



Agenda

Planning Committee

Date:	Thursday, 18 th January 2018 at 2:00pm
Venue:	Community Centre, Mill Street, Kirkham, PR4 2AN
Committee members:	<p>Councillor Trevor Fiddler (Chairman)</p> <p>Councillor Richard Redcliffe (Vice-Chairman)</p> <p>Councillors Christine Akeroyd, Jan Barker, Michael Cornah, Neil Harvey, Kiran Mulholland, Linda Nulty, Liz Oades, Heather Speak, Ray Thomas.</p>

Public Speaking at the Planning Committee

Members of the public may register to speak on individual planning applications: see [Public Speaking at Council Meetings](#).

	PROCEDURAL ITEMS:	PAGE
1	Declarations of Interest: Declarations of interest, and the responsibility for declaring the same, are matters for elected members. Members are able to obtain advice, in writing, in advance of meetings. This should only be sought via the Council's Monitoring Officer. However, it should be noted that no advice on interests sought less than one working day prior to any meeting will be provided.	1
2	Substitute Members: Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 25.	1
	DECISION ITEMS:	
3	Planning Matters	3 - 15

Contact: Lyndsey Lacey-Simone - Telephone: (01253) 658504 – Email: democracy@fylde.gov.uk

The code of conduct for members can be found in the council's constitution at
<http://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/DocumentsandInformation/PublicDocumentsandInformation.aspx>

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Planning Committee Index

18 January 2018

Item No:	Application No:	Location/Proposal	Recomm.	Page No.
1	14/0440	<p>ROSEACRE HALL FARM, ROSEACRE ROAD, TREALES ROSEACRE AND WHARLES, PRESTON, PR4 3UE</p> <p>COUNTY MATTER APPLICATION: LCC/2014/0101</p> <p>PROPOSAL: CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A SITE FOR DRILLING UP TO FOUR EXPLORATORY WELLS, HYDRAULIC FRACTURING OF THE WELLS, TESTING FOR HYDROCARBONS, ABANDONMENT OF THE WELLS AND RESTORATION, INCLUDING PROVISION OF ACCESS ROADS AND IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESSES ONTO THE HIGHWAY, SECURITY FENCING, LIGHTING AND OTHER USES ANCILLARY TO THE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PIPELINE AND A CONNECTION TO THE GAS GRID NETWORK AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO LAND WEST, NORTH AND EAST OF ROSEACRE WOOD AND BETWEEN ROSEACRE ROAD, ROSEACRE AND INSKIP ROAD, WHARLES</p> <p>LOCATION: AGRICULTURAL LAND THAT FORMS PART OF ROSEACRE HALL, TO THE WEST, NORTH AND EAST OF ROSEACRE WOOD, AND LAND THAT FORMS PART OF THE DEFENCE HIGH FREQUENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE (DHFCS) SITE BETWEEN ROSACRE ROAD AND INSKIP ROAD, OFF ROSEACRE ROAD AND INSKIP ROAD, ROSEACRE AND WHARLES, PRESTON</p>	Object	5

Background Papers

In accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, the background papers used in the compilation of reports relating to planning applications are listed below, except for such documents that contain exempt or confidential information defined in Schedule 12A of the Act.

- Fylde Borough Local Plan (As Altered) October 2005 (Saved Policies)
- Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan
- Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (Submission Version) December 2016
- Bryning-with-Warton Neighbourhood Plan
- Saint Anne's on The Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan
- National Planning Policy Framework
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 and Addendum I and II November 2014

and May 2015 and Housing Market Requirement Paper 2016

- Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement at 31 March 2017 (as amended July 2017)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Schedule (SHLAA)
- Consultation on Additional Evidence in Support of Fylde Local Plan to 2032 – August 2017
- Other Supplementary Planning Documents, Guidance and evidence base documents specifically referred to in the reports.
- The respective application files
- The application forms, plans, supporting documentation, committee reports and decisions as appropriate for the historic applications specifically referred to in the reports.
- Any additional information specifically referred to in each report.

These Background Documents are available either at www.fylde.gov.uk/resident/planning or for inspection by request at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes.

