

Proof of Evidence of David Knight Volume 1

LAND AT SODBURY ROAD, WICKWAR

APP/P0119/W/23/3323836

Bloor Homes



LAND AT SODBURY ROAD, WICKWAR

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Qualifications

- 1.1.1 My name is David Andrew Knight and I am Director of Transport Planning at Norman Rourke Pryme responsible for the company's Transport Planning Services. I hold an honours degree in Civil Engineering and the Chartered Transport Planning Professional (CTPP) qualification. I am a Chartered Fellow of the Institute of Logistics and Transportation (FCILT), a Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (MCIHT) and a Member of the Transport Planning Society (MTPS). I am a CIHT Technical Champion for Sustainable Development and Transport Planning. I have 35 years professional experience working as a Transport Planner and Engineer for private sector consultants on Development projects, including many residential and mixed-use proposals. I am currently completing a part-time PhD at Loughborough University studying Transport Planning in Large Scale Housing Developments.
- 1.1.2 My professional experience includes advising clients on access strategies and delivering Transport Assessments/Statements and Travel Plans in support of planning applications for residential development. Technical work has included accessibility assessment, the planning and design of active travel schemes and the assessment and agreement of bus service improvements.
- 1.1.3 I have provided transport input to major masterplanning studies and undertaken environmental traffic impact assessments as part of Environmental Statements. I have also managed and supported transport studies including town centre and corridor studies, public transport and bus priority schemes, Park and Ride schemes and streetscape and traffic calming schemes. I have also undertaken Road Safety strategies.
- 1.1.4 I have 25 years experience of Travel Demand Management projects which has included the planning, monitoring and evaluation of Travel Plans, the writing of guidance, the development of assessment tools, auditing and Personalised Travel Planning. I have been a member of expert panels, provided training and lectured in the subject.
- 1.1.5 I have considerable experience of Using Multi Criteria Analyses in the evaluation of transport scheme options and other scoring and weighting techniques and have given a conference paper on the subject.
- 1.1.6 Further details of relevant project experience is included at **Appendix DAK1**.

1.2 Instructions

- 1.2.1 Bloor Homes applied for outline planning permission with all matters reserved to South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) on 23rd February 2022 for a residential development of up to 180 residential units, associated infrastructure and a shop of up to 500m² on land at Sodbury Road, Wickwar. The application was confirmed valid by SGC as of 21ST March 2022 under reference P22/01300/O. The statutory timeframe for a decision ended on 20TH June 2022, an extension of time was agreed until 21ST April 2023, and the application was not determined by the Council within these timescales.
- 1.2.2 In the absence of a planning decision the Appellants submitted a formal notification of intention to appeal against the non-determination of the application, and to do so via the public inquiry procedure, to SGC on 19th April 2023. The Appellants appealed against non-determination of the application on 9th June 2023. SGC Planning Officers subsequently recommended the approval of the planning application on the basis of a 'Tilted Balance' calculation, had they been able to determine it, however this position was overturned by Council Members who resolved that they would have refused it.
- 1.2.3 I am retained by Bloor Homes to submit Highways and Transportation evidence to this Appeal. I have been retained on this project since 2020. I was previously employed by Clarkebond and moved to NRP in January 2022.

1.3 Literature

1.3.1 In the preparation of this evidence, I refer to the following policy documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2023);
- South Gloucestershire Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-2027 (2013);
- Bus Back Better (2021); and
- WECA Public Transport Strategy (2021).

1.3.2 I also refer to the following technical documents submitted to SGC, and where appropriate, National Highways and West of England Combined Authority:

- Transport Assessment (B05313/TA01 Issue 03 7th December 2021);
- Residential Travel Plan (7909/TP01 Rev 1.0 14th December 2022);
- M5 Junction 14 Vehicle Trips (7909/TN01 Rev 1.0 11th July 2022);
- South Gloucestershire Highway Consultation Response (7909/CR01 Rev 1.1 19th December 2022);
- High Street Shuttle Signals (7909/TN03 Rev 0.1 31st May 2023; and
- 84/85 Alternative Bus Route Proposal ((7909/TN03 Rev 0.1 31st May 2023).

1.4 Structure of Proof of Evidence

1.4.1 This Proof of Evidence is set out as follows:

- Chapter 2 describes the Planning Application Proposal;
- Chapter 3 provides my understanding of the Local Authority Case;
- Chapter 4 describes the existing traffic conditions in Wickwar;
- Chapter 5 sets out the Sustainability and impact of the Proposed Development;
- Chapter 6 provides my opinions on the pertinent matters in this case;
- Chapter 7 sets out my conclusions; and
- Chapter 8 provides a Statement of Truth and Declarations.

2 PLANNING APPLICATION PROPOSAL

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This chapter considers the planning application proposal addressing the following matters:

- Recent Development in Wickwar;
- The planning application;
- Discussions with the Highway Authorities; and
- The reasons for refusal of the planning application.

2.2 Recent Development in Wickwar

2.2.1 The proposed development site lies opposite two parcels of land which were recently granted planning consent and have been implemented (see **Figure DAK2**). These are:

- Land south of Poplar Lane: 80 residential units PK16/4006/O, (Outline, granted 2017) and PK17/5966/RM (Reserved matters, granted 2018); and
- Land south of Horwood Lane, Sodbury Road: 90 residential units PK17/4552/O (Outline, granted 2018) and P19/5258/RM (Reserved Matters, granted 2019).

2.2.2 These developments both access onto Sodbury Road with simple priority T-junctions. The schemes have delivered traffic calming improvements, improved bus stop facilities and a footway/cycleway parallel to Sodbury Road along their frontage.

2.2.3 The improvements are as follows:

- A new foot/cycleway between Firth Lane and 'The Fence Yard' on Sodbury Road (implemented);
- Footway improvements between the Horwood site and the village centre, including across the frontage of the Citroen dealership (not implemented);
- New bus stop (implemented); and
- Traffic calming measures on Sodbury Road (implemented).

2.3 Planning Application

2.3.1 The planning application P22/01300/O is for a residential development of up to 180 residential units, associated infrastructure and a shop of up to 500m² on land at Sodbury Road, Wickwar.

2.3.2 Two accesses are proposed for the development. The first is situated about 40m south of the junction of Sodbury Road with Amberley Way, whilst the second is situated approximately 100m from the junction of Sodbury Road with Frith Lane at the location of the current field access. Both will take the form of a simple priority junction, with footways providing pedestrian access into and out of the site. Access designs have been agreed with SGC and are shown as **Drawings 7909-SK02 Rev 2.0** (CD 2.4) and **-B05313-SK05** (CD 1.22) for the southern and northern accesses respectively.

2.3.3 A Transport Assessment (TA) and a Residential Travel Plan (RTP) were prepared in support of the planning application and these documents have been agreed with SGC as Highway Authority.

2.3.4 Additional documents, South Gloucestershire Highway Consultation Response (7909/CR01 Rev 1.1 19th December 2022) and High Street Shuttle Signals (7909/TN03 Rev 0.1 31st May 2023) were submitted in response to SGC Highways comments, and the results and findings have been agreed.

2.4 Discussions with the Highway Authorities

- 2.4.1 My team at Clarkebond and from January 2022, at NRP have held discussions with the Highway Authorities, National Highways for the Strategic Road Network and South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) for the Local Road Network to discuss and agree transport and highways matters associated with the planning application.
- 2.4.2 National Highways have no objection in principle to the planning application subject to a planning condition requiring a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) being attached to any consent (reference consultation response dated 9th March 2023).
- 2.4.3 SGC as highway authority has no objection to the planning application on highways grounds. Details are set out in the officer report in recommending planning permission and the agreed Highways Statement of Common Ground (HSoCG). Transport and Highways matters including access, traffic impact and junction capacity modelling have been agreed as well as proposed highway improvements. Providing suitable bus service improvements are included within the Section 106 Agreement, SGC have no highways objection to the proposed development and as such there are no matters that remain in dispute. A suitable bus contribution has been offered and this is discussed further in the next section.

