South of Ravensthorpe Road – JSJV Review

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Overview

National Highways has tasked the Jacobs Systra Joint Venture [JSJV] to review the Transport Assessment [TA] and Travel Plan [TP] produced by Development Planning Limited [DPL] in support of development proposals at Dewsbury Riverside, south of Ravensthorpe Road, planning application reference 2021/93689.

The development proposals are located 5 miles east of M62 Junction 25 and 5.5 miles west of M1 Junction 40.

The Dewsbury Riverside site is allocated within the Kirklees Local Plan Allocations and Designations, and the site forms Local Plan ID HS61. The hybrid planning application comprises:

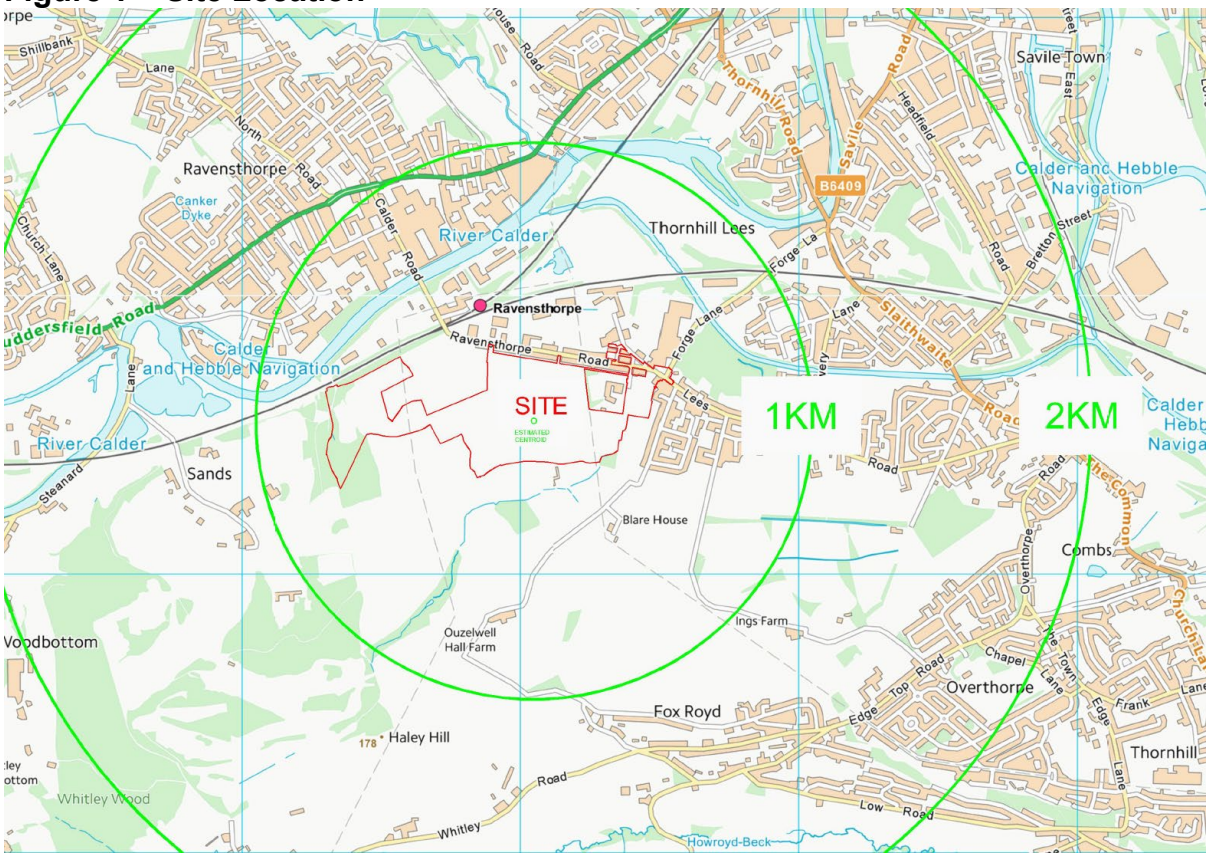
a) Application for full planning permission for engineering works, drainage and utilities connection for the provision of site access from Forge Lane and Ravensthorpe Road and associated works; and

b) Application for outline planning permission for the erection of up to 350 dwellings and mixed-use development (including community facilities) with associated works including the provision of internal estate roads and parking, landscape works (including provision of public open space, tree clearance/replacement/woodland management and ecological management) and sustainable urban drainage works drainage principles.