Planning Committee Schedule

18 January 2018

Item Number: 1

Committee Date: 18 January 2018

Application Reference:	14/0440	Type of Application:	County Application
Applicant:	CUADRILLA ELSWICK LIMITED	Agent :	Arup
Location:	ROSEACRE HALL FARM, ROSEACRE ROAD, TREALES ROSEACRE AND WHARLES, PRESTON, PR4 3UE		
Proposal:	<p>COUNTY MATTER APPLICATION: LCC/2014/0101</p> <p>PROPOSAL: CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A SITE FOR DRILLING UP TO FOUR EXPLORATORY WELLS, HYDRAULIC FRACTURING OF THE WELLS, TESTING FOR HYDROCARBONS, ABANDONMENT OF THE WELLS AND RESTORATION, INCLUDING PROVISION OF ACCESS ROADS AND IMPROVEMENT OF ACCESSES ONTO THE HIGHWAY, SECURITY FENCING, LIGHTING AND OTHER USES ANCILLARY TO THE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PIPELINE AND A CONNECTION TO THE GAS GRID NETWORK AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO LAND WEST, NORTH AND EAST OF ROSEACRE WOOD AND BETWEEN ROSEACRE ROAD, ROSEACRE AND INSKIP ROAD, WHARLES</p> <p>LOCATION: AGRICULTURAL LAND THAT FORMS PART OF ROSEACRE HALL, TO THE WEST, NORTH AND EAST OF ROSEACRE WOOD, AND LAND THAT FORMS PART OF THE DEFENCE HIGH FREQUENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE (DHFCS) SITE BETWEEN ROSACRE ROAD AND INSKIP ROAD, OFF ROSEACRE ROAD AND INSKIP ROAD, ROSEACRE AND WHARLES, PRESTON</p>		
Ward:		Area Team:	Area Team 2
Weeks on Hand:	186	Case Officer:	Mr M Evans
Reason for Delay:	Additional information has been submitted for consideration following a public inquiry.		

If viewing online this is a Google Maps link to the general site location:

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@53.8217489,-2.8781285,4428m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Summary of Recommended Decision: Object

Summary of Officer Recommendation

The applicant now proposes three separate access routes to serve the site rather than the single route previously proposed. Whilst the proposal to spread HGV traffic across three alternative routes rather than relying on a single route will lessen the impact on any one route, the additional red and green routes that have been proposed would introduce additional HGV traffic onto the Thistleton junction of the A585. The operation of this junction is known to be of concern to Highways England. There would also be potential for conflict with other road users, including vulnerable users such as pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and children using the routes that are proposed to be used and to access the facilities such as schools and play areas that are located along them. There is potential for a

greater number of vulnerable users to be using the highway within the environs of the villages through which the proposed access routes pass. As the red and green routes would pass through the centre of Elswick before they split it is considered that there is an increased risk of conflict in this location. The additional routes also include a number of tight 90 degree (and tighter) bends that would be difficult to negotiate in a large articulated vehicle without crossing onto the opposite side of the carriageway even where the carriageway can be widened to assist turning movements.

Although the peak traffic flows would only be experienced over a limited period of time, on balance, it is considered that the impact of the proposal would have an adverse impact on highway safety. The inspector previously expressed concern regarding a number of issues including the need for large HGVs to cross onto the opposite side of the carriageway at a number of bends and junctions. The appellant previously relied on the anticipated skills of the drivers of these vehicles as a large part of the mitigation of risk associated with such manoeuvres and this was not accepted by the Inspector or the SoS. The revised scheme still includes a number of junctions at which large vehicles would have to or are likely to cross onto the opposite side of the carriageway. In addition, it is considered that the use of part time traffic lights on part of Dagger Road which, it is proposed, would show green in both directions when not being used by HGV's, would have the potential for drivers of light vehicles to falsely assume that they have right of way, which it is also considered would be a hazard to highway safety.

On that basis, it is recommended that LCC be advised that this council considers that matters of highway safety have not been adequately addressed. It is also recommended that the views of Highways England be obtained in regard to the proposed increase in turning movements at the A585 Thistleton Junction.

Reason for Reporting to Committee & Background to the Report

Consultations on applications to be determined by Lancashire County Council would normally be considered and presented by officers in line with the approved scheme of delegation. However, Members have previously considered this particular proposal and have also requested that all applications relating to hydrocarbon gas exploration and extraction be considered by committee.

This proposal was originally considered by Committee on 17 September 2014 when Members resolved:

"That this Council recommends that the County Planning Authority be satisfied that the below and above ground operations will not have any significant adverse impacts, as well as ensuring the views of the County Highway Authority, County Archaeologist and County Ecologist are addressed in full in particular in respect of policies SP2, TR9, TREC10, EP10, EP11, EP13, EP13, EP14, EP15, EP18, EP19, EP21, EP22, EP23, EP24 and EP25.