2.5 Discussions on the Public Transport Contribution

- 2.5.1 I consider that I have a good track record of agreeing appropriate bus service improvements and contributions with local highway authorities in connection with development proposals, where they are needed, over many years. Discussions are held with local highway authority officers and may include Public Transport Officers and Operators such as Stagecoach. Discussions are undertaken as part of the planning application and technical work is normally provided where appropriate including bus service modelling which aids negotiation on reaching an appropriate contribution level. The technical work and negotiation and agreement is normally a process over a number of months.
- 2.5.2 The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) has the responsibility for running bus services in South Gloucestershire, formerly it was the Council themselves. SGC'S Highway Officer requested bus contribution in July 2022. The requested amount from WECA is £450,000 per year over 5 years i.e £2,250,000. I did not, and do not consider this level of funding to be commensurate with the scale of the development proposal of 180 dwellings and I understand that this cost relates to the running of the entire bus service between Yate and Wotton under Edge without any consideration of the revenue.
- 2.5.3 NRP attempted to contact WECA between August 2022 and January 2023 to discuss and agree an appropriate bus contribution for the proposed development without success (details are given in **Appendix DAK2**). In the absence of any response from WECA, NRP commenced technical work through a bus modelling exercise using the Podaris software in the Spring of 2023 to determine an appropriate service improvement. It is only very recently that I have had the opportunity to meet with WECA and present our bus modelling work and its findings. It is disappointing that this matter has taken time to be addressed and not been able to be agreed before now.
- 2.5.4 NRP provided the technical modelling work to WECA and SGC on 15th September 2023 and this suggests that a commercially viable 84/85 service is possible if the route is made more direct between Yate and Wotton under Edge through Wickwar and Charfield. It has not been possible to hold further discussions before submission of the Proof of Evidence.
- 2.5.5 A bus contribution offer of £400,000 has been made to the Authorities on 18th September 2023 as follows:
- £50,000 for 5 years = £250,000 to support the bus operation; and
 - £150,000 Personal Travel Planning intervention with residents along the route catchment to maximise patronage to include promotion, information provision and bus taster tickets. PTP typically achieves a 10% mode shift on top of normal patronage and is particularly useful with new services.

- 2.5.6 These elements would support the long term viability of the bus service and de-risk any concerns regarding the success of the service.

2.6 Reasons for Refusal of the Planning Application

- 2.6.1 The reasons for refusal, set out in the SGC Statement of Case, are as follows:

1) The adverse impacts of the proposal with regard to:

- *Less than substantial harm to South Farm – great weight*
- *Less than substantial harm to Frith Farm – great weight*
- *Less than substantial harm to Wickwar Conservation Area – great weight,*
- *Increase reliance on car borne transport – substantial weight,*
- *Landscape Harm – significant weight*
- *Conflict with Spatial Strategy – limited weight*
- *Loss of Grade 3 agricultural land – limited weight*
- *Recreational pressure on SSSI – limited weight*

significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal, which are:

- *Provision of housing – significant weight,*
- *Affordable housing – significant weight,*
- *Provision of self-build plots – significant weight,*
- *Provision of new jobs – limited weight,*
- *Other benefits (potential for a shop, redirected Public Right of Way, highway improvements and connections) – limited weight*

and therefore, applying paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF, permission should be refused.

2) The proposal development fails to provide and/or secure adequate provision for necessary on-site and off-site infrastructure. Such infrastructure shall include (but is not limited to) Affordable Housing; Public Transport; off-site highways works; Travel Plan measures; Education contributions to nursery, primary and secondary education and associated transport; Public Open Space; Community Infrastructure; A retail unit and Self-build/custom build homes. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy CS6 of the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy 2006-2027.

- 2.6.2 This Proof of Evidence considers the reasons for refusal as they relate to transport and highways:

- Increased reliance on car borne transport (reason 1); and
- Transport contributions (reason 2).

3 THE LOCAL AUTHORITY CASE

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This chapter summarises the case of South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) as Local Planning Authority and Local Highway Authority.

3.2 SGC Statement of Case

- 3.2.1 SGC has set out their case in the Statement of Case.

Reason 1: Applying paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF

- 3.2.2 'Increase reliance on car borne transport' is considered to be an adverse impact of the development proposal and an element that should be given substantial weight in the calculation known as the 'Tilted Balance' set out in the first reason for refusal. The Tilted Balance calculation was prepared by the Planning Officer and subsequently amended by Members.

- 3.2.3 The weighting is a judgement and was made by Members of the Strategic Sites Committee that met on 3rd August 2023 and Members of Spatial Planning Committee that met on the 8th August 2023. The judgement made by members was different to that made by the Planning Officer in her 'Tilted Balance' calculation where she placed moderate weight to the considered adverse impact of 'Increase reliance on car borne transport'.

- 3.2.4 Under the heading of 'Increased Reliance on car borne journeys', the SGC Statement of Case identifies that the following evidence will be put forward in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3.

4.2 The Council will show that the current bus provision is both poor and uncertain and that this will essentially be a car borne development. Although there is currently a bus service (Run by The Big Lemon Bus Company) that runs through Wickwar, it is infrequent and has only short-term funding. Dynamic Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT known as Westlink) is early on in a 2-year trial and there is no certainty of any future funding. The bus service cannot be relied upon to provide a viable alternative to the private car. Residents of the proposed houses would therefore be reliant on cars to access the majority of services such as doctors, employment etc.

4.3. Such a reliance on the private car is contrary to Section 9 of the NPPF which addresses promoting Sustainable Transport and also contrary to policies PSP11 (Transport Impact Management) and CS4A (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development). The fact that the proposal will be car borne is a substantial adverse impact of the proposal.

Reason 2: Failure to provide and/or secure adequate provision for necessary on-site and off-site infrastructure

- 3.2.5 This reason related to agreement on a Section 106 Agreement which is being progressed between the Appellant and SGC.

3.3 Highway Authority Position

- 3.3.1 The Transport Development Control Manager at SGC did state in a meeting on 18th August 2023 that he supports the Planning Officer's position that moderate weight should be applied to 'Increase reliance on car borne transport' as an adverse impact in Reason 1.

4 EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This Chapter describes the existing traffic conditions in Wickwar and is divided into the following sub-sections:

- A description of the local highway network;
- A summary of existing traffic flows on the local highway network;
- An overview of the performance of the road network;
- A review of the safety record of the road network.

4.2 Highway Network

4.2.1 Wickwar lies on the B4060 which connects with Kingswood 4.7km to the north, and Chipping Sodbury, 6.4km to the south. The strategic location of Wickwar is shown on **Figure DAK1**.

4.2.2 In the vicinity of the proposed development site, the B4060 is known as 'Sodbury Road'. Sodbury Road is approximately 6.5m in width, is street lit, permits parking on both sides of the carriageway, and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. Speed tables have been introduced on Sodbury Road and these are observed to be effective in keeping vehicle speeds below 30mph.

4.2.3 To the south, the 30mph speed limit on Sodbury Road extends south of the junction with Frith Lane to a short a section of 40mph speed limit and then national speed limit. To the north, Sodbury Road joins with Amberley Way at a three-armed mini-roundabout junction. Amberley Way is a small distributor road serving residential development to the east of Sodbury Road and a suitable active travel route to the village primary school. North of its junction with Inglestone Road to the north of Amberley Way, Sodbury Road is known as 'High Street'. Here it passes through the village centre, linking with The Downs (B4060) and Station Road (B4059) to the north. The northern part of High Street is narrow with the provision of contraflow traffic signals to permit northbound and southbound traffic to travel this route in turn. There are vehicle weight restrictions in place in this location, limiting any vehicles over 18 tonnes from using this route. Wickwar in its local context is shown on **Figure DAK2**.

