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**Subject : Objection to Proposed Retail Store on Stillington Road, Easingwold**

Dear Mr Saddington,

We are writing in connection with the proposed development of a retail store on land at Stillington Road, Easingwold (planning application number 11/02245/FUL).

We act on behalf of the Co-operative group who operate two convenience stores within the town. We have been commissioned to review the submitted application and supporting documents with regard to highway, transportation and access matters. We set out our considerations below and would ask that you accept this letter as an objection to the application.

The following documents were obtained from Hambleton District Council's Planning Portal for consideration:

- The Transport Assessment prepared by Development Transport Planning
- The Design and Access Statement prepared by WCEC Architects
- Various objection comments by members of the public

We have identified a number of concerns relating to the highways issues regarding the proposed development. These are described in detail in the following paragraphs:

### Site Access

The proposed access to the retail development takes the form of a simple priority junction directly opposite residential properties. Issues which should be considered at accesses are capacity, deliverability and safety, but it is first important to consider the layout at present.

The current arrangement is that a lay by exists along the frontages of the residential properties on Stillington Road. Vehicles accessing those properties drive across that layby onto their driveways. It would appear that the layby feature may have been constructed to allow roadside parking for the properties, whereby parked cars would not obstruct through flows on the main road. It may also have been intended to offer some degree of safety margin or protection for vehicles emerging ( i.e. in practice, reversing) from the driveways onto Stillington Road.





At either end of the layby the frontage reverts to a typical footway and grass verge arrangement which in other circumstances would afford lateral visibility to emerging motorists. The fact that vehicles do park in the layby means that they constitute obstructions in the visibility splays of residential cars emerging from the properties.

We mention this here, even before discussing the form of the proposed access because three principal concerns arise.

Firstly, parking in the layby will increase, either from passing trips stopping roadside or if parking overflows from the carpark. That will obstruct lateral visibility to emerging residents vehicles and will be to the detriment of safe movement from the properties.

Secondly the applicant (TA Fig PM 15) forecasts additional pm peak hour traffic of 137 vehicles on the property side of Stillington road, i.e NW bound. Consequently emerging residents will have an increased conflict with through trips of the order of an extra vehicle every 26 seconds. This is a safety concern.

Thirdly, in the hours of darkness the headlights of emerging store trips will shine directly upon the windows of the residential properties. This is an amenity concern.

Turning to the proposal, it is the case that priority junctions should be designed in accordance with the DMRB TD 42/95 – Geometric Design of Major/Minor Junctions.

TD 42/95 notes that where daily turning movements exceed 300 vehicles, ghost island priority junctions should be provided instead of a simple priority junction. The TA states that the proposed development is forecast to generate 3205 vehicle turning movements on a weekday and 2955 on a Saturday. Both these values are significantly higher than the DMRB threshold however no ghost island has been proposed. To provide a ghost island (central hatching to develop a right turn area, out of the through traffic flow) it is necessary to widen the road over a length of up to 100m and since no such junction is proposed, there is no information as to whether such a layout could be provided without requiring third party land. Deliverability of an acceptable solution has not been demonstrated by the applicant.

If widening took place on the south side it would worsen the lay by issues described above. Moreover, if any widening took place on the site side of the road, that would set back the give way line for exiting shoppers, hence worsening the visibility splay for exiting vehicles. The proposal only offers an x distance of 2.4 m, whereas 4.5m would be the norm for a use of this intensity. Widening for a ghost island would worsen the lateral visibility and this is another safety concern.

### **Access Geometry**

The proposals show that the supermarket access would be used by both customers and delivery vehicles. This raises serious highway safety concerns with regard to conflicting HGV and customer vehicular and pedestrian movements, in particular in relation to the swept paths of large articulated HGVs, as described further below. We are not aware that the applicant has provided Swept Path analyses to show large vehicles turning through the access but it is our strong expectation that such manoeuvres would cross centrelines and conflict with oncoming



vehicles. Indeed it is our understanding that swept path analyses undertaken by other consultants objecting to the proposals shows that a 16.5m articulated HGV cannot satisfactorily access the site.

Large delivery vehicles would also conflict with customer traffic within the site, passing the ends of the two main parking aisles and potentially having to wait in the car park if another vehicle of any size was present in the service yard.

The proposed access to the supermarket is located approximately 35m west (centre line to centre line) of the junction with Leasmires Avenue. It is considered that the close proximity of these junctions could lead to an increase in conflicting vehicular movements. This should be investigated to determine if there is likely to be an increased risk of accidents.

The proposed access to the residential development is located directly opposite the junction with Ingleton Drive. Again it is considered that this would lead to an increase in conflicting vehicular movements and again should be investigated to determine if there is likely to be an increased risk of accidents.

### **Service Vehicle Area**

The proposed service yard is only large enough (and possibly not even large enough) to accommodate one delivery vehicle at a time. In the event that the service yard is occupied there is no room within the yard for another vehicle. This would at best result in delivery vehicles standing in the car park, causing problems for customer traffic and could result in delivery vehicles having to reverse through the car park and back onto the main road i.e. past three internal junctions and through the site access junction. This is another safety concern.

