

### **Relevant Qualifications**

I am Robert Holland, an Associate Director at Tetra Tech with responsibility for a team of 5 transport professionals. I have over 20 years' experience in the field of Transport Planning. My qualifications and professional memberships are summarised as follows:

- BA(Hons) Degree in Geography
- Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (MCIHT)

My career to date has mainly involved providing consulting advice in connection with development-related transport and highway matters for housing and commercial developments and advising local planning and highway authorities. Through my work advising on the Cossington Road development proposal, I am familiar with local transport conditions near the site which is the subject of this case.

### **Documentation**

Tetra Tech has been involved with the proposed development on land adjacent to Cossington Road since November 2020. We prepared the Transport Assessment and Residential Travel Plan reports submitted with the planning application and a separate Transport Note which was submitted during the planning application determination period. Independent of the design team, Tetra Tech also carried out a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of the proposed site access junction.

The planning application was refused by Planning Committee on 17 September 2021. There were no transport/highways reasons for refusal.

I have reviewed the transport planning documentation submitted with the outline planning application and stand by the findings of the reports.

I would however like to draw specific attention to a traffic count used in the Transport Assessment. The count at the High Street / Brook Street / Cossington Road junction was undertaken in April 2016. Traffic data used in Transport Assessments should normally be no more than three years old. A more recent traffic count was not undertaken at this location because at the time the report was prepared, Covid-19 restrictions were in place and traffic patterns were not representative of typical conditions.

A new traffic count was not requested by Leicestershire County Council (LCC) in their capacity as the local highway authority. Nevertheless, a new traffic count was undertaken in November 2021 at this junction. Traffic flows recorded in 2021 were higher than those recorded in the 2016 traffic count and have been increased further using adjustment factors provided by LCC to account for the impacts of Covid-19 on traffic patterns. When the November 2021 traffic count is used to assess development traffic impacts at the High Street / Brook Street / Cossington Road junction, impacts are comparable to those reported in the Transport Assessment. Therefore, I stand by the findings of the Transport Assessment in relation to the High Street / Brook Street / Cossington Road junction.

### **Highways Consultation**

LCC provided a formal highways consultation response dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021. The response indicated that the application as submitted did not fully assess the highway impact of the proposed development and further information was requested. An additional Transport Note was submitted in July 2021 that fully addressed LCC's comments. LCC submitted a second formal highways consultation response dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 which confirmed that:

*"the impacts of the development on highway safety would not be unacceptable, and when considered cumulatively with other developments, the impacts on the road network would not be severe."*

LCC's response went on to confirm that:

*"based on the information provided, the development therefore does not conflict with paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), subject to the conditions and/or planning obligations outlined in this report."*

### **Third Party Representations**

I have read the transport and highways third party representations. The main themes of concern are:

- 1 Traffic increases due to the proposed development and impacts on Sileby which is already busy.
- 2 Vehicle speeds on Cossington Road.
- 3 General road safety concerns for all road users.
- 4 The accessibility of the site by sustainable modes and the concern that future residents will drive to use facilities in Sileby, such as the primary school and shops. Related to this, the lack of available parking in Sileby village.
- 5 The suitability of the proposed site access arrangement.
- 6 The effect of road closures due to flooding.

In response to the transport and highways third party representations, I comment as follows:

1. The study area for assessing development traffic impacts is set out in Section 1.3 of the Transport Assessment. The study area was agreed with LCC prior to the report being produced and is based on the scale and type of development proposed. Trip generation and trip distribution is presented in Chapter 6 of the Transport Assessment. Development trips have been added to background traffic flows and an assessment of junction capacity has been carried out where impacts are greatest.

Junction traffic capacity assessments are presented in Chapter 8 of the Transport Assessment and the July 2021 Transport Note. Forecast development traffic impacts at off-site junctions are not severe and as such, no highway capacity mitigation is proposed.

2. A vehicle speed survey was undertaken outside the site frontage on Cossington Road. The results of the survey are presented in the July 2021 Transport Note. 85th percentile speeds of 34.7mph northbound and 36.5mph southbound were recorded. Speeds are therefore above the 30mph speed limit which is in place on this section of road. The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit recommended that speed reducing measures be introduced on Cossington Road and LCC's 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 consultation response indicated that this could be explored further at the detailed design stage.
3. To assess road safety, an analysis of historic collision data is presented in Section 3.9 of the Transport Assessment. The analysis study area extends from the Syston Road/Main Street junction in the south to the centre of Sileby in the north. It is concluded that there are no existing road safety issues which are likely to be exacerbated by the proposed development. The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit undertaken for the proposed site access junction recommended the introduction of speed reducing measures on Cossington Road. No other road safety problems were identified. As part of the proposed site access works, the existing footway outside the site frontage will be widened to 2m as shown on drawing B024412-35-18-003-A in Appendix F of the Transport Assessment. This will help to improve pedestrian safety.
4. As indicated in Section 3.2 of the Transport Assessment, the site is near several local amenities, including the local primary school. As indicated in Section 3.5 of the Transport Assessment, bus stops are located a short distance to the north of the site on Cossington Road which are served by an hourly bus service between Loughborough and Leicester. Future residents will therefore have a choice of sustainable travel alternatives and will not be reliant on the car for serving their day to day local needs.
5. Section 4.2 of the Transport Assessment confirms that the proposed site access arrangement complies with relevant design standards. The traffic capacity assessment in Chapter 8 of the Transport Assessment confirms that the proposed site access arrangement will operate well within capacity at the future assessment year. The need for a 'Ghost Island' right turn lane was considered as part of the July 2021 Transport Note and not considered appropriate. LCC agreed with this position in their 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 consultation response.
6. A Transport Assessment assesses the impact of a proposed development against typical transport conditions. The impacts of infrequent extreme events such as road closures due to flooding would not ordinarily be assessed as part of a Transport Assessment submitted with a planning application.