4.2.4 Junction 14 of the M5 lies approximately 8km to the north. The route to this junction is via the B4059.

4.2.5 Active travel provision on the east side of Sodbury Road is good with a 3.0m wide shared footway/cycleway between the Frith Lane junction and 30m south of the Poplar Lane junction; a facility some 460m in length. North of Poplar Lane is a 2.0m wide footway to the Amberley Road junction and beyond. On the west side of Sodbury Road provision is limited south of Amberley Way with an approximate 1.0m wide footway. North of Amberley Way there is a footway on both sides of the road to the village centre.

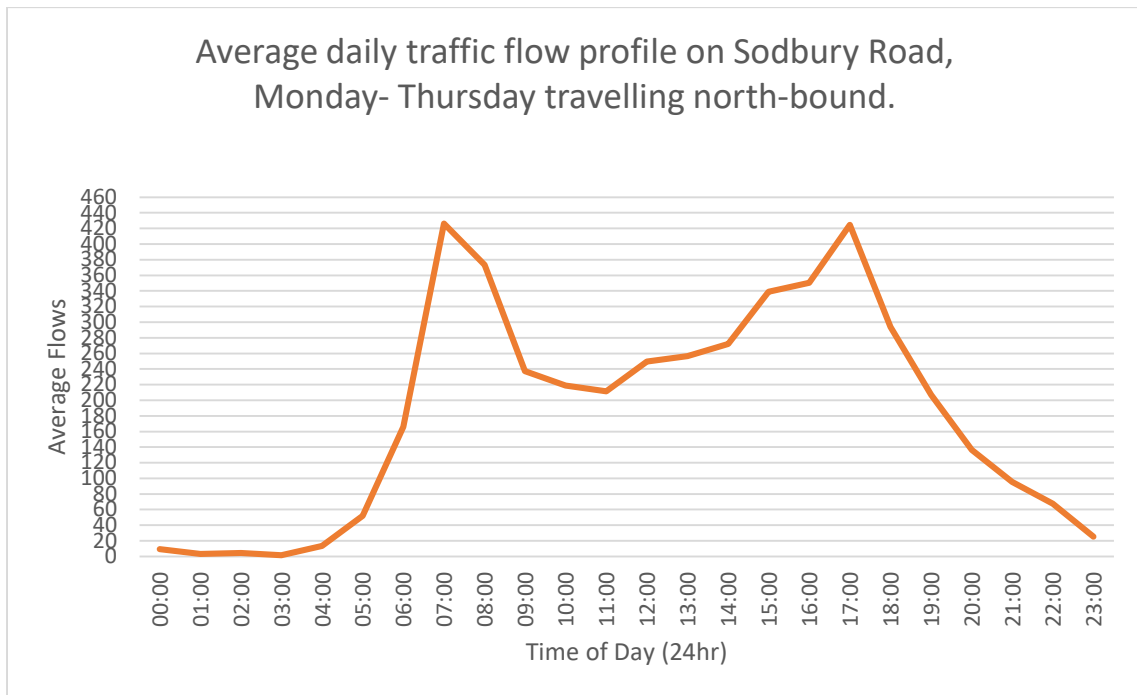
4.2.6 A Photographic Record of walking and cycling provision between the site and the High Street and the primary school is given at **Appendix DAK3**.

4.3 Traffic Flows

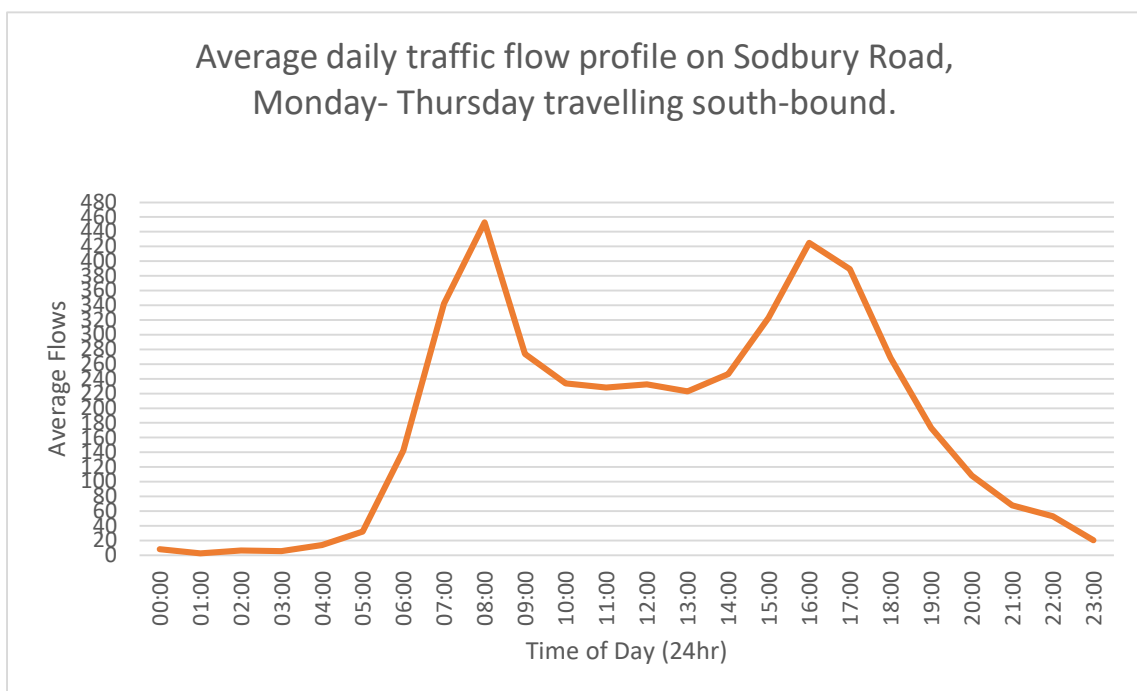
4.3.1 Daily traffic flows on the B4060 surveyed in 2016, identified that traffic peaked between 08:00 to 09:00 and 17:00 to 18:00 across a weekday The Transport Assessment (Table 3.1) identifies that peak hour traffic flows were typically 950 vehicles two-way on Sodbury Road.

4.3.2 Plots 4.1 and 4.2 show the average weekday (excluding Friday) traffic flow profiles for Sodbury Road in the northbound and southbound directions respectively. Plots 4.3 and 4.4 show the Saturday traffic flow profiles for Sodbury Road in the northbound and southbound directions respectively.

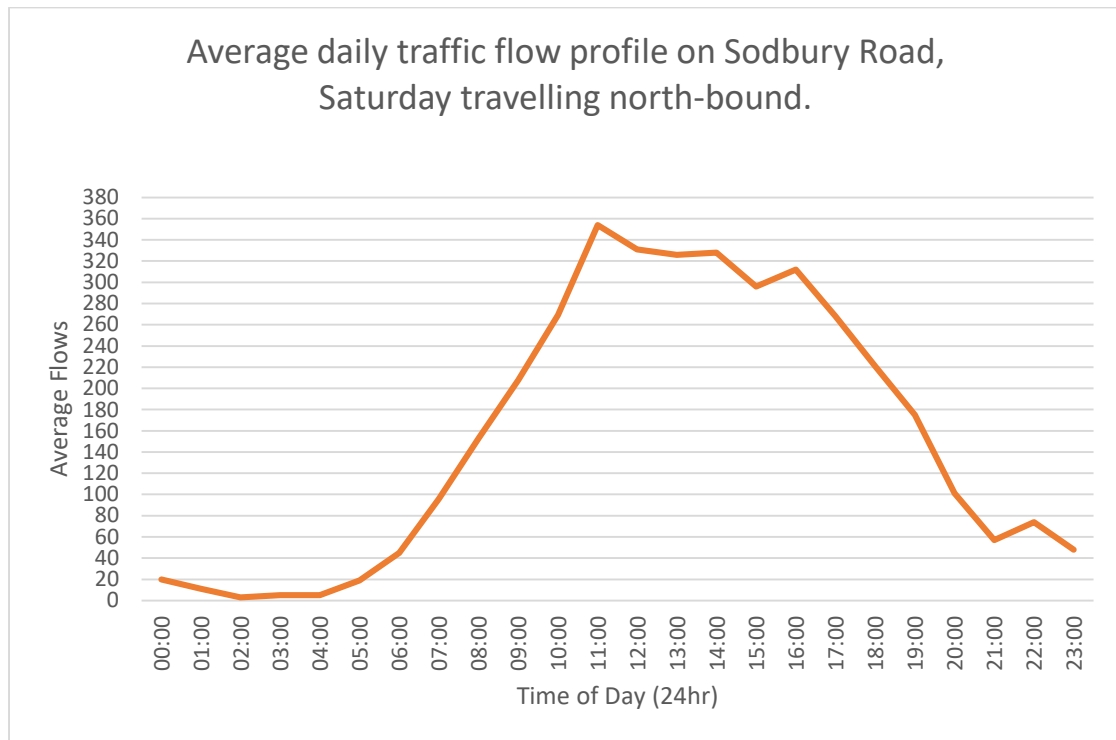
- 4.3.3 Traffic flows in the interpeak in the weekday typically vary between 220 and 320 vehicles/hour in each direction. On a Saturday the peak is in the middle of the day at between 300 and 340 vehicles/hour in each direction.



