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# TECHNICAL NOTE FOR FITTLEWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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**PROPOSAL:** Land at The Fleet, Fittleworth  
**OUR REF:** GDB/5512/TN.1  
**Planning Ref:** SDNP/20/03676/FUL  
**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bellamy Roberts have been asked to provide a Technical Note advising on highway related concerns in respect of the above planning application. The development comprises 14 dwellings, 12 of which are to be served by a new access directly from The Fleet, with the other 2 served by a private drive from Limbourne Lane.
- 1.2 The Fleet forms part of the A283 and in the vicinity of the proposed development it is a long straight section of road subject to a 40mph speed limit. There is residential development along the southern side of the road opposite the proposed development site together with a footway which runs continuously along that side of the road into the main part of the village. There is no footway along the northern side of the road. There is a westbound bus stop opposite part of the site frontage, to the east of the proposed new access, and an eastbound bus stop some 45m east of Limbourne Lane. These bus stops are served by the Service 1 which provides hourly links to Petworth and Pulborough.
- 1.3 The proposed new access is designed to appropriate standards and achieves 2.4m x 120m sightlines in both directions, consistent with the 40mph speed limit

and measured speeds. The access design was subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

- 1.4 A key concern of the Parish Council relates to the safety aspects of people, including school pupils, crossing The Fleet from the new development to reach the footway on the opposite side of the road for walking into the village or to access the bus stops. At present there is no development on the northern side of this initial length of The Fleet at the commencement of the 40mph speed limit, and the only pedestrian crossing movements are those from people going to and from the eastbound bus stop and or the small number of properties up Limbourne Lane. This will change with the proposed development which is likely to generate school pupils using buses to and from school.
- 1.5 There is a passing reference in the Design and Access Statement to a proposal to relocate the eastbound bus stop to a new position on the site frontage just west of the proposed new site access. There is no reference to this in the text of the Transport Statement, although it is shown on the Site Access Detail plan attached as Figure 3 to the TS (Plan ref. 12569-GA-015 Rev G) and it was addressed by the Road Safety Audit, which raised safety concerns about its location. The proposed new bus stop location is connected to the development by a short length of footway between the site access and the stop. A pedestrian crossing point is shown immediately west of the site access, and this has dropped kerbs and tactile paving.
- 1.6 The Safety Audit report raised concern that the location of the bus stop would create a safety hazard because a bus waiting at the stop would obstruct visibility to the right for drivers pulling out of the site access and could lead to a collision with an eastbound vehicle overtaking the bus. We consider that to be a valid safety concern, but we have an additional concern with this location.
- 1.7 The crossing point is located where it will be immediately in front of a bus, stationary at the stop. That creates a real risk of a person alighting from the bus and walking around the front of it to cross the road whilst other people are still boarding or alighting from the bus. That person would have no visibility of any eastbound vehicle which might be overtaking the bus and there is a real risk of a

collision between that person and the overtaking vehicle. This arrangement is generally considered to be unsafe for that reason.

- 1.8 It is our view that this proposed layout is unacceptable on safety grounds. The bus stop should be moved to the eastern side of the new access together with the pedestrian link to and from the site. The pedestrian crossing point would then be located behind the bus stop and between it and the site access. There is still limited visibility for anybody crossing behind the bus but it is significantly better than in the other case, and that is why this arrangement is the normally recommended layout.
- 1.9 A further benefit of this layout is that the pedestrian crossing point is then in the same direction from the access for both bus stops, and is therefore more likely to be used by those heading for the westbound stop.
- 1.10 Given the long straight nature of The Fleet and the introduction of more crossing movements as a result of the proposed development, the crossing point itself should be highlighted in order to make its presence more obvious to drivers. There are various ways in which this might be done but our recommendation would be as follows:
- Timber posts be placed each side of the tactile paving on both sides of the road;
  - The crossing point itself should be surfaced in a contrasting colour;
  - The existing edge of carriageway markings should be moved further out from the kerb lines, by say 150mm, at the crossing point on both sides and tapered back on each side of the crossing over a length of, say, 6m. That will create a perception of carriageway narrowing without actually doing so.
- 1.11 Finally, we are aware of local concerns that the speed limit should be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. Speed limit changes are always controversial and there are a variety of criteria used to determine the appropriate limit. However, WSCC policy seeks to promote the aim of 30mph in all villages, if necessary by relaxing the link to actual speeds.

- 1.12 Whilst the 40mph section of The Fleet does not meet the speed or accident criteria for a 30mph limit, the Route Assessment criteria would be satisfied with the proposed development on the northern side of the road. The extension to the existing 30mph limit would be approximately 450m (the length of the current 40mph limit). There is 360m of frontage development along the south side of the road, and with the proposed new development there would be 280m along the northern side (including existing properties west of the application site). The overlap with development on both sides would be 200m.
- 1.13 The WSCC Route Assessment criteria for a 30mph limit is that there should be at least 30% of the route length with development on both sides of the road or at least 50% with development on one side. In this case the length with development on both sides would be 44% of the total length, and there is 80% of the length with development on one side only. Those criteria are therefore satisfied, and given the WSCC policy to seek 30mph limits in all villages there is a good case to be made for promoting this change.