The Local Plan envisages 1,869 dwellings during the Local Plan period with a potential for a further 2,131 dwellings beyond the plan period. The planning application is for the first phase of the Dewsbury Riverside site, which consists of up to 350 residential properties and ancillary land uses.

There is a potential that the development proposals could impact on the capacity, operation and safety of the Strategic Road Network [SRN], hence the need for this Technical Memorandum [TM]. This TM reviews the TA and TP in the order in which the issues are presented, with a summary and conclusions provided at the end of this document.

Figure 1 – Site Location



Source – TA (Appendix A)

Transport Assessment Review

Highway Safety

The TA states that in order to consider whether there are any existing issues relating to road safety which are relevant to this site, a review of the five-year road traffic accident data on the local highway network has been undertaken for the key routes between the site, key local destinations and the wider transport networks.

The area includes:

- Ravensthorpe Road/ Calder Road;
- Lees Hall Road; and
- Forge Lane.

It is noted by JSJV that the SRN is not included within the study area when considering highway safety.

Proposed Access

It is stated that the development proposals incorporate a two-phase approach to the access to the site. However, given the proximity of the development proposals from the SRN, the access arrangements are not considered to be an issue for National Highways to comment upon.

Furthermore, it is stated that the development proposals for Phase 1 of Dewsbury Riverside scheme is adjacent to existing bus routes and the majority of the scheme is within 800m of the train station. This is noted by JSJV.

In addition, it is stated that the proposed pedestrian access points provide direct linkages to the existing bus stops; and that whilst the existing bus stops close to the site do not benefit from shelters, the development proposals will include the upgrading of the two (one bus stop in each direction) existing bus stops to include shelters, lighting and information.

The TA also states that should the supporting infrastructure be available, Real Time Passenger Information screens would be implemented at the new bus stops. In addition, it is stated that as the scheme progresses and houses are occupied, there will be an increased demand for public transport. Discussions will be held with operators to discuss an extension to the operating period of the existing bus routes adjacent to the site (routes 230 / 230A) to cover a post-17:00 service from Dewsbury to the site.

JSJV supports the improvement of public transport routes and infrastructure in relation to the site, as this has the potential to reduce the number of single-occupancy private vehicle trips to and from the site.

Highway Study Area

It is stated in the TA that prior to consideration of potential requirements for mitigation on the wider highway network, consideration must be given to the enabling role that Phase 1 makes to the wider masterplan for 4,000 homes. The development of 350 units in Phase 1 equates to 8.75% of the full 4,000 units proposed.

Furthermore, the TA states that the current planning application is being made in 2021, with Reserved Matters planning applications assumed to be submitted in 2022. A start on site date of 2023 has been agreed with the highway authority as an appropriate opening year for assessment. In addition, it is stated that based upon a build-out of around 50 properties per year across the Phase 1 site, the agreed future year assessment (following completion of development) is 2030, i.e. a seven-year build out.

DPL state that traffic generation and distribution for the development proposals has been undertaken within the highway authority's wide-area traffic model. The wide-area traffic model utilises a macro-simulation traffic model to assess the changes in junction flows across the whole Dewsbury road network.

It is stated that the traffic model has been prepared and is operated by Systra; and is being utilised to assess the impacts of the whole of the Local Plan scheme allocations. As such, the traffic model is the only source of future traffic flow data which aligns with the Local Plan, of which Dewsbury Riverside is a major scheme. Furthermore, it is stated that the use of such a traffic model ensures that the traffic impacts of the Phase 1 development proposals are undertaken on the same basis as all Local Plan development schemes being assessed by the highway authority and is considered by DPL to be suitable for use in assessing the development-generated impacts.