Notwithstanding Lancashire County Council's assessment of the above matters, the proposed drilling operations would result in the introduction of considerable traffic onto the rural highway network and would require alterations that would detract from the character of the rural area and cause significant environmental harm, particularly given the distance of the site from the primary highway network and the uncertainty surrounding the alternative access arrangements through HMS Inskip. In addition to the noise and general disturbance from 24 hour drilling operations and associated activity that would be significant, as would the impact on Roseacre Wood.

For these reasons it is recommended that LCC be advised that this Council raises objections to the proposal and recommends that planning permission be refused a[s] being contrary to the provisions of Policy DM2 of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Policies EP12, EP26, EP27 and EP28 of the Fylde Borough Local Plan which are considered to be in conformity with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Furthermore, Lancashire County Council be asked to invite a member of this Council's Development Management Committee to address its Planning Committee prior to the determination of the application.

It was also resolved that the comments of this Council's Environmental Protection Team as considered by the Committee be forwarded to the County Planning Authority for consideration."

Planning permission was ultimately refused by Lancashire County Council on 25 June 2015 and an appeal was submitted resulting in a public inquiry being held to consider this proposal, alongside another proposed exploration site at Preston New Road, Westby and the proposed monitoring arrays for the two sites. The inquiry sat on various days between 9 February and 16 March 2016. On 6 October 2016, the Secretary of State (SoS), who had recovered the applications for his own consideration, issued his decision letter.

Whilst the SoS granted planning permission for the Preston New Road exploration site and the monitoring arrays, he agreed with the inspector's concerns relating to highway safety matters at the Roseacre Hall Farm site. As much of this concern related to the failure of the appellant to provide adequate evidence that they had properly considered and addressed the highway safety issues, and the failure of the Appellant to demonstrate that the proposed mitigation would be workable in practice, he decided to give the Appellant and other parties the opportunity to provide further evidence on highway safety and for parties to make any representations on that before reaching a final decision on this appeal. Subject to being satisfied that the highway safety issues can be satisfactorily addressed, the Secretary of State has stated that he is minded to allow the appeal and grant planning permission, subject to conditions.

Accordingly, the appellant has submitted new information relating to highways matters, including relevant updates to their Environmental Statement and the public inquiry will be reopened on 10 April 2018.

Whilst containing some contextual background information, this report focuses on addressing the additional highway information submitted by the appellant only, and does not cover the wider implications of the development as these are not the subject of this consultation.

Site Description and Location

The Roseacre Wood application site is in agricultural use and is bordered on all sides by farmland. The application site also includes the existing track through the Defence High Frequency Communications Service (DHFCS) Inskip site between Roseacre Road and Inskip Road.

The Exploration Site itself is located approximately equidistant between Blackpool and Preston in the centre of the Fylde. It is situated approximately 400 metres southeast of the village of Roseacre and some 800m north-west of the village of Wharles.

The Exploration Site is located approximately 500m from Roseacre Road (a minor road linking the

villages of Elswick, Roseacre and Wharles).

The closest residential properties are Roseacre Hall to the north, a group of properties at Stanley Farm to the north east and Old Orchard Farm located to the south east. The closest settlement to the Site is the village of Roseacre. The village is rural in character, dominated by large agricultural sheds associated with Roseacre Hall Farm and Post Farm. There are residential properties of differing styles and ages extending along Roseacre Lane. Similar in character and form, and located to the south east, is the village of Wharles. The larger village of Elswick can be found 2km to the north-west, which exhibits more modern development around its edges.

An area of woodland (Roseacre Wood) is located adjacent to the agricultural access track between Roseacre Road and the Site, and is some 200m from the Site boundary. Holmes Wood, a rectangular block of woodland, is located about 500m south-west of the Site.

The area for the access track to the Site from Roseacre Road and the Extended Well Test (EWT) connection is approximately 2.44 ha and is also in agricultural use, bounded by agricultural land and Roseacre Wood.

The application site (the total surface work area) extends to 6.54 hectares (ha) and the total area within which the below ground works would be located is 470 ha.

The proposed access passes through DHFCS Inskip which is a sensitive communications facility forming part of a global communications network.

The Exploration Site is predominantly surrounded by a combination of pasture and several arable fields. Field boundaries to the medium sized field parcels are marked by a combination of native hedgerows and post and wire fencing. Hedgerow trees are largely absent in the proximity of the Site, but mature trees are found in association with farms and individual properties. Deciduous woodlands, such as Holmes Wood and Roseacre Wood are visually prominent in the surrounding area.

