



WARMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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OBJECTION to Planning Ref: 22/00441/FUL. Land North Of Peterborough Road Haddon

Warmington Parish Council (WPC), as the elected representative of the local community, objects to the above planning application (A1 West) that seeks to develop a storage and distribution facility on agricultural land west of the A1 near Junction 17 of the A1M. The objection is based on the following material planning considerations:

- Government policy
- Traffic
- Highway safety

Although Warmington, located on the A605, is outside the boundary of Huntingdonshire District Council the close proximity of the proposed development will have a detrimental impact on our village and community, making its objection very relevant.

1) Government Policy

a) The application site predominantly comprises 103.71 ha of agricultural land to the immediate northwest of A1M Junction 17, adjacent to the A1M and, as the applicant acknowledges, is not designated as development land within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (2019).

- The land is clearly defined as agricultural within the Local Plan, with land for industrial use allocated elsewhere.

b) The soil and agricultural quality survey (Appendix 2.4) concludes that the land falls within grade 3b and is not therefore classed as 'best and most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land. On this basis, the applicant suggests that planning policy aims only to protect BMV agricultural land from significant, inappropriate or unsustainable development proposals.

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that development on grade 3b land should only be allowed where it is 'demonstrated to be necessary', and as an alternative to developing on BMV land. It has already been shown that the site is clearly defined as agricultural within the Local Plan, and as such development on this land was not demonstrated to be necessary by the local authority. The Applicant has not suggested that the proposed site was a second choice alternative to land found to be of higher grade of agricultural land.

c) The application states that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on agricultural land provision.

- It is the responsibility of Local Planning Authorities to consider such applications against their impact on the national as well as County requirement for food production. Aside from the detrimental impact on the countryside, the environment and rural life, the loss of arable land at a time when climate change, food security and geopolitical concerns are shaping future national

policies is of great concern.

- Unless such speculative development is considered within a wider context, the Nation's agricultural land will be lost to vast swathes of warehouses simply because it is close to the strategic road network and with little consideration to the cumulative impact of such loss. Newlands Developments have also submitted plans to North Northamptonshire Council (reference NE/22/00151/FUL) for a logistics and distribution warehousing on a further 71 hectares of designated agricultural land at Thrapston, the other end of the A605, showing both a lack of regard for land designation within Local Plans and the importance of agricultural land provision.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a document that guides the production of Local Plans and provides a framework for making planning decisions. To deviate from the democratically agreed Local Plan would create a strong precedent and mean that no area of the countryside that is adjacent to a primary road is safe from similar, speculative developments.

2) Traffic

The traffic analysis is based on a tabletop exercise, without any live traffic counts, using data which is 10 years old (The Peterborough 018 (E02003254) Middle Super Output Area (MSOA)) and so omits current and key data. It should be considered whether this is appropriate for such a large scheme.

One of the key points in the design evolution of the proposed development (Chapter 4; 4.30), is that 'the site is superbly connected to the strategic road network being immediately adjacent to Junction 17 of the A1(M)'.

a) It is acknowledged that the Applicant has consulted with the Joint Highway Authorities - Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and National Highways in the production of the Transport Assessment (Appendix 11.1 TA, Part1).

No traffic count surveys were conducted within the study area as part of the analysis (para 2.6.1: Appendix 11.1 TA, Part1) but instead utilised information provided by Peterborough City Council relating to 2019 turning count data for the local junctions on the A1(M), the A1 and along Fletton Parkway to inform their Transport Assessment (para 2.6.2).

- Analysis and mitigation for the development has been confined to the immediate road network adjacent to the proposed development, although the negative impact on the local road network and communities was raised by WPC during the public consultation held in Elton.

b) 'The proposed development is to be accessed directly from the A605 which runs along its southern boundary' (Chapter 3: 3.39).

- The A605 runs in a south-west direction towards Northampton and forms a link between the A1(M) Junction 17 at Peterborough and the A45 / A14 Junction 13 at Thrapston.
- The A14 is part of the Strategic Road Network that connects the Midland region and the national motorway network (via the M1 and M6) with the A1 at Huntingdon. The A1 and the A1(M) form part of the north-south strategic highway network between London and the north.
- The A605 is 'a single-carriageway road connecting the A14 and A45 with the A1 to the west of Peterborough (Northamptonshire Major Roads Strategy (NCC, 2013)).
- The Major Road Strategy states, and the applicant - in their separate application for

development at Thrapston – acknowledge, that the A605 ‘is also used as a short-cut by some trunk road traffic in preference to the higher-quality, but less direct A14 and A1(M)’. Given that this short-cut reduces the journey by approximately 30 miles, the rising cost of fuel and the pressure on time, it is unsurprising that the A605 has become increasingly busy. It negates any possible assumption that traffic to / from the proposed development and travelling from or returning to the A14 / M1 / M6 would use the longer strategic route via the A1/A14 rather than the A605 from which the A1 West development would be accessed.

