



Development Management Highway DC Appeal Statement

APPLICATION NO.	242011
APPEAL REF:	APP/X0360/W/25/3364902
APPEAL SITE:	Land east of Warren Lodge, Warren Lane, Finchampstead, RG40 4HR
PROPOSAL:	Full application for the proposed change of use of land for the siting of 2 no. Gypsy and Traveller pitches with creation of a second access off Finchampstead Road and associated installation of soft and hard landscaping.

1. AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

- 1.1. My name is Alan John Lewis. I am the Highway Development Manager at Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). I am a Chartered Engineer (C.Eng); a Fellow of the Institute of Highway Engineers (FIHE); and, a Chartered Member Institute of Logistics & Transport (CMILT).
- 1.2. I have over 35 years of experience working in the public and private sector including appearing as an expert witness at numerous public hearings inquiries and Examinations in Public both for and against developments.
- 1.3. I joined WBC in June 2023, but I have worked in the Borough for many years (primarily 1988-2000) and was seconded to the Council to work extensively on the Core Strategy (2008-10) and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as well as appearing on behalf of the Council at Inquiries in Woodley, Shinfield and Swallowfield.
- 1.4. Whilst my colleague considered the application, I know the site area well and have visited the site and its surrounds on several occasions to examine the proposals and potential mitigation options.
- 1.5. The statements in this evidence are to the best of my knowledge true. Any professional opinions expressed are my own, provided in accordance with the professional standards for the institutions to which I belong.

2. Reason for refusal

- 2.1. This statement provides evidence in support of refusal reasons 3 and 4 of planning application 242011, which are as follows:
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- *By reason of the site's spatial constraints and prominent bend in Finchampstead Road, acceptable parking, turning and visibility splays for motor vehicles and caravans cannot be achieved, to the detriment of highway safety. The proposals are therefore contrary to policies CP1, CP3 and CP6 of the Core Strategy, CC07 of the MDD Local Plan and section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*
- *By reason of a poor walking environment, lack of crossing facilities for pedestrians, proximity to a busy 40mph B-road, poor quality bus services and lack of cycle routes, the application site is poorly located in terms of accessibility to sustainable forms of transport. The occupants of the pitches would be overly reliant on private motor vehicles to access basic amenities and services, contrary to policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP6 and CP11 of the Core Strategy, CC01, CC02, CC08 and TB10 of the MDD Local Plan, Policy GA2 of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Borough Design Guide SPD and the NPPF.*

3. Background

The Proposal

- 3.1. The appellant proposes to station 2 separate pitches of permanent mobile homes, each comprising an independent site access for cars, a static and touring caravan. Touring caravans will only utilise the eastern access. The site is at land east of Warren Lodge, Warren Lane, Finchampstead, RG40 4HR. A total of eight car parking spaces have been proposed.



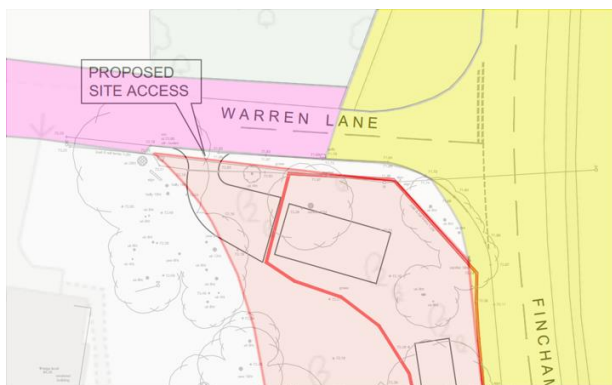
- 3.2. The site is currently unused, and is overgrown and features of trees.
- 3.3. The site is proposed to be served by two vehicular accesses, the northern access via Warren Lane, and the eastern access via the B3016 Finchampstead Road. There is not internal road within the site, so that each access will only serve a single pitch and are not accessible internally.

The Northern Access

- 3.4. The appellant proposes to create the northern access at the position of the existing farm gate. The site photo below shows the condition of the existing farm gate, which I consider is an abandoned field gate:



- 3.5. Warren Lane is a bridleway (PRoW Reference: FINC35), with a short section of public highway, depicted below. The public highways end at circa 15m west from the junction of the B3016/Warren Lane (denoted in yellow), and the proposed access falls within the private road section (denoted in pink), where WBC does not own the right of vehicle access at the proposed access point.



