

Neighbourhoods Directorate
Planning and Infrastructure
Development Management
PO Box 30, Civic Centre, West Street
Oldham
OL1 1UQ

Our ref TRA/17/346
Your ref: PA/337301/15

23 October 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Application Number: **PA/337301/15**

Location: **Former W H Shaw Pallet Works, Huddersfield Road, Diggle, OL3 5NX**

Proposal: **Construction of a new Saddleworth School (for ages 11 to 16) with associated sports fields and pitches, external recreation and teaching space together with parking landscaping and associated works.**

Thank you for consulting Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) on the above planning application. The following comments are offered as advice on transport issues for you to balance against other factors in determining the application and are made in the context of TfGM's role in the planning process, as set out in the footnote below.¹

Background

The application seeks approval for the construction of a new school (for ages 11 to 16), together with outside areas including sports pitches, playing fields, and areas for play and parking. The number of pupils accommodated will be 1,500. This school development is a replacement for Saddleworth High School.

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Highways Impact

TfGM's Urban Traffic Control Unit carried out modelling for this development on behalf of Oldham and most of the TA is lifted from our responses to Oldham.

Our primary concern is that the scheme is unsafe and Glyn Boucher sent the following to Oldham is July 2016;

As the scheme stands there are several design considerations that will need to be addressed before a signal controlled scheme can be progressed.

Cycle and equestrian safety – these road users are considerably slower than motor vehicles. A failsafe method of detecting these users along the single lane section will need to be determined to avoid a dangerous conflict whereby opposing traffic can be allowed to receive a green signal. A stage one RSA should be completed before detailed signal design commences.

Modelling and capacity – the one way section appears to be approximately 120 metres which introduces a significant length of lost time. There may be implications of queuing traffic extending to the priority junction of Huddersfield Rd / Standedge Rd to the south and delays to traffic/buses generally. Consideration should be given to a shared use pedestrian/cycle footway if carriageway width permits.

The private access adjacent to number 44 Huddersfield Rd appears to be signal controlled. This will increase queues and delays considerably and if the detection fails it will receive a green signal in all stages. Ideally this access should be removed from the scheme.

We are also concerned that the queue from the right turn into the car park will extend to the one-way section. Para 6.5.6 gives queue lengths dependent on usage of the car park, however the full results table that we supplied in our report to Oldham and is;

Level of Demand 2025 AM Peak	Average Queue Extent Full Hour (m)	Average Queue Extent Busiest 15 Min's (m)
100%	68	81
80%	62	74
60%	55	67
40%	44	57

Highways Impact (Urban Traffic Control Comments)

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This indicates that the queue will extend back to the one-way section during the busiest 15 minute period, even if the car park is only used by 60% of the demand. If the exit from the one-way section is blocked there will be excessive queuing in both directions on Huddersfield Road and the road will become even more unsafe as there will be vehicles effectively 'stranded' in the one-way section.

Given the above we would not support this scheme.

Site Accessibility:

The Transport Assessment (TA) refers to the 1996 Education Act when assessing acceptable walking distances from the new school. Pupil addresses have been obtained from the existing school from the year 2007 / 2008. The data shows that there will be a number of pupils who will live outside of the proposed school's walking catchment. The TA states that for those pupils who will be outside the walking catchment area, appropriate bus provision will be provided.

Condition: Should Oldham Council be minded to approve this application it is suggested that provision of suitable bus provision be attached as a condition of any planning consent.

In terms of accessibility by bus, the TA states that the closest bus stops to the site are located on Huddersfield Road just to the north of the site access junction, approximately 300 metres from the centre of the site. Bus services 184 which serves local towns and villages such as Diggle, Dobcross, Upermill and Greenfield, stops at these bus stops seven times between 0800 to 0900 and four times between 1500 to 1600.

The TA also states that there are seven school buses that currently connect the existing school to a range of local and regional destinations. Appropriate school bus provision is to be provided at the new school.

Providing that adequate school bus provision will be provided at the new location, TfGM agree that the proposed site will be accessible by bus in accordance with relevant policies.

In order to maximise the benefits of the site's location in relation to active travel, it should be ensured that the pedestrian and cycling environment is designed to be as safe, convenient and attractive as possible, so as not to discourage people from accessing the site on foot / by bicycle. This should be applied both throughout the site layout, and also between the site and existing active travel networks and can be achieved through measures such as the appropriate use of surfacing materials, landscaping and signage.

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It is also important to ensure that the development includes adequate infrastructure and facilities to encourage users to travel by sustainable modes. The TA states that secure cycle parking and facilities will be provided. TfGM note that the TA does not state how many cycle spaces will be provided at the site.

Condition: Should Oldham Council be minded to approve this application it is suggested that suitable cycle parking designed in accordance with Oldham parking standards be required as condition of any planning consent.

Travel Plan

TfGM recommends that a School Travel Plan is developed in accordance with these proposals, with the objective of reducing reliance on the private car, particularly single occupancy use. It is noted that a framework School Travel Plan has been submitted alongside this application. The framework travel plan is based on a travel plan written in 2010. The TA states that the new Full Travel Plan will be based on new travel surveys.