Details of Proposal

The application site in respect of the Exploration Works comprises of four elements:

1. The well pad area, including the bunding, drainage and fencing associated with the well pad. The exploration works would be undertaken from this area,
2. The “access road” to the site from the A583,
3. The land required for pipelines and connections to the gas grid network,
4. The “underground works” associated with the drilling of the lateral wells and the hydraulic fracturing and testing associated with these wells.

The original scheme, i.e. as considered at the previous planning inquiry, proposed a single access route to the site from the A583 to the south via Lodge Lane, Clifton Lane, Station Road, Dagger Road and Salwick Road passing through DHFCS Inskip before accessing the site.

In order to minimise HGV impact on any one route and to enable more than one access to the Site from the surrounding A roads, the appellant now proposes a multi-route strategy. In addition to the original access route from the south (now referred to as the blue route), the revised proposal introduces two new HGV Routes (green and red routes) both of which would gain access to the Site via the A585 at Thistleton. These routes are shown on the plan at the end of this report.

The green route would run from A585 to the Site via B5269 Thistleton Road, Elswick High Street and Roseacre Road. The red route would also run from the A585 to the Site via B5269 Thistleton Road and Elswick High Street, but rather than turning down Roseacre Road, it would continue along Lodge Lane, Preston Road and Higham Side Road before passing through the DHFCS Inskip facility; and entering the site. Egress would be along the reversed routes.

The appellant advises that The Secretary of State for Defence has now agreed that they may route HGVs through the DHFCS Inskip facility. This would allow HGVs to bypass the village of Wharles during the main construction, mobilisation and decommissioning phases, although access would still be via Wharles village during the extended flow testing period.

The appellant proposes to construct a series of passing places along each of the access routes to supplement the passing places each route is currently able to provide. Each of the passing places is intended to ensure that the carriageway has a sufficient width to allow two 6 axle, 44 tonne, articulated lorries to pass, and so these are of different sizes to address the local situations in each case.

It is also proposed to provide temporary traffic signals on a section of Dagger Road that does not have sufficient width for two HGVs to pass or sufficient verge width to provide suitable passing places. The traffic signals would only be activated when any two HGVs are travelling on Dagger Road at the same time in opposite directions. For all other times, a green signal would be provided for both streams of traffic to enable two-way working as is currently the case on this road.

In order to minimise disruption and ensure safe and efficient working, the appellant proposes to operate in accordance with a Traffic Management Plan (which could be secured by a planning condition). The proposal seeks to control traffic movements by:

- committing to use of the DHFCS Inskip route for HGVs during all phases of the project other than during the extended flow test (EFT) when vehicle movements would be lower and limited to no more than 6 two-way HGVs per day (i.e. 3 HGVs in and 3 HGVs out) via Wharles,
- restricting HGV movements to and from the Site to a maximum of 50 two-way HGV movements per day (i.e. 25 HGVs in and 25 HGVs out of the Site per day),
- restricting the number of times mobilisation and demobilisation (i.e. transporting plant and equipment to/from the Site) occurs over the course of the Project to no more than twice for the drilling rig and no more than twice for the hydraulic fracturing equipment,
- limiting access and egress by HGVs to weekdays between 07:30 –18:30
- to reduce the impact of the project on vulnerable users who use the roads at weekends for leisure activities (i.e. cycle clubs, equestrians, ramblers etc), proposing that no HGV deliveries take place on weekends or public holidays, except in an operational emergency and agreed in advance with the police

Relevant Planning History

Application No.	Development	Decision	Date
14/0089.	CONSULTATION ON SCOPING OPINION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A WELL PAD, DRILLING	Additional Details Required	03/03/2014

AND HYDRAULIC FRACTURING OF FOUR
EXPLORATORY BOREHOLES, TESTING
PROCEDURES AND RESTORATION OF SITE

Relevant Planning Appeals History

None – N.B. the appeal relating to this site has not yet been determined and is therefore still current.

Parish/Town Council Observations

As this is a "county matter" consultation with the Parish Council is carried out directly by Lancashire County Council.

Neighbour Observations

As this is a "county matter" neighbour notification is carried out directly by Lancashire County Council. Any responses received by Fylde Council have been forwarded to the County Planning Authority for their consideration. In determining the application, the County Council are required to take account of any responses they receive, including those of Fylde Council who are also acting in the role of consultee in regard to this proposal.