- 3.6. The Highways consultation dated 11th October 2024 has required the appellant to demonstrate legal right of access by including all required land to be within the red line and serving notice to relevant landowners on Warren Lane to ensure have control on the land of the private road section of Warren Lane. Failure to demonstrate such rights could result in unlaw use of the proposed access.
- 3.7. The appellant has not addressed this comment during the planning application. While Paragraph 3.73 of the Appellant Statement of Case has mentioned that this appeal seeks to omit the northern access from the proposal and only retain the access point for pedestrian permeability, the submitted site plan, swept paths and landscape plan have not reflect the proposed arrangement mentioned, for the Highways to assess the feasibility for new parking and turning arrangement of the eastern access.

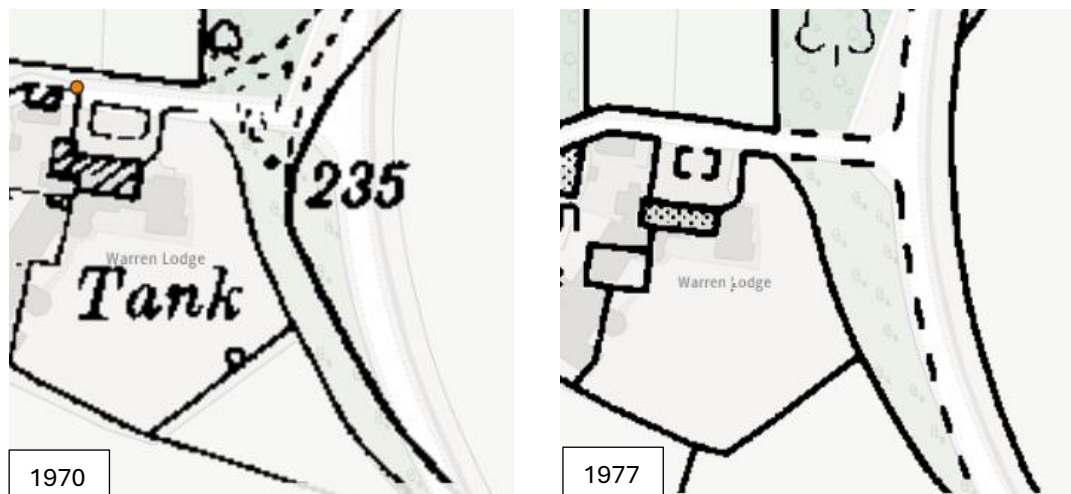
- 3.8. The Highways have therefore reviewed this appeal based on the submitted plans considering the merits of the proposals as submitted, including the northern vehicular access.
- 3.9. Concerns over the turning and parking arrangement of the northern access will be expanded in Section 4.

The Eastern Access

- 3.10. The B3016 Finchampstead Road is a distributor road, which the site frontage is subject to a 40mph speed limit. The appellant has not provided ATC survey data to support the appeal. The AADT of the B3016 Finchampstead Road is classified as Band 5, which is between 2,500 and 5,000 vehicles per day (vpd) as shown in Appendix H1.
- 3.11. There is no direct access point available along the B3016 Finchampstead Road, between Finchampstead Surgery and Arden House. It is relevant to note that the site frontage of Finchampstead Surgery falls within the reduced 30mph speed limit, and Arden House is a pre-war dwelling that has been recorded since 1872.
- 3.12. Alongside Finchampstead there are footways on both sides of the carriageway within the built-up area. The footway network is broadly continuous to the east, with a short section on the west, between Warren Close and the bus stop.
- 3.13. The Highways have also commented on the visibility splays, turning and parking arrangement of this access, which will be expanded in Section 4.

Historic Road Layout

- 3.14. It is noted that the road layout at the junction of the B3016 Finchampstead Road and Warren Lane has been modified between 1970 and 1977 to its current road alignment.