The swept path analysis of the delivery vehicle within the service area is only presented within the Design and Access Statement, with no scale drawings provided. It is unclear from the Design and Access Statement whether the delivery vehicle can actually enter, turn around and exit the service yard without colliding with the site boundary or the surrounding kerbs and landscaping. Further details should be provided by the applicant.

The service yard is directly adjacent to residential properties and consequently there are likely to be amenity concerns here too.

### **Car Park Adequacy**

The unsatisfactory nature of delivery vehicles traversing through and waiting in the car park has been described above.

The planning application states that the development would have 100 full time and 100 part time employees i.e an equivalent number of full time employees of 150. It is not stated what proportion of employees would drive to work but being in a generally rural area the expectation must surely be that the proportion of car drivers would be high. It is for the applicant to satisfy the Planning Committee on this matter, not ourselves however, even if a low proportion of drivers say 50% existed and even if just half of all full time eq staff are present at one time the parking requirement for staff would be 38 staff parking spaces. This would result in a significant loss in the number of available customer parking spaces.



The proposed supermarket car park has 130 spaces which includes 10 for the mobility impaired.

A total of 182 vehicular trips are forecast to arrive at the proposed development during the weekday peak hour. No car parking occupancy calculations have been provided within the TA but it is highly likely that if such an exercise was undertaken overspill parking would be found.

### **Travel Plan**

Given the generally rural nature of the area the proportion of trips by car could be high. There is no substantial detail on sustainable mitigation measures such as would be provided in a travel plan.

According to PPG13 the proposal is of a scale that warrants a Travel Plan. A framework is presented but contains little or no specific detail. For example there are no targets and the timeframe over which a Travel Plan would be operated is not set.

It is not apparent from the publicly available documents whether adequate funding is currently being secured through a S106 agreement to deliver a meaningful Travel Plan in the future. Even if the Committee is minded to approve the application, significant and adequate funding for a Travel Plan should be secured at this stage.

### **Stillington Road/York Road Junction Capacity Assessment**

The 2011 observed traffic flows for this junction are presented in Figures 1-3 of the TA. However, there is no raw traffic survey data presented anywhere in the report, as is the norm for TAs. The observed flows presented suggest that the area is lightly trafficked and the junction works well within capacity. However this contradicts the opinions of local residents with many expressing concerns regarding the amount of traffic using this junction. In addition it is our understanding that traffic counts recently undertaken by a third party consultant showed significant inconsistencies when compared to the flows presented in the TA.

The 2011 assessment of this junction suggests that it currently operates well within capacity with minimal queuing on the Stillington Road arm, however again this contradicts the opinions of a number of local residents who believe considerable queues can be observed at this location. There is no observed queue data presented in the TA thus there has been no validation of the 2011 capacity assessments.

As described in the TA the development is forecast to have a material effect on this junction and in particular on the Stillington Road arm. As there has been no validation of the base year model it is considered that the future year model may not accurately reflect the effects of the proposed development. It is considered that any validated model of the base year model would show existing queuing on the Stillington Road approach which would increase with the addition of the proposed development traffic.

### **Summary**

In summary our review has established the following:

1. The proposed supermarket site access should be in the form of a ghost island junction in accordance with DMRB TD 42/95. Forecast daily turning movements are significantly



above the 300 threshold at which TD 42/95 suggests the provision of a ghost island. Any such provision would require significant works and land take and may reduce the visibility splays at the proposed junction. There is no information before the Planning Committee to show that such a junction is acceptable or deliverable in the proposed location.

2. No swept path analysis has been undertaken on a delivery vehicle entering/exiting the main site access as part of the development application. The applicant has not demonstrated that HGVs can access the site safely. Planning permission should not be granted without this issue being resolved.
3. The proximity of the proposed site access to existing junctions has the potential to lead to an increase in conflicting vehicular movements to the detriment of road safety.
4. The intensification of through traffic and the intensification of roadside parking is a significant safety concern in terms of increasing conflicts and reducing lateral visibility for traffic emerging from the residential dwellings opposite the proposed access.
5. The disamenity caused by headlight intrusion into the living quarters of properties directly opposite the access has not been addressed by the applicant.
6. No detailed analysis of the operation of the delivery yard has been undertaken within any of the available documentation. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development can be serviced safely or indeed at all. Planning permission should not be granted without this issue being resolved.
7. The proposed delivery yard is directly adjacent to residential properties which could lead to amenity objections. The TA does not mention any delivery schedule thus it is considered there is the potential for early morning and late night deliveries which may be of particular concern to local residents.
8. Overspill parking is likely to occur and will manifest itself in the form of off site parking, particularly in the layby opposite the site access to the detriment of road safety.
9. The Travel Plan Framework is inadequate and if the Committee is minded to grant approval sufficient funding for a meaningful and adequate Plan should be secured.
10. The base year model for the Stillington Road/York Road junction has not been validated and its performance contradicts the opinions of local residents. It is considered that it may not be an accurate basis for assessment.

With reference to the above we consider that there are significant highway, safety, amenity and deliverability reasons why this development should not be permitted. We trust that you will take our objection fully into account when considering this application.

Yours Sincerely,

Peter Blair  
Technical Director

cc: Tim Coyne – North Yorkshire County Council