JSJV has considered the trip generation presented within the TA and used within the model, and find them suitable for use for assessment purposes.

It is noted by JSJV that the SRN is not included within the study area for assessment. This is accepted given the quantum of the Phase 1 proposals and the distance of the site from the SRN. However, the entire development quantum at this location does have the potential to impact at the SRN, and this will need to be included within

assessment of future phases coming forward at this location to enable National Highways to take a view on the development proposals.

Travel Plan Review

In broad terms, it is considered that the TP will be a matter for the local authority to satisfy themselves with. However, a reduction of single-occupancy private vehicle trips as a consequence of an effective TP will reduce the impact of the development proposals at the SRN, hence JSJV reviewing the contents of the TP.

It is stated that the objectives of the TP have been designed to be site-specific, whilst reflecting the requirements of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework and local guidance, and are summarised as follows:

- Promoting walking, cycling and public transport as the primary modes of travel;
- To deliver mode shift from car journeys to alternative modes including multioccupancy vehicle trips;
- To reduce vehicle emissions through the take up of alternative transport modes; and
- To deliver education and promotion of walking and cycling as options for a healthier lifestyle.

DPL state that these objectives may change over time due to the results of the surveys, changes within the organisation and changes to the environment around it, however the overall aim of reducing the impact on the road network will remain. JSJV consider the objectives – and the approach taken to the objectives – is supported.

Objectives and Targets

The TP aims to promote travel choice for residents of the development, and hence to increase the use of sustainable transport modes. Overarching targets for the site are to be set once baseline travel surveys have been carried out; and it is stated that any targets set for the TP will need to be 'SMART' i.e. they must be:

- Site-specific;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Realistic; and
- Time related.

This approach is welcomed by JSJV.

DPL state that the target of the TP is to influence behaviour such that:

- Single occupancy car trips are reduced and minimised as much as possible; and
- Access to the site by all other modes, particularly walking, cycling and public transport is promoted, encouraged and enhanced.

The TP states that the minimum target is 5%, with an aim of 7% and a stretch target of 10%; and the TP is to be monitored annually against the targets and additional measures agreed, should the projection be that the 'aim' target may not be met in five years from first occupation. JSJV consider the approaches to target setting to be acceptable.

Roles and Responsibilities

The TP states that the developer will appoint a Travel Plan Co-ordinator [TPC] for the development; and the TPC will be in place three months prior to first occupation and retained for a period of five years, or until the sales on the site are completed, whichever is the latter. Following this, the role will be offered to the residents.

Furthermore, it is stated that prior to the commencement of the initial marketing of the residential units, the TPC shall be appointed and acquire all relevant supporting information required and review the overall content of the document to ensure its currency and relevance. It is considered by JSJV that the approach to appointing the TPC, as well as the proposed timescales, are accepted.

The TP states that the duties of the TPC will include:

- Acting as a single point of contact for all transport, access and travel related issues for the residential units within the development;
- Obtaining and providing residents with up-to-date details of information relating to access to the site via sustainable modes, including the provision of weblinks;
- Conducting baseline surveys of the residents;
- Undertake annual surveys and monitoring review report;
- Reviewing the TP;
- Liaison with the highway authority, bus operators and other key stakeholders;
- Ensuring that a Sustainable Travel Leaflet is provided within the residential marketing information packs sent out to potential buyers / tenants as well as providing details of the site's accessibility by sustainable modes within any newsletters; and
- Ensuring that a copy of the TP is available to all new residents on request.

It is noted by JSJV that a DPL member of staff is identified as an interim TPC, and that any change of TPC should be notified to the Council and / or updated on the travel website within one week of the new co-ordinator being in role. This is considered to be an appropriate approach by JSJV.

In addition, it is stated that six months prior to the end of the formal period of the TP that has been delivered by the TPC, the TPC will set up a series of meetings with residents to form a Residents Travel Group.

Measures and Action Plan

Measures detailed within the TP have been reviewed by JSJV and are considered to be appropriate.