Relevant Planning Policy

Fylde Borough Local Plan:

- SP02 Development in countryside areas
- SP09 Diversification of rural economy
- TR09 Car parking within new developments
- TREC10 Countryside Recreation
- EP10 Protection of important landscape and habitat features
- EP11 Building design & landscape character
- EP12 Conservation trees & woodland
- EP13 Planting of trees, hedgerows and woodland
- EP14 Landscaping of new developments
- EP15 Protection of European wildlife sites
- EP18 Natural features
- EP19 Protected species
- EP21 Archaeology
- EP22 Protection of agricultural land
- EP23 Pollution of surface water
- EP24 Pollution of ground water
- EP25 Development and waste water
- EP26 Air pollution
- EP27 Noise pollution
- EP28 Light pollution
- EP30 Development within floodplains
- EP31 Managing water resources

Fylde Local Plan to 2032:

- CL1 Flood Alleviation, Water Quality and Water Efficiency

CL2	Surface Water Run-Off and Sustainable Drainage
ENV1	Landscape
GD1	Settlement Boundaries
GD4	Development in the Countryside
GD7	Achieving Good Design in Development
INF1	Service Accessibility and Infrastructure
SL5	Development Sites outside Strategic Locations for Devt
T5	Parking Standards

Minerals and Waste Local Plan/Core Strategy:

CS1	Safeguarding Mineral Resources
CS5	Achieving Sustainable Minerals Production
NPPF1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DM2	Development Management

Other Relevant Policy:

NPPF:	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG:	National Planning Practice Guidance

Environmental Impact Assessment

The application is supported by Planning Statement, Environmental Statement (ES) and Non Technical Summary. The ES provides a full description and assessment of the following:

- The application site and surroundings
- A description of the proposed development
- Scheme alternatives
- Air Quality
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Community and socio economics
- Ecology
- Hydrogeology and ground gas
- Induced seismicity
- Landuse
- Landscape and visual amenity
- Lighting
- Noise
- Resources and waste
- Transport
- Water resources
- Public health

Additional information has been submitted and the application revised to include a number of proposed off site highway works. The elements of the supporting statements that addressed traffic and highway safety matters have been updated as has the Environmental Statement.

Comment and Analysis

As this application relates to the winning and working of minerals, Lancashire County Council (LCC) are the relevant planning authority who are presenting evidence to the inquiry.. As part of their consideration of the revised evidence, they are seeking the views of this Council through this consultation. A number of organisations and individuals have chosen to forward their views to this Council and, these have been forwarded to LCC for their consideration.

The Secretary of State has indicated that the inquiry will be reopened in order to consider additional evidence relating solely to highways and access matters.

He has already concluded that, apart from the matter of highway safety, the various other impacts associated with the proposed development, including cumulative impacts, could be reduced to acceptable levels.

The consideration of this proposal therefore turns upon whether the access arrangements now proposed have sufficiently addressed the concerns previously expressed by the inspector.

Lancashire County Council are the highway authority and this council does not, at the time of writing this report, have access to the views of the highway authority on the revised proposals. Clearly their opinion on the proposed access arrangements will be a key consideration in the determination of the reopened inquiry. Members will recall that when this application was last considered by this committee, consideration was restricted to the matters upon which it felt able to comment and detailed matters, including those of highway safety were left to the county council to address.

Whilst this is still the case, this council does now have the benefit of the considerations of the Inspector and the Secretary of State in regard to the short comings of the previous proposal. The scheme has been amended in order to introduce three separate access routes as well as proposing the construction of a number of passing places along these routes and introducing part time traffic lights along a length of Dagger Road. These mitigation works have been informed by additional survey work carried out on behalf of the appellant.

The passing places can be formed within the existing verges of the highway and will generally only require very limited widening of the carriageway. On that basis, it is considered that the proposed works would not have such a significant impact on the character of the area so as to object to their provision on visual amenity grounds, and are not considered to bring significant changes to the character of the rural roads that are to be subject to these works. Many of the passing places are proposed in places where there is already evidence of existing road users running onto the verge and so the works may be considered to assist in addressing an existing problem that is evident from normal highway operations.

Whilst the number of HGV movements is proposed to be capped at a maximum of 50, for the majority of days throughout the Project there will be less than 25 HGVs travelling to and from the Site. The peak movement are programmed to occur for a total of up to 12 weeks, including a period of four weeks during construction, four one-week periods for mobilisation and demobilisation of equipment, and a period of four weeks for well suspension and site restoration.

