

Transport Development Services
Leeds City Council

21 November 2019

Dear Sir,

**Leeds City Council Planning Application - 17/02594/OT -
Racecourse Approach, Wetherby**

LCC City Planning Panel - 29 August 2019

Extract from the minutes

In summing up, the Chair thanked all parties for their attendance and contributions, commenting that many relevant points had been raised. Access onto York Road clearly remains a fundamental issue. Following a suggestion by officers, Members expressed the view that outline planning approval should only be granted subject to the delivery of vehicular access into the site from York Road before the development could proceed.

Upon being put to the vote:

RESOLVED –

(i) That the application be deferred and delegated to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the submission of an amended Masterplan and Access Parameter Plan and following the delivery of a vehicular access into the site from York Road to meet the SAP Site Requirements (mechanism by which the vehicular access can be delivered by the applicant and how this is controlled be through the Section 106 Agreement or by condition (whichever is most appropriate) and subject to the conditions specified in the submitted report (and any other conditions which the Chief Planning Officer may consider appropriate) the following and the prior completion of a section 106 Agreement to cover the following obligations:

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Working to ensure that the physical character of Wetherby and District is protected and developed for the benefit of the community of both current and future generations.

The York Road Access

1) Right Turning Traffic

This access which has the potential to be the most used of the 4 road accesses onto this development requires some significant amendments from that plan as incorporated in the developers evidence to the panel and their Masterplan (or should I say failed Masterplan as clearly the minutes record that it was not accepted as satisfying that description)

It fails to make adequate provision for vehicles driving west along the B1224 to turn right into the site. To avoid queues and rushed turning across traffic travelling east over the A1(M) bridge the junction needs a ghost lane for this right turning traffic. The need is evidenced by the fact that the 3 access roads into the development along Racecourse Approach are show as having such provision on the developers own plans. Furthermore the near identical junction on the other side (town side) of the A1(M) bridge has this very provision.

2) Public Bridleways 7 and 39

These bridleways are respectively north and south of York Road and terminate as they join with York Road at Carr Lane. This is the lane that the developer proposes will be the York Road access point. There proposal is to enhance the drop kerb on York Road to improve crossing of York Road.

This is quite unbelievable. They propose that this Bridleway road crossing be built on exactly that junction which it is highly likely will be carrying hundreds of vehicles to and from their development. What is more this is the first York Road crossing which children will find on their journey to school from the development until the junior school is opened on the site and in perpetuity for senior school pupils. For these older children it will be an attractive short cut for their journey leading them to the underpass below the A1(M) further south on bridleway 39.

It is an extremely dangerous scenario which they are proposing which you as Highway Authority surely cannot possibly think of approving. I believe as a minimum the S106 agreement should require the developer to finance a footbridge which is sufficiently secure to allow easy cycle use. The developer are so intent on proving accessibility is a priority and having failed the majority of your Councils accessibility requirements they should be only too happy to comply with this requirement.

3) Wetherby Young Offenders Institute

At the Planning Panel Meeting a planning officers gave a brief resume of the application as an introduction. In it was shown various plans and photos of the site including a photo view of the B1224 York Road adjacent to the Young Offenders Institute. This showed a single carriageway road not untypical many B class roads. This must have been very well selected because it singularly failed to show the very extensive

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parking on both sides of the road on the verges and footpath which regularly occurs at visiting times at the YOI.

I will not fill this letter with the many photos which were sent with a variety of objections to the development showing this parking. It occurs on both sides of the road and I myself have witnessed 62 cars at one time and 40 is certainly not unusual.

Yellow lines will only do the mischief of moving the cars to adjacent streets with all the resultant problems. There is inadequate parking in Wetherby. To give the highways officer who appeared at the hearing some credit she did not suggest this as a solution. Sadly she then lost all credibility by saying the parking could move to street parking and never explained where, despite some quiet heckling from the residents present at the hearing. You need to think this through. Existing residents of Wetherby and those taken properties on the new development will not take kindly to this and you only have to extend the a yellow line policy all over the town. The fact is at any one time there are not 40+ spare parking places in the town. Perhaps the developer should be asked to give Wetherby Town Council an area of land for the provision of car parking. It could also act as the shuttle bus parking area.

Conclusion

I would suggest that this road access requires some very significant thought on your part. Have the developers offered sufficient funding to resolve all these issues. It will not be a good solution to this SAP requirement; a road on the beginning of an incline over a elevated bridge with limited sight lines. This is a significant development which whilst it satisfies your Councils housing numbers will earn the developer well in excess of £25Million net profit. They should be required to do more than paper over these problems.

At the moment the planning portal does not signify any action by your Council post the panel decision. Could you please let me know what if any thoughts have been given to the York Road access specification/design requirements.

Yours faithfully

Clive Smithson
for and on behalf of
Better Wetherby Partnership

cc. Adam Ward Planning Dept LCC