The Travel Plan should be designed to raise awareness of opportunities for reducing both staff and student travel by car and should feature a range of measures and initiatives promoting a choice of transport modes, and a clear monitoring regime with agreed targets.

Condition: Should Oldham Council be minded to approve this application it is suggested that the development, submission, implementation and monitoring of a full School Travel Plan within 6 months of occupation be attached as a condition of any planning consent. Said Travel Plan should be based on recent surveys.

I hope you find these comments useful in the determination of this planning application. Should you wish to discuss any matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Riccardo Boncinelli
Infrastructure Development Officer
Direct Line 0161 244 1420
Email claire.smallman@tfgm.com

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TfGM submitted a second response in November in order to INSERT the extra comments & additional safety concerns from HFAS (as shown below) INTO their previous response *not to withdraw their previous concerns about safety*** as falsley stated by Oldham Council's statement on the New Saddleworth School PR website!!!**

From: [Riccardo Boncinelli](#) Sent: 25/10/2017 09:54:47
To: [Stephen Irvine](#)
Subject: FW: 17/345 Land at Huddersfield Road Application PA/337930/15

Stephen,

Further comments from our HFAS unit on the proposed car park development:

Safety

There is no mention of the safety implications in the Transport Statement (TS). No provision is made for the residents to cross Huddersfield Road to the new residents car park.

Traffic Counts and Growth

The raw data for the traffic surveys is not provided so it is not possible to determine the accuracy of the figures in appendix E.

The growth factor is stated on figures 8 through 11 but no mention is made of where this figure is derived from to allow for checking.

To calculate the future assessment flows the following calculations have been done:

(2015 flow- Existing school trips) x Growth factor +Total future school trips = future assessment flows

Spot checks show that the calculations have been done correctly.

Due to the close proximity to proposed new Saddleworth High School on the former WH Shaw Paller works site a sensitivity test should be performed on the data to ensure that the impact of the two developments together is taken into consideration.

Junction assessments should be done on the junction of Huddersfield Road and Standedge Road/Wool Road, Wool Road and Dobcross New Road and Dobcross New Road and Woods Lane. HFAS note that said junctions have been assessed for in the Transport Assessment issued for the school development. The same should be done for the car park development.

Distribution

No indication is given of how the figures for the existing school distribution (Figure 3) or the Future pupil distribution (Figure 16) were obtained. This should be included in the TS.

Trip Generation

The future pupil and staff trip numbers given in Figures 17-21 have no source data referenced so it is not possible to determine if a sensible method was used. The TS should give the data source and raw data.

Traffic Impacts

The TS states that the proposed design would provide a balance solution for all users. However, there is no mention of the need to relocate the bus stops on both the north and southbound carriageway in the immediate vicinity of the carpark exit. The existing Southbound stop is currently located in what will become the carpark exit. The northbound stop is located in the section of Huddersfield Road that is proposed to become a single lane section of road. Buses stopping at this stop would completely block flow and could present a safety hazard if a green light is given to the southbound traffic whilst the bus, and vehicles trapped behind, are still in this section of road.

Regards,

Riccardo Boncinelli

Highways Impact (Highways Analytical Forecasting Services - HFAS) Safety

Whilst TfGM agrees with the interpretation of the accident data supplied it is noted that the data is from 2012-2014. Data up to July 2017 is now available (though 2017 is provisional).

TfGM has safety concerns about the access road – provision is being put in place for a footway on the southern edge of the road but measures will need to be in place to ensure that pupils arriving on foot from the north will need to cross the road. There is no indication in the TA of how this is to be achieved safely. Also as the bridge over Diggle brook will not be widened there is possibility for conflict between pedestrians and buses, as well as cyclists and buses when going over the bridge.

Junctions

TfGM HFAS agrees with the need for junction assessments at the sites proposed. The TA does not include any diagrams showing the proposed junction layout at the junction between the access road and Huddersfield Road. A diagram showing the layout of the junction and the swept path of the largest bus/coach likely to be regularly servicing the school is needed. Whilst there are no concerns about the ability of buses and coaches being able to access the site due to the site being accessed by large vehicles for its previous use, it may be that the swept path of such vehicles will mean that the give way or stop line for those vehicles exiting the site may need to be back from the road and as such sight lines may not be suitable for a give way junction. Also, the junction needs to be able to accommodate a bus entering the site at the same time as another is leaving. It is not clear from the TA if this is possible with the current junction dimensions. This could have knock on effects onto the road network and cause queues.

Traffic

The Traffic counts were conducted in 2015, this is now a few years old and consideration should be given to using more up to date data. However, the growth factors applied and the future flows are satisfactory.

Parking provision is within the guidelines and is likely to be sufficient for staff and so not lead to on road parking issues.

Pupil home locations to determine likely walking catchment (Plan 5) areas are from 2007/2008. Whilst it is acknowledged that home locations will have changed and this is only indicative it is not clear if the school's catchment area is the same as in 2007/2008 school year.

There is a possibility that moving the school could cause a shift in the traffic flow, with traffic that was using Huddersfield Road now moving to the A670 Standedge Road and this having a knock on effect of moving more traffic onto the A62 Huddersfield Road which would increase congestion on the KRN.