- As a ‘primary’ route, rather than part of the Strategic Road Network, the majority of the A605 between Peterborough and Thrapston is managed and maintained by Northamptonshire Highways / North Northamptonshire Council (NNC); making it somewhat concerning that the Applicant has not actively sought input from Northamptonshire Highways, nor included relevant data within their analysis.

The A1 West application is relevant to all villages located along the A605, due to the detrimental impact of an increase in the volume of traffic using this link road, which will exacerbate the problems already faced by the rural communities that it connects. Northamptonshire Major Roads Strategy provides figures for annual average daily traffic flow at two villages along the A605, which will not have taken into consideration warehouse developments on un-designated land accessed from the A605.

- In 2012 this was 16,638 (18% HGV) at Barnwell and 18,356 (16% HGV) vehicles at Warmington.
- By 2026 traffic flow is forecast to be 22,000 (at Barnwell) and 28,000 at Warmington.

c) During construction, the Applicant anticipates that there will be up to 913 total vehicle movements daily, including 230 HGVs, which will access the site from the A605 roundabout (ES Chapter 6 - 6.16). Although no Construction Management or contractor have been appointed and the sources for materials and routes into the Site cannot be defined at this stage (Appendix 11.1 TA, Part1; 5.2.6), the routes used for heavy vehicle construction movements has been assumed. Only 10% of the light and heavy construction vehicle flows are assumed to be south-east along the A605 (Paragraph 5.2.8 – although it is believed that the applicant intended to state south-west)

Given that the A605 has been shown to be such an important link road, this assumption is considered to be a highly questionable.

d) Trip rates once operational are also estimated. Table 5.2 of Appendix 11.1 TA (Part1) indicates 4922 total vehicle movements daily including 1625 HGVs. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 estimate 7% of Car / LVG movements assigned to the A605 west (230 vehicles) and between 5.2% and 8.5% of HGVs (85 – 138 HGVs).

- This assumption is again considered to be a highly questionable, both in terms of the percentage of traffic movements using the A605 west and particularly in relation to the percentage of HGV. As highlighted previously data from Northamptonshire Major Roads Strategy would indicate HGVs account for 16-18% of totals.

e) The proposed development would be operational 24 hours per day seven days a week (Chapter 5; 5.38). Furthermore, during the first year of operation, it is noted that construction will

still be on-going (Chapter 6; 6.8).

- The impact on local communities and the local road network, in the form of increased traffic flow, noise and pollution, would not just be experienced at peak times. During the construction phase, most car and heavy vehicle movements would occur outside peak hours (Chapter 6 - 6.18). Once operational, vehicles (especially HGVs) will be travelling to and from the site 24/7.

f) Although the Scoping Report recognises that ‘The Proposed Development has the potential to increase traffic flows significantly at junctions and highways on the local road network’ (Appendix 2.1, 10.10), the Transport Assessment concludes that the increase in traffic can be accommodated through mitigation.

- Mitigation for the proposed development is restricted to the immediate area; at and between the access roundabout on the A605 and Junction 17 roundabout on the A1(M). No mitigation measures have been proposed for the impact of increased traffic flow along the length of the A605 corridor.
- No consideration is given to traffic flow on the A605, which is recognised as a busy link between two important strategic routes (A14 and A1)
- The application fails to recognise the cumulative impact of this proposed development, together with the speculative development at Thrapston. Proposed development by Newlands at Peterborough and Thrapston is, based on figures provided by the developer, estimated to create 850 vehicles daily on the A605. Again, this figure is considered to be a low estimate by WPC.

Given that the parallel planning applications by the same applicant (22/00441/FUL and NE/22/00151/FUL) serve to favour the applicants traffic predictions for both schemes we consider it essential that the cross-border effect of BOTH of these applications are considered simultaneously by National Highways and that suitable mitigation is considered for the length of the A605, which whilst not managed by National Highways provides an accepted and acknowledged link road between the A1 and the A14.