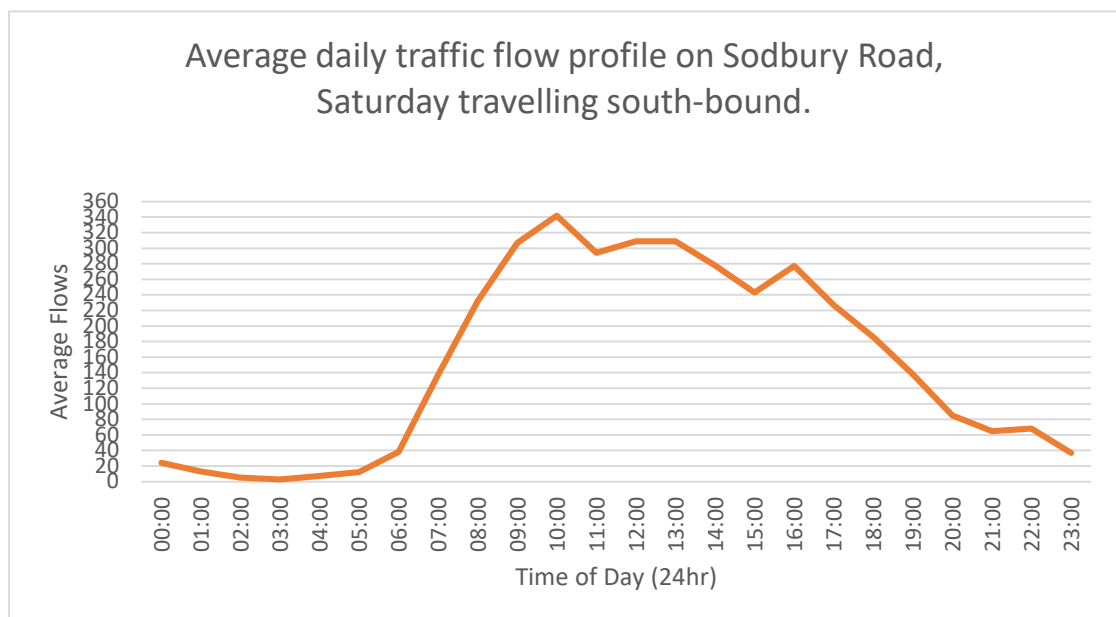
Plot 4.1: Average Daily Traffic Flow Profile, Sodbury Road, Wickwar Weekday N/B



Plot 4.2: Average Daily Traffic Flow Profile, Sodbury Road, Wickwar Weekday S/B



Plot 4.3: Average Daily Traffic Flow Profile, Sodbury Road, Wickwar Saturday N/B



Plot 4.4: Average Daily Traffic Flow Profile, Sodbury Road, Wickwar Saturday S/B

- 4.3.4 The proposed residential development is predicted to generate 95 two-way vehicle trips in the AM Peak hour and 101 two-way vehicle trips in the PM Peak hour (reference: Transport Assessment).
- 4.3.5 The convenience store is predicted to generate 75 two-way vehicle trips in the AM Peak hour and 106 two-way vehicle trips in the PM Peak hour (reference: Transport Assessment). It should be noted that the vast majority of these trips will not be 'new' to the highway network, but existing pass by trips and redistributed trips from other stores.

4.4 Performance of the Road Network

- 4.4.1 Traffic is observed to be free flowing on the B4060 throughout a typical weekday including in the peak periods. The High Street/Station Road/The Downs junction is subject to a limited amount of queuing on the approaches to the shuttle traffic signals during the AM and PM peak hours. This is not considered to be significant, and this view is supported by the results of traffic modelling undertaken and agreed with SGC.

4.5 Safety Record

- 4.5.1 The existing highway safety record was provided for in the Transport Assessment for the latest five-year period that was available at that time, 1st February 2015- 31st January 2020. A total of nine people had suffered personal injuries as a result of four recorded personal injury collisions on the highway network of interest during the specified time period. Of these collisions, there were eight slight casualties and one serious casualty. There were no fatal casualties.
- 4.5.2 The highway safety record has been updated to reflect the latest collision data for 2020 and 2021. There has only been one recorded incident on May 20th 2020 between a car and a pedal cycle at Wickwar High Street. The recorded personal injury collision was slight, impacting the pedal cyclist.

5 SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT IMPACT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter considers the sustainability credentials of the proposed development from a transport and highways viewpoint and considers the transport impact of the development in light of the technical assessment work carried out and the letters of objection from members of the local community. The chapter is subdivided into the following sections:

- Walking and Cycling;
- Public Transport;
- Transport Impact; and
- Residents Consultation Responses.

5.2 Walking and Cycling

5.2.1 With reference to section 5.4 of the Transport Assessment, it is noted walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km and it is also generally accepted that cycling has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly those less than 5km.

5.2.2 Facilities within walking and cycling distance of the proposed development are given in Table 5.1. It can be seen that there are a significant number of facilities within walking and cycling distance.

Table 5.1: Local Facilities within Walking and Cycling Distance and Times

Facility	Distance (metres)	Walking time (minutes)	Cycling time (minutes)
Public transport			
New S/B Bus Stop (southern access)	100	1	0.5
S/B Bus Stop – Poplar Lane	300	3.5	1.0
N/B Bus Stop – Sodbury Rd (southern access)	200	2.0	0.5
N/B Bus Stop - Sodbury Rd (northern access)	200	2.0	0.5
Education			
Alexander Hosea Primary School	1,100	13.0	4.5
Brimsham Green School (Secondary)	5,700	-	-
Employment			
Country Style Supplies	40	0.5	0.5
Wilcox Citroen	400	5.0	1.5
The Highstreet Studio	1000	12.0	4.0

AE Wilcox and Son (MG)	1,100	13.0	4.5
Alderley Plc	1,400	16.5	6.0
Majorlift Hydraulic Equipment	1,500	18.0	6.5
RC Brine & Son Vehicle Maintenance	1,600	19.0	6.5
Prestige Window and Conservatories	1,700	20.0	7.0
Health			
North Yate Pharmacy	5,100	-	-
Wellington Road Family Practice	5,500	-	-
Leisure			
<i>Sport</i>			
Wickwar Playing Fields	900	10.5	3.5
Impact Gym	1300	15.5	5.5
<i>Food and Drink</i>			
Wickwar Social Club	1,000	12.0	4.0
Wickwar Coffee Shop	1,050	12.5	4.5
Fox and Maple	1,100	13.0	4.5
<i>Social</i>			
Wickwar Town Hall	900	10.5	3.5
Wickwar Youth Centre	700	8.0	3.0
Wickwar Village Hall	1,200	14.5	5.0
<i>Other</i>			
Castle Farm Cross Country and Livery	650	8.0	2.5
The Old Stables Guesthouse	750	9.0	3.0
Holy Trinity Church	1,400	16.5	6.0

- 5.2.3 Wickwar itself has a significant number of local facilities which are shown on **Figure DAK3**. Future residents of the proposed development will be able to walk or cycle to these easily, quickly and safely. The routes are of a good quality for a village.