4. Highway Safety

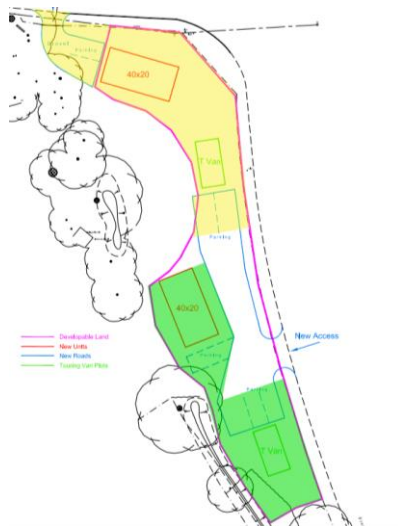
- 4.1. The Highways have raised the concern regarding the turning and visibility, and have requested improvements to the design. While the appellant has suggested to omit the northern access from the proposal and only retain the access point for pedestrian permeability, the plans submitted for both the

planning application and the appeal still include this access and associated parking and turning area.

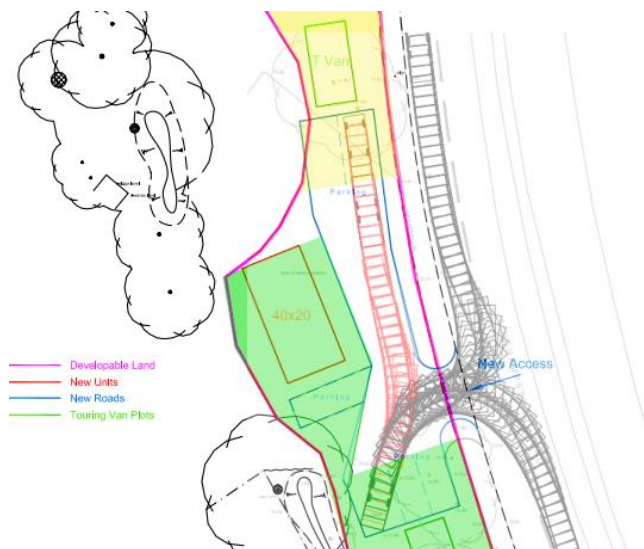
- 4.2. The Highway Authority has therefore assessed the appeal based on the submitted plans and figures in Transport Appeal Statement, which include the northern vehicle access with associated parking spaces.
- 4.3. Through the application consultation, the Highway Authority requested additional information. Whilst responses provided some information, the applicant did not address all highway safety concerns arising from the proposed development, these matters are addressed in detail below.

Manoeuvring and Parking (Eastern Access)

- 4.4. I have considered the application assuming both touring caravans and the six of the car parking spaces to be accessed via the eastern access. Also assuming the areas shaded in yellow would be dedicated to the northern pitch, and those shaded green would belong to the southern pitch. Therefore, vehicles of either pitch will be expected only to utilise its own plot or the shared drive for manoeuvring.



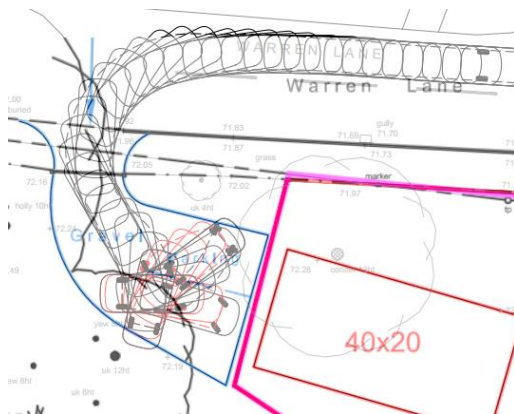
- 4.5. Swept path analysis of a 13m long touring caravan is submitted as Drawing No. TR01. However, for the touring caravan of the northern pitch to enter and leave the site in forward gear, it will encroach into the parking spaces of the southern pitch, as such there can be no certainty this area will be kept clear for manoeuvring as shown below.