Implementation and Communication

It is stated that the TPC will survey the residents following occupation of the 100th dwelling, around two years from opening; and the survey will be undertaken based upon the questionnaire contained at Appendix D within the TP. JSJV have reviewed the survey and found it to be appropriate for use.

Furthermore, it is stated that the TPC shall collate the results of the survey and forward the information to the highway authority within six weeks of the surveys being undertaken.

It is stated that when raising awareness of the TP consideration should be given to different groups that should be targeted i.e. as an initiative; fliers may be provided on buses for bus users or leaflet drops for car drivers to raise awareness. As such, publicity material will include the following:

- Providing details of the site's accessibility by sustainable modes within any newsletters;
- Ensuring that a Sustainable Travel Leaflet is provided to all new residents;
- Provision of a Sustainable Travel Information Leaflet;
- Leaflets on sustainable travel to be displayed in the sales office / show home;
- Cycle route and bus timetable information in Travel Leaflet; and
- A TP email / newsletter – for example a leaflet detailing the launch of a new measure, the advantages of this and who to contact to find out more.

In addition, it is stated that the TPC should consider membership of any local authority Travel Plan Network which may be established during the lifetime of the Travel Plan. Liaison with the local Travel Plan Officer will enable the TPC to consider membership as appropriate organisations are formed.

JSJV consider the overall approach to be acceptable.

Monitoring and Review

It is stated that a successful TP must have an appropriate monitoring programme that measures success (and opportunities for improvement) and reinvigorates the process where necessary.

DPL state that the TPC shall collate the results of the survey, produce an annual monitoring report and forward the information to the highway authority within six weeks of the surveys being undertaken; and the TPC shall agree the following items with the highway authority prior to implementation i.e. an action plan for the next 12 months:

- Any revised specific measures to reduce the numbers of car-borne trips;
- The persons responsible for delivering the changed specific measures;
- Review of the TP;
- The target dates for the implementation of these measures; and
- Any revisions to the modal split targets for the residents as a result of carrying out the baseline survey.

Furthermore, it is stated the Monitoring Report will also review the progress that has been achieved in implementing measures against the modal shift targets over the preceding twelve-month period. The progress made will be reported by the TPC to the relevant external organisations including employers within the vicinity of development, the highway authority, and public transport operators where appropriate.

Following the Monitoring Report, DPL state that the TP will be reviewed as appropriate, and any further actions / measures will be identified and implemented to progress and if necessary, improve the TP to meet objectives and targets. This review should be undertaken in consultation with the highway authority and any other relevant stakeholders.

Potential secondary measures / actions are stated as could include the following:

- Arrange for a local cycle shop to provide a troubleshooting / maintenance day on selected weekends through the year. Promotion of this through marketing would be coordinated by the TPC;
- Seek to arrange promotion for residents of a local cycle store. Promotion of this through marketing would be coordinated by the TPC; and
- Seek to arrange a promotion for residents of a local running / sportswear store to try and increase the number of people walking to local services / employment.

It is stated that the exact measures to be delivered will depend upon where there is considered to be the greatest opportunity to maximise sustainable travel modes.

This approach is considered accepted by JSJV.

Summary and Conclusions

National Highways has tasked the Jacobs Systra Joint Venture [JSJV] to review the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan produced by Development Planning Limited in support of development proposals at Dewsbury Riverside, south of Ravensthorpe Road, planning application reference 2021/93689.

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There is a potential that the development proposals could impact on the capacity, operation and safety of the Strategic Road Network, hence the need for this Technical Memorandum. This TM has reviewed the TA and TP in the order in which the issues are presented.

On the basis of this review, the recommendation to National Highways in relation to this development proposals is:

No objection – the assessment is sufficient to reach this view.

It is noted by JSJV that the SRN is not included within the study area for assessment within the TA. This is accepted given the quantum of the Phase 1 proposals and the distance of the site from the SRN. However, the entire development quantum at this

location does have the potential to impact at the SRN, and this will need to be included within assessment of future phases coming forward at this location to enable National Highways to take a view on the development proposals.

Furthermore, it is considered that the Travel Plan is fit for purpose, although this will be a matter for the local authority to decide upon.