- 5.2.4 The proposed development site will provide a local shop of up to 500m². This facility will deliver increased accessibility to a store for new and existing local residents and reduce carborne journeys. Presently, the nearest local store is approximately 4.5km from the proposed development. Table 5.2 below outlines the average distance and time it would take to drive from the development to the nearest local shops at a similar scale to the proposed shop being provided within the development.

Table 5.2: Accessibility to the nearest Local Store

Local Shops	Distance from development (metres) ¹	Time from development (minutes in car) ²
Tesco Express Yate	4,530	5.9
Coop Wotton-under-edge	7,330	11.5
Spar Avon Road	6,200	6.9
Proposed Development Shop	350	1.4

Note: ^[1] As measured from centroid of development
^[2] Time calculated using TRACC software

- 5.2.5 Table 5.3 below outlines average distance and time it would take to drive from the development to the nearest larger supermarket store. The nearest supermarket is 5.3km from the site in Chipping Sodbury.

Table 5.3: Accessibility to the nearest Supermarket

Local Shops	Distance from development (metres) ¹	Time from development (minutes) ²
Waitrose Chipping Sodbury	5,320	6.2
Tesco Extra Yate	6,050	8.1
Lidl Yate	6,430	7.8
Morrisons Yate	6,680	8.5

Note: ^[1] As measured from centroid of development
^[2] Time calculated using TRACC software

- 5.2.6 The new development shop offers enhanced local accessibility to residents of the village of Wickwar. Taking into account the future number of residents that would move into the new development, approximately 1,900 people are within 1,500m of the proposed shop. Table 5.4 highlights the number of residents that live within a 1,500m walk of the proposed shop. **Figure DAK5** shows the level of accessibility up to 2km from the development.

Table 5.4: Total Usual Residents within 1500m of the proposed shop

	Total number of dwellings ¹	Occupancy per dwelling ²	Total Usual Residents ³	Economically Active/Driving Age ⁴
Existing	510	2.78	1,419	1,032
Development	180	2.78	500	363
Future Total	690	2.78	1,919	1,396

Note: ^[1] 2021 Number of dwellings census data
^[2] Calculated using number of dwellings and all usual residents
^[3] 2021 All usual residents census data
^[4] 2021 Census Data (Ages 17+)

- 5.2.7 It is evident from Table 5.4 that the new shop will allow Wickwar residents to walk or cycle locally to buy groceries etc. and many will undoubtedly do so replacing car journeys to other stores (Tables 5.2 and 5.3) that currently take place.
- 5.2.8 The National Cycle Network passes through the northern end of Wickwar and the Stoke Gifford loop cycle route runs to the west. Future residents can access both of these routes, the latter via Frith Lane at the southern end of the site. The routes are shown on **Figure DAK6**.

5.3 Public Transport

- 5.3.1 Wickwar is currently served by bus services.
- 5.3.2 Existing conventional bus services are given in Table 5.5. The 84/85 bus service, operated by The Big Lemon bus company, provides a route through the centre of Wickwar between Yate and Wotton-under-edge.

Table 5.5: Summary of Existing Bus Services

Service	Day	First Bus	Services per day (approximate frequency)	Last Bus
84 – The Big Lemon				
Yate – Wotton-under-Edge Circular Clockwise	Weekday	09:28	3 (5 hrs)	18:28
	Saturday	09:28	3 (5 hrs)	18:28
	Sunday	-	No Service	-
85 - The Big Lemon				
Yate – Wotton-under-Edge Circular Anti-clockwise	Weekday	08:26	3 (5 hrs)	17:31
	Saturday	08:31	3 (5 hrs)	17:31
	Sunday	-	No Service	-

S8 – Taylors Travel (School Service)¹

Old Sodbury – Katherine Lady Berkeley School	Weekday	07:10	1 (Daily)	15:55
	Saturday	-	No Service	-
	Sunday	-	No Service	-

912 & 916 – Euro Coaches (School Service)

Wickwar - Katherine Lady Berkeley School	Weekday	No timetable available	1 (Daily)	No timetable available
	Saturday	-	No Service	-
	Sunday	-	No Service	-

C60 – Stagecoach West (School Service)

Wickwar – Cirencester College	Weekday	07:05	1 (Daily)	17:45
	Saturday	-	No Service	-
	Sunday	-	No Service	-

Note; ⁽¹⁾ Assumed that service still runs. Timetable data is from 2019, but local news suggest that it still runs through Wickwar

- 5.3.3 The current timetable for the Big Lemon 84/85 service is included at **Appendix DAK4**. Table 5.5 also shows that a number of school services exist for Wickwar residents.
- 5.3.4 Westlink is a Dynamic Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) bus service that is ‘on demand’ and operates within 3 zones in the West of England. Westlink operates across South Gloucestershire and is available for residents of Wickwar. Journeys can be booked using the Westlink app, webpage or over the phone. This allows users to choose a start and end location, they will then be assigned the best pick-up and drop off locations based on their nearest existing stops. Details of this service is given in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Westlink DDRT Service

Day	Service regularity	Operating Areas	Fares
Monday to Saturday	07:00-19:00	Wickwar, Yate, Chipping Sodbury, Charfield and Thornbury	<u>Single fares</u> Adults £2 Children £1 OAP's (bus passes accepted from 9am)
Sundays and Public Holidays	No service	No service	No service

- 5.3.5 At the time the planning application was made the 84/85 bus services were being run by Stagecoach with the 84 providing a Yate to Wotton Under edge circular clockwise at 2-hour intervals and the 85 providing a Yate to Wotton Under edge circular anti- clockwise at 2-hour intervals. It is understood that this service ceased in June 2023, however the less frequent Big Lemon service has been introduced.
- 5.3.6 Yate Station is located approximately 7km to the south of the development and offers direct trains northbound towards Gloucester and southbound towards Bristol Temple Meads. Yate station is a short 10-minute drive from the development site and provides 116 car parking spaces and inexpensive charges (£2.70 all day weekday, £2.00 Saturday). Rail is a realistic option for longer journeys made by Wickwar residents.
- 5.3.7 Charfield station has planning permission and is scheduled to be operational for hourly services in 2027 and is located 6.5km to the north of the development. Proposals include north and south platforms, a pedestrian footbridge with lifts, bus stop, car parking (including EVCP), cycle parking, and highway improvements to enhance pedestrian and cycling crossings.
- 5.3.8 Yate Park and Ride is a park and ride facility located off the A432 road on the edge of Yate with 198 car parking spaces (including 38 electric vehicle (EV) charging bays) that opened in February 2022. The Park & Ride site uses the existing bus network and services combine to offer a typically 30 minute frequency, or better, into Bristol on a weekday. Services are available to Bristol City Centre, Frenchay, Kingswood and Southmead Hospital. The facility is 8.4km from the development site and a realistic option for Wickwar residents. The timetables for services Y1 and Y6 are included at **Appendix DAK4**.
- 5.3.9 Details of Public Transport links with Yate and Chipping Sodbury are shown in **Figure DAK4**.