- 4.6. The Highway Authority also has concern if the caravan of the northern pitch will be able to manoeuvre in the event the parking space(s) to the south are occupied. Similarly for the southern pitch.
- 4.7. The appellant has been asked to revise the swept path analysis and demonstrate that touring caravan can enter and leave the site in a forward gear, either with the occupation of the proposed parking spaces or a means to control these to ensure the turning manoeuvre can be completed safely off street. However, no revision has been made.
- 4.8. The Appeal Statement of Case states that *'there will be no parked cars on site until a touring unit has been placed'*. It is conceivable the site could be managed to ensure there are no vehicles parked in these bays, but these would need to be effectively controlled/managed. At this juncture, the appeal statement ignores the proposition that the eastern access is a shared drive among two pitches of independent occupants. Coordination between independent occupants would not be guaranteed.
- 4.9. The Transport Appeal Statement also suggests that *'the positioning of caravans would be an infrequent event ... ensuring the existing parking spaces on site remain free for the initial siting of a caravan would form part a standard procedure for any large item being delivered at any residential dwelling'*. However, the new access is being proposed onto a classified B Road, which has been designed to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements. I will expand on it in sub-section 'Direct Access onto B3016'.
- 4.10. The concerns could have been mitigated or at least improved with a revised parking plan. Unfortunately, such revisions have not been provided in the appeal.
- 4.11. The proposed arrangement fails to demonstrate that caravans can access and manoeuvre safely and independently within each pitch, potentially resulting in reverse manoeuvring or obstruction of the B3016, to the detriment of highway safety. This is contrary to Core Strategy policies CP3 & CP6 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC07.

Manoeuvring and Parking (Northern Access)

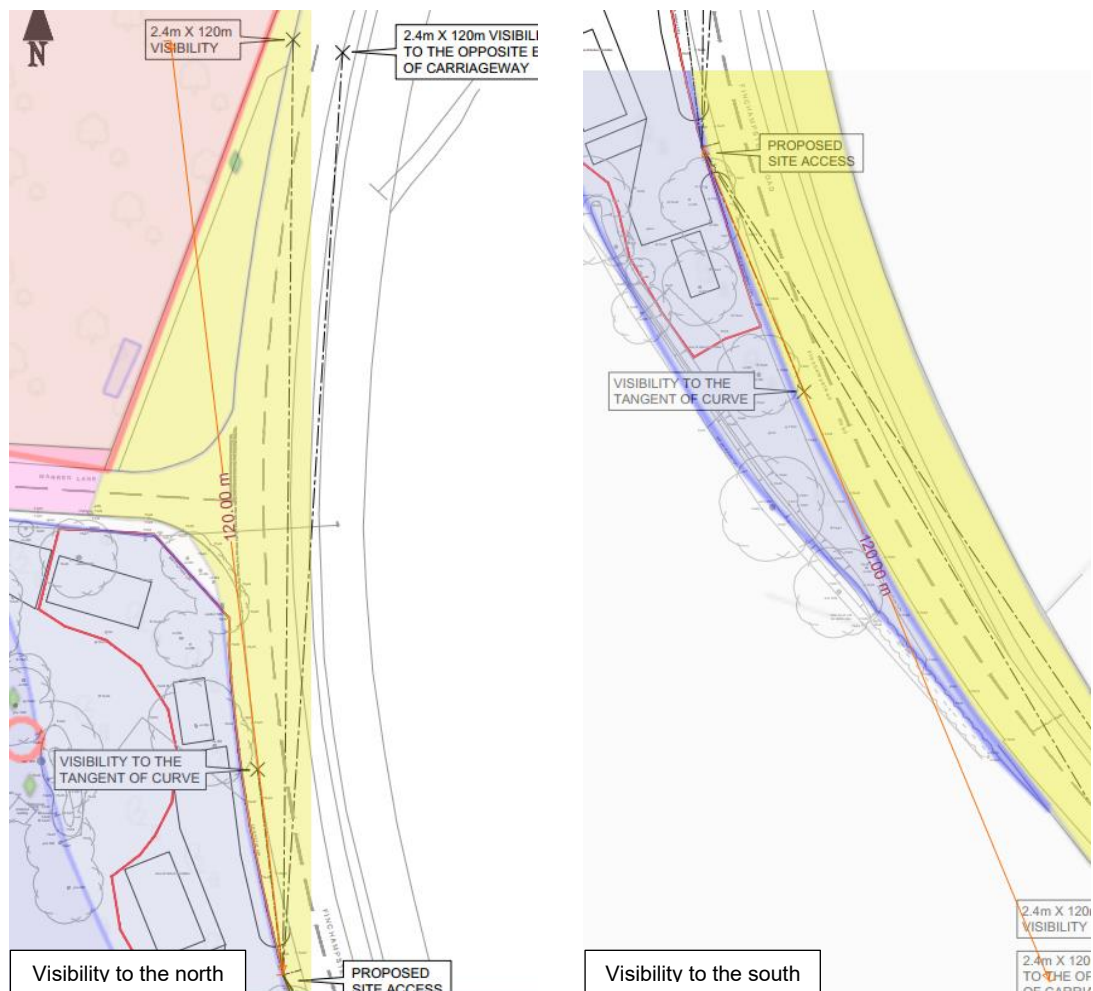
- 4.12. The northern access has been proposed with two driveway parking spaces.
- 4.13. The appellant has demonstrated the swept path of a large saloon car in Drawing No. TR02. I have overlaid the swept path analysis with the proposed parking plan, and it reveals that the car would struggle to park safely in the available space and would require multiple turns to enable it to enter and leave in forward gear.



