

Harborough District Local Plan – Inspection Matters, Issues and Questions

The following challenge and proposed improvement/mitigation to the plan are primarily with regard to the impact on Broughton Astley,

Matters 1

What is the up-to-date position in respect of transport matters?

The Local Plan proposes Frolesworth Road as the location for the entire allocation for Broughton Astley. This will create a very significant traffic issue which cannot reasonably be mitigated simply with the addition of traffic lights at the Bulls Head cross roads.

This crossroads carries a large proportion of the “in-village traffic” which is avoiding the B581, accessing the village centre shops, and is the main crossing point for children going to Thomas Estley Community College and Old Mill Primary School. It is also a “rat run” for commuter traffic from Narborough, Littlethorpe, Whetstone and Cosby going south to Magna Park. With the continued expansion of Magna Park and other development along the A5, these traffic volumes will only increase adding to the problems caused by the Frolesworth Road proposed development and any installation of traffic lights.

The recently installed pedestrian-controlled crossing in practice is not used by the majority of people, who cross at the junction itself. If the mitigation were to be a traffic light system, then the crossing and the lights would interact and create a significant traffic constriction at the junction, most likely leading to commuters trying to jump the lights or speeding to beat the lights thus increasing the risk to school children and parents trying the walk to school. This perception of increased risk, particularly for primary aged children, is likely to prompt more parents to drive their children to Old Mill and TECC thus exacerbating and existing congestion problem.

Additionally, there is a pre-school children group/business located on this cross roads with a lot of parents dropping off their children at peak traffic times. Adding traffic lights or other traffic controls will make access extremely difficult and could cause the business to fail reducing child care provision in Broughton Astley.

The substantive response from the Highway authority to 2026/0480/03/H makes a number of points including

- Traffic movement underestimate: LCC note that the number of properties is 550 not the 475 as per the original application which suggests the vehicle movement assessment is a known underestimate.
- Speed limits: The LHA rejects the proposal to extend the 30mph limit to the south along Frolesworth Road stating clearly that it believes this to be the current location. This will result exposing more pedestrians to speeding traffic travelling at 50mph or more with no further safety mitigations. Relying on a small mini-roundabout is not a credible solution on a road with a known speeding problem.

The report specifically states "Notwithstanding the above the applicant has not currently demonstrated the accesses are safe and suitable to serve the proposed development." It has always been the contention of local residents and Councillors that the excessive concentration of development on Frolesworth Road would exacerbate an existing speeding problem on this road.

Funding for mitigations to the traffic problem (ref. HDC11 Updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan page 11 of 23) has been reduced from £3.3M to just over £1.0 which is not a credible amount considering the significant work which would be required. No explanation of how this figure was arrived at has been found in the documentation or how it impacts the viability and deliverability of the site.

In terms of traffic, there is no evidence in the Local Traffic Plan, the SOCG for the LCC that any consideration or modelling has been carried out to support the Frolesworth Road Site selection.

It must be recognised that the transport plan impacts the heritage and place as per Policy DS04 Development Strategy: Preserving and Enhancing our Heritage and Rural Character. Restructuring the Bulls Head Cross roads would adversely impact the War memorial and surrounding area and permanently disfigure this key piece of heritage for Broughton Astley.