5.4 Transport Impact

- 5.4.1 The opportunity exists for travel to and from the proposed development by sustainable transport. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 demonstrate that active travel and public transport options currently exist for future residents.
- 5.4.2 The village of Wickwar is closely related to the towns of Yate and Chipping Sodbury which offer a full range of education, employment, health, leisure and retail facilities. These towns are a short drive from the development for those residents who choose to use their cars; most car journeys are likely to be short.
- 5.4.3 The transport impact of the proposed development is considered acceptable and agreed with the Highway Authority, SGC. Details are set out in the Highway Statement of Common Ground.

5.5 Residents Consultation Responses

- 5.5.1 A total of 488 consultation letters have been identified as of relevance in relation to transport matters.
- 5.5.2 A total of 1,087 different consultation responses have been identified as of relevance in relation to transport matters. To review public responses in a methodical and rigorous manner, responses were sub-divided in relation to the sub-categories outlined below:

- Facilities;
- General Traffic;
- Safety;
- Motorway Junction;
- Traffic Signals;
- Diversions;
- Parking; and
- Bus Services.

5.5.3 A summary of this categorisation process is outlined in Table 5.7, including an overview of the most prevalent overarching themes and key points of concern.

Table 5.7: Local Residents Comments

Sub-categorisation	No.	Main points of concern.
Facilities	321	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that existing infrastructural provision is unable to support further development in Wickwar. • A lack of facilities in the Village such as a doctor's surgery, supermarket, and dentist will lead to a reliance upon cars to access services amongst residents of the proposed development. • Pressure on Village School places, meaning that families would need to travel out of the village, impacting upon traffic levels. • Concerns over the deliverability and longer-term viability of the shop proposed, as well as its location to the south of the village in terms of accessibility.
General Traffic	376	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns over the impact of traffic generated from these Proposals, existing committed development in Wickwar, and traffic travelling north from Yate and Chipping Sodbury via Wickwar. • Concerns that speed bumps installed on the B4060 Sodbury Road have increased traffic levels and led to erratic speeds through the Village. • Concerns that existing levels of congestion on the B4060 will worsen because of increased vehicle traffic from Proposals. • The impacts of queuing traffic upon local air pollution levels within the Village.

Safety	136	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general increase in traffic increasing the risk of highway incidents. • Concerns around the availability of safe walking and cycling routes from Wickwar to Yate, Kingswood, and Chipping Sodbury. • Increased traffic through the village increasing the risk posed to pedestrians and cyclists. • Dangers posed to pedestrians seeking to cross the B4060 High Street. • Concerns that existing weight restrictions in place through Wickwar from the north are being ignored, posing highway safety risks, and damaging the road surface.
Motorway Junction	51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that the M5 junction 14 is already at capacity, and that further north-bound journeys will worsen traffic on the B4060 Highstreet.
Traffic Signals	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of increased vehicle numbers upon the signal-controlled junction of the B4060 High Street/ Station Road. • Increased congestion on the B4060 High Street backing up from the one-way signal-controlled section of the road network.
Diversions	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased traffic on Frith Lane, and village back-routes to avoid congestion and traffic calming measures on the B4060.
Parking	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of these proposals upon parking-stress within Wickwar.
Bus Services	118	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irregularity of bus services limit reliable mobility options beyond the car for existing residents, compounded by the loss of bus service routes 84 and 85. Concerns therefore that new development will generate significant increases to car-borne journeys. • School bus service provision for students aged 16 and older.
Total	1087	

6 OPINIONS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This chapter sets out my professional opinions on the case as follows:

- Existing Traffic Conditions in Wickwar;
- The Proposed Development;
- Accessibility Improvements;
- Active Travel;
- Public Transport;
- The Weight to be given to any Increased Reliance on Car Borne Transport; and
- Residents Consultation Responses.

6.2 Existing Traffic Conditions in Wickwar

6.2.1 Traffic levels in Wickwar are low, even at peak times. I have observed no traffic issues or congestion when I have visited the site including most recently in September 2023. The High Street traffic signals with their shuttle working are a constraint, however, these are observed to be operating without significant queuing and delay to drivers at peak times.

6.2.2 Traffic modelling of the High Street/Station Road/The Downs junction arrangement has demonstrated that traffic associated with the proposed development can be accommodated, together with committed development traffic, with reserve capacity available at peak times. The Appellant has offered a contribution towards the introduction of MOVA at the signals. MOVA is likely to improve operation by approximately 10%. This is agreed with SGC.

6.2.3 The highway safety record in Wickwar is good and there are no safety concerns.

6.3 The Proposed Development

6.3.1 The location of the proposed development is accepted by officers of SGC, in the report to committee and at the meeting on the 18th August 2023. The development site is in a similar location to the two recent residential schemes that were given planning permission by SGC in recent years and have now been built out (see Figure DAK2).

6.3.2 A sustainable development is proposed that encourages public transport, cycling and walking trips. A Residential Travel Plan (RTP) has been prepared and includes a package of measures to increase public transport, cycling and walking use and targets to reduce car driver trips.

6.4 Accessibility Improvements

6.4.1 The proposed development includes a shop of up to 500m² which will be available to the whole village community and will be in walking and cycling distance of existing residents. This will undoubtedly result in a reduction of car-based food shopping trips for existing residents in Wickwar.

6.5 Active Travel

6.5.1 The existing facilities in Wickwar are within easy reach on foot, or by bike, for future residents at the proposed development. All facilities are within accepted distance thresholds.

- 6.5.2 The proposed development will improve infrastructure provision for pedestrians and cyclists through footway extensions and the implementation of a zebra crossing across Sodbury Road and near to the proposed southern highway access.
- 6.5.3 Through existing and proposed footway provision it is easy, convenient and safe to walk from the proposed development to Wickwar Village Centre and Alexander Hosea Primary School. The walk to the village centre takes around 15 minutes and the route is of a good quality for a village.
- 6.5.4 Cycling from the proposed development site to the village centre would be on-street if the direct route along Sodbury Road was chosen. I have cycled this in the weekday interpeak period and it was comfortable and safe, traffic flows were light and it took less than 5 minutes. In the peak hours traffic flows are 950 vehicles two-way which is typically one vehicle every 4 seconds which should still be comfortable for adult cyclists. It is also possible to reach the village centre avoiding the Sodbury Road and taking the parallel route via Amberley Way and Avon Crescent.
- 6.5.5 I have carried out an evaluation of the cycling and walking routes to the primary school and the high street against the widely used core design outcomes as follows:
- Coherent – a consistent and easy to navigate quality route that links the places people want to go;
 - Direct – a route should follow the desire line as far as possible and provide advantage over the car;
 - Safe – a route should minimise conflict with vehicles and address real and perceived safety issues;
 - Comfortable – a route that is continuous and easy to ride that avoids sudden changes in alignment and difficult gradients; and
 - Attractive – a pleasant route that is enjoyable to walk or cycle because of its environment.
- 6.5.6 Tables 6.1 and 6.2 highlight the cycling and walking score for the route to Alexander Hosea Primary School and the High Street based on the five core design outcomes. These are the overall level of coherence, directness, safety, comfort and attractiveness and have been scored between green (good), amber (acceptable) and red (unacceptable).

Table 6.1: Evaluation of Cycling Routes

	Coherence	Directness	Safety	Comfort	Attractiveness
Route to School					
Route to High Street					

Table 6.2: Evaluation of Walking Routes

	Coherence	Directness	Safety	Comfort	Attractiveness
Route to School					
Route to High Street					

- 6.5.7 It is evident from Tables 6.1 and 6.2 that cycling and walking routes to the primary school and the high street are mostly good or acceptable.