For the remainder of the period traffic flows are expected to be at the lower level during which time, the route via Wharles would be used rather than the DHFCS Inskip private road section. Subject to a condition capping the number of HGVs passing through Wharles, this arrangement has been accepted by the Secretary of State.

Each of the three access routes proposed pass along considerable lengths of narrow rural lane which

are of restricted width at certain points so that it would not allow two HGV vehicles to pass. Accordingly, the appellant has now proposed to construct a series of passing places.

In considering the original proposal, The Secretary of State considered that:

“the proposed development would have a serious and very significant adverse impact on the safety of people using the public highway. On the evidence before him he considers that it is not possible to conclude that the demonstrable harm associated with that issue would be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level.”

The local roads are well used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists. Whilst much of this use occurs during the weekend when it is proposed to suspend access to the site by HGVs, the local highway network is used during weekdays by a number of vulnerable users. Despite the introduction of the passing places, there is still potential for conflict to occur between these vulnerable users and the large HGVs that are proposed to access the site along these routes.

The dog-leg junction next to the Hand and Dagger Pub was previously identified as being particularly awkward to negotiate, involving complex manoeuvres and crossing a busy road at an existing public house. Whilst the introduction of alternative routes could reduce the number of vehicles using this particular junction, the geometry of this junction remains unaltered in the revised proposal and so concern must remain over the safety of this junction.

Whilst the two additional routes would dilute the HGV movements on any one stretch of road, the red and green routes would utilise the Thistleton junction on the A585. As all consultations have been carried out by LCC, Fylde Council does not have any comments from Highways England about the suitability of this junction to cater for the number and nature of the additional movements. From consideration of other proposals that have had potential to impact upon this junction, and through the preparation of the local plan, Fylde Council is aware that Highways England have concerns about the safety of this junction and the potential adverse impacts that may come from the increased use of this junction. There is clearly potential for the development to add to the number of large, slow moving heavy goods vehicles turning into and out of this junction. It is considered, therefore, that the views of Highways England must be sought in regard to this matter.

The additional access routes have a number of narrow stretches and tight narrow bends where visibility is restricted by vegetation or buildings, as well as passing through several small settlements where there are likely to be a greater number of vulnerable highway users. It is considered that the additional access routes are not appropriate to accommodate the large vehicles proposed to service the site and could actually be considered to be less appropriate than the original access route to the south.

Conclusions

Whilst the proposal to spread HGV traffic across three alternative routes rather than relying on a single route will lessen the impact on any one route through the dilution of traffic flows, the additional red and green routes that have been proposed would introduce additional HGV traffic onto the Thistleton junction of the A585. The operation of this junction is known to be of concern to Highways England. There would also be potential for conflict with other road users, including vulnerable users such as pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and children using the routes that are proposed to be used and to access the facilities such as schools and play areas that are located along them. There is potential for a greater number of vulnerable users to be using the highway within the environs of the villages through which the proposed access routes pass. As the red and green routes would pass through the centre of Elswick before they split it is considered that there is an

increased risk of conflict in this location. The additional routes also include a number of tight 90 degree (and tighter) bends that would be difficult to negotiate in a large articulated vehicle without crossing onto the opposite side of the carriageway even where the carriageway can be widened to assist turning movements.

Although the peak traffic flows would only be experienced over a limited period of time, on balance, it is considered that the impact of the proposal would have an adverse impact on highway safety. The Inspector and SoS previously expressed concern regarding a number of issues including the need for large HGVs to cross onto the opposite side of the carriageway at a number of bends and junctions. The appellant previously relied on the anticipated skills of the drivers of these vehicles as a large part of the mitigation of risk associated with such manoeuvres and this was not accepted by the Inspector or the SoS. The revised scheme still includes a number of junctions at which large vehicles would have to or are likely to cross onto the opposite side of the carriageway. In addition, it is considered that the use of part time traffic lights on part of Dagger Road which, it is proposed, would show green in both directions when not being used by HGV's, would have the potential for drivers of light vehicles to falsely assume that they have right of way, which it is also considered would be a hazard to highway safety.

Recommendation

On that basis, it is recommended that LCC be advised that this council considers that matters of highway safety have not been adequately addressed and that the proposed red and green routes which are along narrow country roads with tight bends and restricted forward visibility are not appropriate as an alternative or additional access to the appeal site. It is also recommended that the views of Highways England be obtained in regard to the proposed increase in turning movements at the A585 Thistleton Junction.

