to the development.
2. Insufficient and incorrect transport information has been provided to show that the impact on the Old Mill road corridor will not be severe. As recommended by Highways England, an appropriate microsimulation model such as VISSIM should be developed, validated and applied to the proposals put forward in this application.
3. Any redesign of the traffic light scheme at the bottom of The Hill must adequately cater for non-vehicle users, allowing for increased non-vehicle use in the future.

4. Enhancement of the Waitrose roundabout is not a given. Any traffic impact assessment should be based on the current roundabout, at least as a sensitivity.

3.2

D P D Whitworth

10<sup>th</sup> February 2021



# 3.3

Dear Planning,

Please see my comments regarding this scheme, numbered by priority:

1. Crossing of the A534 for cyclists to reach and join Holmes Chapel Road (A5022)
2. Crossing the southbound on-slip road of J17
3. Crossing the northbound off-slip road of J17
4. A shared footway for pedestrians and cyclists
5. General comments on the walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment and review (WCHAR)

## Detailed comments

### 1. Crossing of the A534 for cyclists to reach and join Holmes Chapel Road (A5022)

The walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment report (WCHAR) says '... it is recommended the crossing facilities be included across A534 Congleton Road to gain access to A5022 Holmes Chapel Road' (12.3), from the Arclid direction.

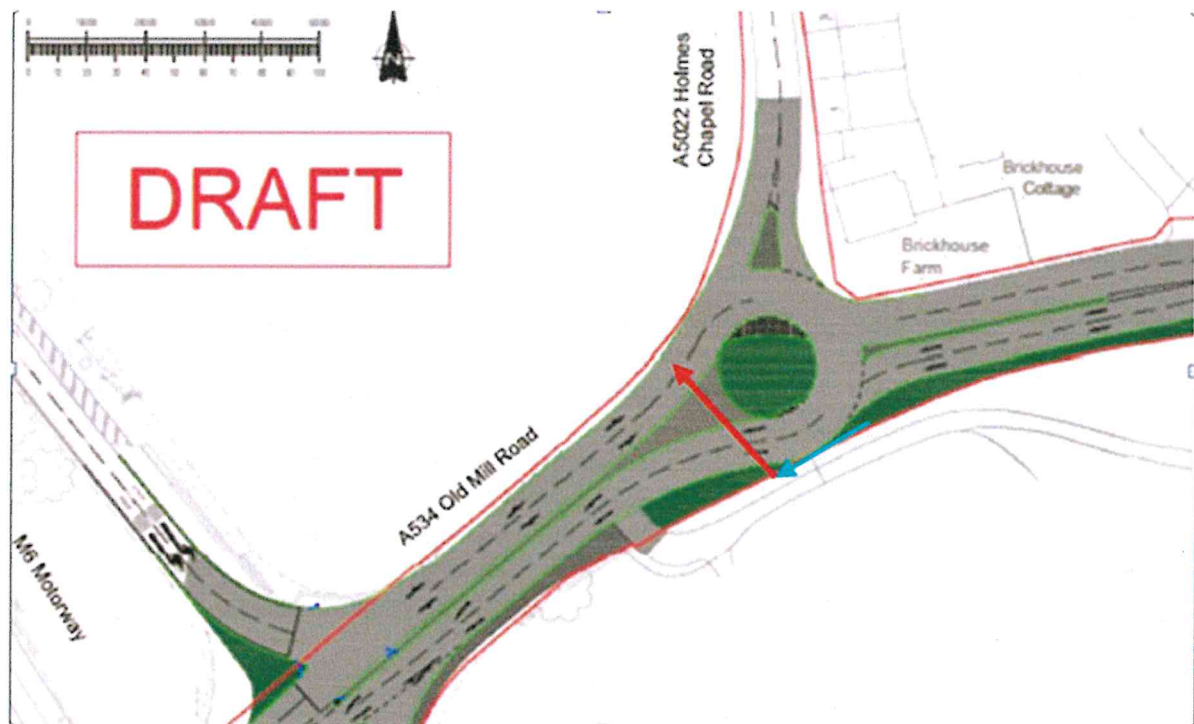
I support this though I doubt there is sufficient space to 'land' on the north side of the A534. The photo shows a grass verge, on the north side, which might be public land. However, the width of 1.5m of the central island has been identified as Problem 6.1 in the Road Safety Audit, Stage 1. The designer's response states that 'there is approximately 1.0m additional public land available to make adjustments to the island width'. I assume this refers to the grass verge which would then no longer be available for cycling.



This problem is also mentioned in relation to pedestrians and the WCHAR states '... there are no pedestrian facilities for those wishing to access the A5022 Holmes Chapel Road' (11.1).