- 6.5.8 The cycling route to school starts at the proposed northern access of the site, turning right at the Amberley Way junction continuing onto Burleigh Way and Ingleston Road to end at the school on Honeybourne Way. This route is direct, following the main desire line to the school through residential streets and a journey time that is likely to be less than vehicles as a result of two traffic free points between the site and the school. Comfort and attractiveness is rated green due to the high surface quality of the street network and low gradient, alongside a minimal level of street clutter and an attractive level of greening. Coherence and safety were rated amber on this route. This can be attributed to minimal wayfinding signs between the development and the school, as well as cyclists having to share connections with motor traffic. Traffic flows on Sodbury Road are higher in the peak hours, reducing the perceived feeling of safety on this link to the school.
- 6.5.9 The route to the high street scored well for coherence, directness and attractiveness. Cyclists can connect to the high street without the need to dismount, and are able to connect to other links such as the National Cycle Network. The route is direct and attractive, allowing cyclists to follow the main desire line into the village centre on a street with a minimal level of street clutter and an attractive level of greening. An amber score has been assigned to the safety and comfort of the route as a consequence of traffic flow being higher in the peak hours and a few minor defects in the road condition. Speed tables between Frith Lane and Amberley Way on Sodbury Road are easy to cycle over but could slightly reduce the feeling of comfort.
- 6.5.10 The walking route to school has been scored green for directness, safety and attractiveness. This route links the site to the school following the main desire line and offers several traffic free sections to separate pedestrians from traffic. It is also well lit and provides an attractive level of greening. Coherence and comfort scored amber as a result of the minimal wayfinding signs and a lack of dropped kerbs and tactile paving. These elements have been addressed as part of the WCHAR study.
- 6.5.11 The walking route to the high street route follows the main desire line, offers dropped kerbs and is an attractive route through to the High Street. Coherence and safety scored amber as a result of minimal wayfinding signs and some levels of kerbside activity narrowing footways.

6.6 Public Transport

- 6.6.1 Wickwar is currently served by bus services in the form of the Big Lemon 84/85 service between Yate and Wotton Under Edge, which I have observed as being well used and the Westlink DDRT service. It could be argued that this provision does not differ greatly to that previously provided by Stagecoach at the time of the planning permissions for the recent identified developments (Figure DAK2). No bus contribution was requested from these other recently completed developments.
- 6.6.2 The Westlink DDRT service is a significant financial commitment by the Department for Transport (DfT) and WECA with £6,000,000 allocated over two years. It is too early to understand how successful this initiative has been at attracting bus users.
- 6.6.3 The Government's Bus Back Better Strategy (2021) outlines a vision to transform bus services across England's regions outside London, underlining a commitment to support both Service Operators and Local Authorities in delivering substantial improvements to service routes and frequencies, vehicle comfort and efficiency, as well as simpler fares. Strong bus networks connect communities, enhancing accessibility to jobs and services and boosting economic growth and inclusion. This Strategy makes clear that a reformed bus service network is key to sustained progress against both net zero and levelling up objectives, as well as the National COVID-19 recovery. Backed by 'transformative, long-term funding' the National bus strategy sets clear targets to increase patronage and raise buses' mode share substantially beyond pandemic levels.

- 6.6.4 The West of England Bus Strategy (2020) further supports a commitment to substantially improving the bus network at the City-Region level, with the Combined Authorities setting targets to double the number of bus passenger journeys by 2036. The Strategy's central vision is the development of a more reliable, affordable, and user-friendly bus network that links all key destinations, providing a compelling alternative to the private car across the West of England. Success in delivering this vision will mean more travel by bus, less reliance on car travel, which is essential to achieving the West of England's economic, environmental, and quality of life ambitions. For rural areas such as Wickwar, of central importance is the delivery of a consistent and easy-to-understand network which provides a practical alternative to the car for many journeys, and a reliable means to accessing services for those without access to a car.
- 6.6.5 In their statement of case, SGC raise concern about whether the bus services will continue into the future. National Government policy through Bus Back Better and Local Government policy through WECA's bus strategy show commitments to improve bus services in the future and significant Government funding has been provided. On 28th September 2023, the Government announced more funding for bus services in England (see announcement at **Appendix DAK5**). WECA and North Somerset Council have a £105,488,498 Bus Service Improvement Plan allocation.
- 6.6.6 Government is committed to bus services and major funding is being given to the WECA area. I would expect bus provision to increase in the future.
- 6.6.7 The Appellant has been accepting of the need to provide a bus contribution with the proposed development and has sought, through NRP, to determine an appropriate level of contribution commensurate with its scale. This matter should have been addressed before now, however it has been difficult to engage with WECA. A contribution of £400,000 over 5 years has been offered by the Appellant which equates to £2,222 per dwelling. This is significant in my judgement and will benefit the whole village community,
- 6.6.8 How this contribution is used is for WECA to decide. NRP have sought to assist the process through bus modelling that suggests the 84/85 service can be redesigned into a viable hourly service in the weekday with the possibility of a 30 minute peak period frequency. The Appellant's bus service contribution offer would remove any uncertainty regarding the viability of such a service.
- 6.6.9 It is worth noting that a basic improvement, for the needs of the development would be a shuttle bus service between the development and Yate (without going to Wotton Under Edge). The proposed street layout within the development would allow a bus to turn around, entering one access and leaving the other. This has not been looked at, but could be considered; it offers reduced benefit to the wider Wickwar community.

6.7 The Weight to be Given to any Increased Reliance on Car Borne Transport

- 6.7.1 In this section, I give my opinion of 'Increased reliance on car borne transport' element of the 'Tilted Balance' calculation considered to be moderate adverse by SGC Officers and substantial adverse by Members. I note that the methodology adopted by the SGC Planning Officer was based on the Inspector's decision at the Land West of Park Farm Inquiry (Appeal Decision APP/P0119/W/21/3288019) and she considered the transport improvements at that site of significant benefit:
- 162. The provision of the sustainable transport link and the extension to the bus service would help to improve the accessibility credentials of the site. However, on the evidence it would also make the provision for the Park Farm development viable. Without the appeal scheme it seems unlikely that the adjoining development will have a proximate bus service for its residents to use. For this reason, I consider it to be a benefit of significant weight.*
- 6.7.2 In weighing up this element of the tilted balance, I have given consideration to the NPPF, the proposed development's travel characteristics and the proposed transport improvements.
- 6.7.3 Chapter 9 of the NPPF outlines the requirement for planning applications to consider the transport issues at the earliest stage of planning.

- 6.7.4 In reference to carborne travel, planning applications should limit the need to travel by offering a “genuine choice of transport modes”. It is made clear that sustainable transport opportunities will differ between rural and urban areas and so this should be taken into account in the process.
- 6.7.5 The following criteria highlight what planning applications need to do in order to minimise the impact of carborne travel:
- “support an appropriate mix of uses...to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;
 - identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development; and
 - provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans).”
- 6.7.6 The proposed development includes a shop to reduce the length of shopping journeys for existing and future residents of Wickwar. The proposed development does not adversely affect routes. The proposed development will have an attractive and well-designed walking and cycling network and improvements are made to connections. These criteria are met for a more rural area.
- 6.7.7 Further, Paragraphs 105 to 113 of the Framework address promotion of sustainable transport and the key elements are considered with regard to paragraphs 106, 110, 111, 112 and 113 and set out in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Promotion of Sustainable Transport (reference: NPPF)

NPPF Paragraph	Actions taken	Has it been addressed? (Y/N)
Includes appropriate measures to promote and encourage take-up of sustainable transport modes (110 a);	Residential Travel Plan submitted	Y
Provides safe and suitable access for all users (110 b)	The results and findings of the traffic modelling at the northern site access and southern site access as set out in the Transport Assessment are agreed. Access and highway mitigation proposals agreed.	Y
Includes cost effective measures to mitigate all significant impacts on the transport network and on highway safety (110 d);	MOVA is a cost-effective mitigation measure proposed for the High street traffic signals.	Y
Does not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe (111).	The Highway Safety Record (Section 3.5 of TA01) is good. No severe impact.	Y

Gives priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport (112 a);	<p>S106 agreement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A zebra crossing provided at the southern access; • Footway extensions; and • Bus service contribution and bus stop improvements. 	Y
Addresses the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility (112 b);	<p>S106 agreement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayfaring signs, dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Burleigh Way, Amberley Way and Inglestone Road. 	Y
Creates a safe, secure and attractive place that would minimise conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles (112 c);	<p>S106 agreements by appellants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A southbound bus stop with footway extensions; • A zebra crossing, with footway extensions to tie into the new southbound bus stop; 	Y
Allows for efficient delivery of goods and access for emergency service vehicles (112 d);	The Masterplan layout as given in Drawing no BLOA3039_3001-H Framework Masterplan is acceptable	Y/N
Will be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations (112 e); and	The Masterplan layout as given in Drawing no BLOA3039_3001-H Framework Masterplan is acceptable	Y/N
Will provide a travel plan (113).	Travel Plan submitted 15.08.2023	Y

6.7.8 It is demonstrated in Table 6.3 that the identified elements of the NPPF have been addressed as appropriate with the outline planning application. Two items, delivery and servicing and Electric Vehicle Charging will be addressed in the reserved matters application/s.

