

Dear Mr Williamson,

Re: Planning Application Number 15/2274M Land off School Lane Marton

The Parish Council wish to comment on items that have been logged on the Planning Website since our last communication dated 6th August 2015.

Marton Parish Council has employed a number of professional opinions in order to produce informed objections to the proposed development for 27 houses at School Lane, Marton.

The proposed site will have two points of access and the original Technical Highway Note provided by Progress10 Design in June, 2015 held significant criticism of the application details with regard to the impact of junction construction on existing mature trees and hedge lines and the lack of a defined access strategy despite the outline application specifically noting 'access' as a detailed matter for immediate resolution through planning application 15/2274M.

Whilst the applicant's highway consultant has made some changes to the locations of the points of access, there is no clear resolution to the Parish Council's concerns about the adverse impact on trees and hedge lines despite the applicant claiming that the impact is reduced.

There is also the added problem of the impact on a listed building and the Council fully share the concern of the Design and Conservation Officer regarding the impact the new proposed access road will have on the listed building "Greenacre". The revised access is only 10.5m from the property's garage (which also has listed building status) and will result in harm to the heritage asset.

This is not acceptable as the current position remains one of significant impact on trees/hedges and a listed building, and there is no clear resolution of the highway access strategy as a detailed matter.

The Strategic Highways Manager for Cheshire East Council has made two responses to this application. The original one gave an overview of the application detail and concluded that the junction designs were acceptable and that the traffic generation could be accommodated within the existing highway infrastructure.

The Technical Note provided by Progress10 made a detailed examination of the transport aspects of this site and the submitted Transport Statement and concluded that there was shortfall in information and that some of the Transport Statement detail was flawed. These concerns were related to:

- Detailed design for access strategy given it is submitted as a 'detailed matter' under the planning process.
- The inability to provide the original footway proposals due to either: lack of control over required land or the severe impact on existing trees and no provision of a safe design for a footway emerging directly onto the A34 itself
- The claimed sustainability of the site and the inaccurate information submitted together with the unrealistic cycle links to Congleton which are not practical.
- The impact of highway construction on existing trees and hedges.

The Parish Council wish to express real concern that the latest position with this planning application, despite revised highway design work and updated detailed comments from the CEC Strategic Highways Manager, does not effectively resolve the issues in the bullets above and which are dealt with in detail within the earlier Parish Council objections and the Technical Note provided by Progress10 Design in June.

There is also a question over the quality of the data collected from Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC). The statement that the ATC was located 80m to the northeast is incorrect as it was chained to tree T6, which is 110m from the A34. Also the SHM has pointed out that the ATC's were not positioned 40m either side of the proposed access, which is standard practice.

The PC does recognise that the CEC SHM has required a S278 Agreement under the Highways Act 1980 for any future construction within the public highway, but only at detailed application stage when under planning procedure, the details for access strategy should be resolved within this application.

It would therefore seem to be contrary to planning requirements that the application still fails to provide a properly detailed access strategy and the Parish Council would question whether this is a valid position that can be acceptable.

The ability of the site to provide appropriate footway links is in question and not proven and in particular the proposed footway link to the A34 that will require the loss of two mature trees and for which no detailed design has been provided to demonstrate safe facility.

The developer's highway consultant has also claimed the site to be sustainable in a variety of transport modes however this is proven not to be the case in the PC's earlier objection. The updated position with reduced footway provision to link to local facilities simply makes the claims of sustainability less acceptable.

This despite the comment from the CEC SHM that they will accept the need for pedestrians from the development to negotiate a length of School Lane in live traffic flow without a provided footway.

This is contrary to the need to provide a viable access strategy for a site and this can only encourage new residents to drive in order to shop and travel to work.

They will not be encouraged to use the limited local facilities through this inadequate design.

Despite the altered position for the points of access to the site there will still be a severe impact on local trees, hedges and a listed building from the proposed highway access construction. This means that the strong objection to this impact from the Parish Council remains. At the time of writing of this objection there was still no comment from the Arboricultural Officer at Cheshire East Council.

The Highway Technical Note provided by the applicant to support these junction changes is cursory in detail and does not resolve concerns over much of the highway issues related by the Parish Council.

Road Safety at school times

The original Transport Statement submitted with the application did mention school arrival and dispersal traffic as an observed position but did not relate the severe congestion that occurs at these times along School Lane often to a point close to the A34 and certainly past the proposed junction position within the application.

In addition this is not mentioned in the two sets of comments made by the Strategic Highways Manager.

The fact remains that the school traffic at both ends of the day will obstruct the proposed junction position. Traffic will be forced to approach the junction unsighted to it and on the wrong side of the road.

From the start of the new school year the number of school buses has been reduced from 3 to 2, but with no significant difference in the school numbers. This has resulted in more children being delivered to school by car. As a result the school parking problem has deteriorated since the applicant's transport surveys were carried out.

The turning movements into and out of the junction will impede other private points of access and be unsighted at school times due to the parking congestion which manifests itself.

The road safety implications of this proposal are complex and parents and children have no other option than to walk in the carriageway in what would become a more congested traffic environment, should this development take place.

Marton Parish Council are extremely concerned that this aspect of highway safety, linked to this development proposal, has not been properly assessed by the applicant and not acknowledged by the Strategic Highways Manager.

Conclusion

Marton Parish Council have real concerns and have provided assessment of relevant areas of the submitted application and examined details against them – both in the original objection which was supported by technical highway assessment and currently, given the changes to the application detail.

The Transport Statement and recent Technical Note still fall short of detail in terms of design provision and do not provide evidence in a number of areas noted above. It also has incorrect details within the body of the documents such as bus service provision and incorrect site references.

In addition there are questions regarding safe highway design which remain unanswered given the lack of sufficient room to provide footways.

As a result Marton Parish Council express their view that this application should not be granted a planning permission as there is sufficient doubt in the submitted details ability to provide a safe and viable access strategy to this site, both in the interest of the highway user and also in that there will still be a severe adverse impact on a listed building, existing trees and hedges which will permanently damage and promote the loss of these local green landscape features.

Yours faithfully

Marton Parish Council