Even if cyclists were able to 'land' on the north side and there were a shared footway for pedestrians and cyclists, there would not be a good way to join the A534 or A5022 Holmes Chapel Road again by bicycle. The grass verge gets narrower and Holmes Chapel Road has a long left hand bend.

Alternatively a crossing could be created closer to the roundabout, indicated in red below, though there does not seem to be space left for cyclists to leave the carriageway, indicated in blue, to then get to that crossing point.



This very serious problem has been addressed neither in the WCHAR nor the Road Safety Audit. I suggest rejecting both reports and accepting them only when this problem has been addressed.

## **2. Crossing the southbound on-slip road of J17**

I support the finding of the WCHAR that *'the Assessment Team are concerned with the safety of pedestrians travelling westwards and having to cross the M6 southbound on-slip carriageway as they have to look behind them in order to assess the volume and speed of the traffic travelling westwards wishing to take the M6 on-slip'*. (11.1)

I support *'It is recommended that adequate crossing facilities are included for both pedestrians and cyclists when crossing from east to west where the A534 joins the M6 southbound on-slip carriageway'*. (12.2). Furthermore, I recommend upgrading to a signalised crossing.

## **3. Crossing the northbound off-slip road of J17**

Similar to no2 I suggest adding a signalised crossing for pedestrians, and potentially cyclists, here too. *'Partial signalisation has been introduced at the roundabout on the northbound side of the junction, with the A534 overbridge and opposing circulatory approaches being signalised'* (1.27).

Perhaps pedestrian/cyclist phases can be built into this arrangement.

## **4. A shared footway for pedestrians and cyclists**

The WCHAR wonders if a footway/cycleway will be included in the design (12.1). I assume the report suggests this on the south side of the study area between the proposed roundabout and the southbound on-slip, perhaps further allowing cycling on the footway across the overbridge before joining the footway around the southern side of the access roundabout to Capricorn. This is a very busy environment and cyclists using the road face conflict with cars and lorries wishing to turn left

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on to the M6. However, installing a shared footway undermines the cyclist's acceptance on the road. Cycling on a shared footway is cumbersome and the sections described above are very short and not designed for cycling. This whole scheme is very unfortunate for cycling and I regard signalling the above mentioned crossings as a basic requirement to improve the route via a shared footway .

#### **5. General comments on the walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment and review (WCHAR)**

The report only remotely addresses its requirements:

The Government's General Principles and Scheme Governance for a WCHAR states:

*'The purpose of this document is to facilitate the inclusion of all walking, cycling and horse-riding modes in the highway scheme development process from the earliest stage, enabling opportunities for new or improved facilities and their integration with the local and national network(s). This could include the creation and/or improvement of facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians that are separate from the highway.'* (p5)

Conclusion 12.1 of the report for Capricorn mentions some practical solution in the form of a shared footway but apart from that the report is unimaginative in '... *facilitating the inclusion of cycling ...*' or the '... *improvement of facilities for cyclists ...*'.

The report explains the needs of motorists over 3 pages and confidently comes to the conclusion that '*it has been demonstrated that the revised scheme offers the required safety benefits ...*' (for cars and lorries). I am disappointed that a report that should be dedicated to non-motorised users then only so casually examines the problems arising from the scheme.

*'The assessment report shall contain an analysis of walking, cycling and horse-riding policies and strategies relevant to the WCHAR study area.'* (4.8). This is not present. Consider [Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#), Local Transport Note 1/20 and Cheshire East's Cycling Strategy and how the proposal compares against those documents.

*'Liaison with key stakeholders should include representatives for walking, cycling and horse-riding ...'* and '*Key stakeholders other than local authorities can include walking, cycling and horse-riding organisations...*' (4.14.1).

This did not happen.

The WCHAR is superficial and uncritical in describing existing connections for cycling, for example: '*Non-motorised users will be able to gain access to the site principally from the recently delivered footway/cycleway connection along Old Mill Road that connects the primary access junction at M6 Junction 17 and The Hill/High Street signalised junction.'*

The cycleway part of the footway/cycleway does not connect to that junction but stops short of it with no integration into the highway or elsewhere.

*'This new connection, delivered as part of the Capricorn Phase 1 proposals, provides an unbroken link for Non-Motorised Users ...'*

This is not correct, it will be interrupted by the new access road.

I have criticised the facility via an email exchange 'Review of footway/cycleway on Old Mill Road in Sandbach' in January 2017. I received a response from the local authority, although it was unsatisfying.

Overall the shared footway is not fit for purpose when compared against the three documents above, especially LTN1/20.

I would be grateful if the suggestions made above were considered. Furthermore, as also mentioned above, I suggest rejecting the WCHAR and request a more meaningful document.

Regards  
Matthias Bunte

Cycling UK

3.3