6.7.9 The 2011 census showed that driving a car or van to work in Wickwar was higher than the national average for England & Wales (reference section 6.2 of the TA) and the level of car or van ownership in the village was also higher than the national average (reference section 6.3 of the TA). However, this is not unsurprising for a village and the census reveals the walking and cycling mode share at 6.7% and the public transport mode share at 2.6% (Table 6.1 of the TA) and whilst not high, demonstrates that sustainable travel exists on foot, by cycle, by bus and by rail and offers a basis for improvement.

- 6.7.10 The 2021 census data showed that driving to work was higher than the national average for England & Wales at 83.6% compared to the national average of 61%. The level of car or van ownership in Wickwar is higher than the national average. The percentage of households without access to a car or van is 4.6% compared to 22% for England & Wales. Over half (65.6%) of households have access to two or more cars or vans which is significantly higher than the England & Wales national average (33%). However, this is not unsurprising for a village and the census reveals the walking and cycling mode share at 8.6% and the public transport mode share at 1% and whilst not high, demonstrates that sustainable travel exists on foot, by cycle, by bus and by rail and offers a basis for improvement.
- 6.7.11 It is evident that there are a noteworthy number of facilities in Wickwar which can be walked or cycled to by residents of the proposed development and existing public transport opportunities. The proposed shop and the proposed bus improvements will increase the level of sustainable travel by Wickwar residents overall which is beneficial. The average length of car journeys is unlikely to be high given the proximity of Wickwar to Chipping Sodbury and Yate and their comprehensive array of facilities.
- 6.7.12 Having considered the policy, travel characteristics and proposed transport improvements being put forward as part of the proposed development I cannot agree with SGC Members or Officers that there will be an increased reliance on car borne transport. I would judge the proposed development to offer significant benefit in respect of reliance of car borne journeys within the planning balance calculation.

6.8 Residents Consultation Responses

- 6.8.1 A significant number of local residents have objected to the proposed development and transport and highways issues predominate. I would comment as follows on the key matters as set out in Table 5.7:
- Facilities – The highway infrastructure can support further development in the village and whilst the village would not support a full range of facilities, and nor would it be expected to, the proposed shop is a significant addition reducing car reliance.
 - General traffic – The traffic impact is acceptable and additional traffic from the proposed and committed development can be accommodated by the highway network. The speed tables have reduced speeds and will not have increased traffic levels through the village. The village does not suffer from traffic congestion or significant queuing.
 - Safety – The highway safety record in Wickwar is good and the proposed scheme includes a number of improvements for pedestrians and cyclists including crossings that offer safety benefits that outweigh increased risk caused by a small increase in traffic flows on the B4060. Adherence to the weight restriction by HGVs will not be materially impacted by the proposed development.
 - Motorway Junction – It is agreed with National Highways that the proposed development does not have a material impact on M5 Junction 14.
 - Traffic Signals – The existing traffic signals can accommodate the proposed and committed development as agreed with the Highway Authority. The proposed development will fund MOVA which improves operation by 10% , typically.
 - Diversions – The proposed highway improvements are unlikely to affect existing traffic patterns.
 - Parking – Parking problems in Wickwar are unlikely given the scale of the development and the ease to walk and cycle to the High Street.
 - Bus services – bus service options exist and the proposed development provides a bus contribution.
- 6.8.2 It is understandable that existing local residents will have fears and concerns when a new development is proposed. However, the fears and concerns raised have been addressed during planning and in consultation with the highway authorities. It is my hope that residents would benefit from the local shop and the transport improvements that come with the development.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 This evidence considers the transport and highways implications of the proposed development for 180 dwellings and a shop of up to 500m² at Sodbury Road, Wickwar.
- 7.1.2 The proposed development is sustainable giving due encouragement to public transport, cycling and walking trips. The proposed development includes off-site highway infrastructure improvements and is supported by a Residential Travel Plan which provides a package of measures to reduce car use. The proposed development will make a suitable bus service contribution.
- 7.1.3 Future residents from the proposed development will be able to walk or cycle to a number of local facilities in the high street including a pub, a coffee shop, and a hair salon. It is also possible to walk or cycle to the local primary school and the village playing fields. I have carried out an evaluation of the active travel routes between the high street and the primary school, these are mostly good or acceptable. It is possible for cyclists to easily access the National Cycle Route from the proposed development.
- 7.1.4 The proposed shop will be available to the whole village community and will be in walking and cycling distance of existing residents. This will undoubtedly result in a reduction of car-based food shopping trips for existing residents in Wickwar.
- 7.1.5 I consider that the proposed development has existing public transport options most notably the 84/85 service, the Westlink DDRT service and Yate Park and Ride which is a short drive away. Provision is practically the same, if not better, than when previous developments in the village were awarded planning permission with no bus service contribution. It could be argued no bus contribution is required with the proposed development. Nonetheless, a bus contribution of £400,000 over 5 years has been offered by the Appellant so that WECA can improve services in the village.
- 7.1.6 The development has been the subject of extensive transport assessment work that has been agreed with the appropriate highway authorities, South Gloucestershire Council for the Local Road Network and National Highways for the Strategic Road Network.
- 7.1.7 Local residents have raised many transport and highways concerns with the proposal, however I consider that these have been addressed in the technical work during planning and in consultation with the highway authorities
- 7.1.8 In respect of the first reason for refusal, I do not agree that the proposed development will result in an increased reliance in car borne journeys. The proposed development meets the requirements of Chapter 9 of the NPPF offering a Residential Travel Plan, a sizeable bus contribution and other transport and highway improvements. I consider that the proposed development to offer a significant benefit in respect of reliance of car borne journeys within the planning balance calculation.
- 7.1.9 A Section 106 Agreement with suitable transport improvements will address the second reason for refusal.
- 7.1.10 In conclusion, I consider that the proposed development is sustainable and in accordance with policy and will secure highway improvements and an appropriate bus contribution as well as a local shop for the benefit of the local community. I, therefore, respectfully request that the proposed development is allowed to proceed.

8 STATEMENT OF TRUTH AND DECLARATIONS

8.1 Statement of Truth

- 8.1.1 I confirm that insofar as the facts stated in my Proof of Evidence are within my own knowledge I have made clear which they are and I believe them to be true, and that the opinions I have expressed represent my true and complete professional opinion.

8.2 Declarations

- 8.2.1 I confirm that my report includes all facts which I regard as being relevant to the opinions I have expressed, and that attention has been drawn to any matter which would affect the validity of those opinions.
- 8.2.2 I confirm that my duty to the planning appeal process overrides any duty to those instructing or paying me, that I have understood this duty and complied with it in giving my evidence impartially and objectively, and I will continue to comply with that duty as required.
- 8.2.3 I confirm that I am not instructed under any conditional fee arrangement.
- 8.2.4 I confirm that I have no conflicts of interest of any kind other than those already disclosed in my report.

Signed:



Name: David Knight

Date: 2nd October 2023

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