

Highway Authority's response to Create Consulting Engineers Ltd, Few's Lane, Longstanton Access Review

From the perspective of the Highway Authority the Access Review as produced by Create Consulting Engineers Ltd, has identified three elements in the view of the authors that when taken in aggregate render the use of Few's Lane unacceptably hazardous for additional development these are:

1. The inter vehicle visibility splays that can be achieved from Few's Lane to the High Street.
2. The pedestrian visibility splays that can be achieved from Few's Lane to the High Street.
3. The increased level of motor vehicle traffic that the proposed unit will engender along Few's Lane.

Dealing with each in turn:

The inter vehicle visibility splays from Few's Lane to the High Street.

The Highway Authority does not dispute the measurements made by Create Consulting Engineers Ltd., in relationship to the inter vehicle visibility splays that are at present available when exiting Few's Lane. However, Create Consulting Engineers Ltd., did not gain a plan showing the extent of the adopted public highway along High Street at the junction of Few's Lane. It is clear that there has been substantial encroachment of adjacent vegetation over the adopted public highway from neighbouring properties.

The Highway Authority has powers under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 to remove this vegetation to allow the full extent of the adopted public highway to be used as inter vehicle visibility splays. As can be seen from the attached plan the extent of the adopted public highway extends to the back of the grass verge along High Street and not just to the back of the footway as it appears Create Consulting Engineers Ltd. has assumed.

Inter vehicle visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m can be achieved wholly within the existing adopted public highway in both directions along High Street from Few's Lane, see attached plan. These splays are suitable for a 30mph speed limit, which the High Street is subject to, not only by virtue of street lighting, but as a signed limit.

The fact that Create Consulting Engineers Ltd snap shot of speeds shows that those north bound are in excess of the signed speed limit is not a justification for increasing

the Y distance (that measured along the kerb edge) from 43m to 47m, as it would be unreasonable to require a developer to accommodate third parties who are in breach of the law.

The pedestrian visibility splays from Few's Lane to the High Street.

As Create Consulting Engineers Ltd., state there are various ways of laying out pedestrian visibility splays and in Cambridgeshire the Highway Authority does seek that for new developments splays of 2m x 2m be provided from private access points on to the adopted public highway. However, the National Guidance contained with Manual for Streets (Vol. 1 & Vol. 2) make no specific recommendations as to what visibility from a car to a pedestrian should be and the 2m x 2m splays are reliant on Design Bulletin 32 which was published in 1977.

The most recent National publication is CD123 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Published August 2020). This also shows 2m x 2m splays, measured from the centre line of the minor access and not from the side as per Design Bulletin 32. Using this procedure suitable pedestrian visibility splays can be achieved from Few's Lane to High Street wholly within the existing adopted public highway (see attached extract from CD123 and a plan showing this arrangement from Few's Lane).

The increased level of motor vehicle traffic that the proposed unit will engender along Few's Lane.

Clearly the proposed new residential unit will increase the level of motor vehicle traffic along Few's Lane, though given the 'Cambridge effect' and the higher level of cycle use that the region experiences, this may not be as high as predicted by using nationally derived data from TRICS.

The existing units will, using the TRICS assumptions provided, generate approximately 4.6 motor vehicles movements each in a twelve-hour period, or approximately a total 2.3 movements per hour or one every 20 minutes. The additional dwelling will be a small proportion of the overall number, generating around only 0.5 additional trips in the AM/ PM peak hour, according to the data provided.

It is unlikely that the traffic movements will be so regular, but the TRICS data suggests 3 movements from an overall development of 6 dwellings in the peak hour, which gives some indication of the low level of motor vehicle traffic the site may generate. The additional dwelling will add 4.6 additional movements over the twelve hour period which increase the number of movements on average to 2.7, still only one vehicle every 20 minutes or so.

Given the relatively low level of pedestrian use of Few's Lane (as detailed in the Case Officers Report Paragraph 38 pages 22 – 23) of an average of 10 pedestrians an hour, while the increased level of motor vehicular traffic will inherently increase the risk of conflict it is difficult to see this is unacceptable as required under the National Planning Policy Framework Para 111 for the Highway Authority to request that the application be refused.

Conclusion.

While the proposed development will increase the level traffic (all modes) using Few's Lane and exiting the same on to the High Street, which in and of itself increases the risk of conflict.

However, given the existence of appropriate inter vehicle visibility splays and pedestrian visibility splays within the existing adopted public highway in accordance with the most recent guidance, the relatively low levels of motor vehicular traffic that the overall development will generate, together with the relatively low numbers of pedestrians (and cyclists) that use Few's Lane, there are no substantive highway reasons to recommend that the development be refused.