3) Highway Safety

a) The Applicant obtained data for the road network in the vicinity of the site from Cambridgeshire County Council, showing a total of 74 recorded collisions in the five-year period (1 January 2016 and 30 June 2021), of which four were fatal, eight were serious collisions and 62 were slight collisions (Appendix 11.1 TA, Part1; 2.7.4).

- Given that the proposed development will increase traffic flow along the length of the A605, it is felt to be inadequate to look at data only for the short section of the road that falls within Cambridgeshire County Council.
- The A605 between Thrapston and Oundle is a designated Red Route based on information collated by Northamptonshire Highways and Safer Roads Alliance. Data from Crashmap, relating to reported collisions on the A605 between Thrapston and Elton (2016 – 2021) shows a further 39 injury collisions resulting in 61 casualties. If this information is combined with that provided by the Applicant for the A605 between Elton and the proposed site, a more representative road safety analysis data for the A605 is 113 injury collisions of which 6 were fatal and 18 serious.
- The A605 is a single carriageway road with various speed limits of 40, 50 and 60 mph along its route. It is recognised as a dangerous road and an increase in traffic flow as a result of undesignated development elevates concerns over safety, especially at junctions.

b) As a result of concerns raised during public consultation, the Applicant reviewed personal injury collision data at the A605 / B671 (Elton) junction where the severity (fatal) was found to be higher than expected. Mitigation for the recognised impact of the proposed development is offered in the form of a contribution towards improved road signage and road markings.

- This is a wholly inadequate gesture: the only way that this junction can accommodate an increase in traffic is to have traffic controls that allow vehicles to cross the carriageway safely by providing a forced break in on-coming traffic. A roundabout, as at the Warmington junction, is increasingly ineffective as accessing the roundabout is dependent on a break in the traffic flow continuing along the A605. A traffic light system is therefore considered to be the only acceptable form of mitigation.

Impact

For villages located along the length of the A605, of which Warmington is one, the emissions and noise resulting from the volume of traffic is already evident and has a detrimental impact on both the environment and human health. The current volume of traffic on the A605 means that even minor disruption results in stationary traffic; major incidents on the A14 and A1(M) results in severe congestion.

During 'normal' conditions, the volume of traffic makes it problematic to exit Warmington when this involves crossing the steady flow of on-coming traffic throughout the day. Increasingly, residents are exiting the village via the roundabout rather than the Peterborough Road T-junction due to the difficulties and safety issues associated with crossing the A605 – although this is also becoming similarly challenging as one waits for a break in the flow of on-coming traffic. This has an impact on traffic flows within the village and also within and between neighbouring villages, as the ability to join and safely cross the A605 increasingly influences the routes taken.

Oundle and Peterborough provide important services for the rural community of Warmington. Since the bus service ceased to enter the village in 2018, the only option for local residents wishing to utilise public transport is to use the bus stops located on the A605. On a return journey this involves pedestrians crossing the A605, which can be problematic due to the constant flow of traffic – not to mention dangerous, especially for the elderly and those with mobility issues.

While it is recognised that the A1 West application has to be assessed on an individual basis, it is important to consider the impact of increased traffic flow on all local roads, not just on those that form part of the Strategic Road Network. The cumulative impact of warehouse development at either end of an important link road should be viewed as a whole, rather than being confined to County boundaries.

It is a fact that the A605 has become an increasingly busy link road, with HGVs movements growing considerably over recent years. Warmington Parish Council object to this planning application not because of the current situation relating to the A605, but because the A605 cannot support a further increase in the number of vehicles that will be generated by the proposed undesignated development.

The NPPF (July 2021), Section 9, paragraph 111 notes that developments that would result in

'severe' impacts on the local road network, alone or cumulatively, should be prevented or refused permission on transport ground.

In conclusion, Warmington Parish Council objects to the above planning application as the proposed site is not allocated for strategic warehousing development of the type proposed in the approved Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (2019). In addition, the Applicant has failed to seek or analyse data relating to the cumulative impact of development on the A605 and has therefore provided no mitigation proposals. An increase in traffic flow will have a detrimental impact on the communities of Warmington and surrounding villages, and the local road network. This should provide a basis for refusal of permission on transport grounds as per the National Planning Policy Framework.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Rodger
Clerk
On behalf of Warmington Parish Council