- 4.14. Similar to the eastern access, the concerns could have been mitigated or at least improved with a revised parking plan. However, such revision has not been provided in the appeal.

Visibility Splays of Eastern Access

- 4.15. The B3016 Finchampstead Road is subject to a speed limit of 40mph, which requires visibility splays of 2.4m x 120m to be provided from the access onto the B3016 Finchampstead Road. The sightlines shall be across land within the applicant's control or highway land and shall be clear of obstructions to visibility exceeding 0.6m in height.
- 4.16. The appellant has assessed the required visibility splays in Drawing No. 001, whereas the visibilities along the tangent to a bend in both directions has been indicated.
- 4.17. I have cross-examined the site plan with the public highway boundary and the TPO data and confirmed that the tangential visibility in both directions could cover the required 120m SSD on the nearside edge in both directions of carriageway.
- 4.18. To ensure drivers can see approaching vehicles it will be necessary to clear some vegetation along the boundary. Recognising the transient nature of occupations, a planning condition would need to be secured to ensure this remains safe for use at all times. Meanwhile, because this may involve vegetation beyond the property, it may require a highway licence to conduct such maintenance works.



Direct Access onto B3016

- 4.19. Whilst it is not explicitly stated in the reasons of refusals, I believe it would help the Inspector better understand the spatial constraints of the site, to ensure the context of the access options are considered on their merits.
- 4.20. The Highway Authority will generally consider the merits of proposals for the intensification of existing accesses, the consolidation of multiple access points and new accesses on busy roads. This is normally done on the premise that busier roads with multiple access points will be less safe.
- 4.21. The coordinated link design of different rural road types has been summarised in Appendix A of DMRB CD109. Full details of the coordinated link design are contained in Appendix H2. The B3016 Finchampstead Road is categorised as S2a or S2b, where roads of both sub-categories shall be designed to have minimal number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements.
- 4.22. Within the built-up (30mph) area there are more direct access point along the B3016 Finchampstead Road.
- 4.23. While MfS (7.9.5) recommends that *“the limit for providing direct access on road with a 30 mph speed restriction is raised to at least 10,000 vehicles per day”*, the findings are based on streets with 30 mph speed limits and continuous houses with driveway, the standards for other roads are not clearly defined.
- 4.24. MfS is supported by an evidence and research by TRL¹ which explored a range of factors including junction spacing. Using a ‘hypothetical analysis’ of different highway layouts the research concluded the desire to achieve safer junctions resulted in greater pedestrian permeability thereby offsetting the slight increase in accidents. However, this is not the situation for the B3016.
- 4.25. Given the absence of explicit guidance at a national level, the Authority is working towards the local approach to remedy the standards. The approach being advanced is outlined below:
- The Council will resist new direct access points to properties on roads/streets with speeds in excess of 40mph and with traffic flows over 8,000 vpd.
 - The Council will actively seek to minimise the number of access points on all roads/streets, where possible consolidating driveways to minimise conflict points on the highway.
 - The Council will seek to ensure that direct access points to streets with traffic flows over 4,000vpd can be served by vehicles entering and leaving the highway in forward gear.
- 4.26. In summary, the proposed eastern access conflicts with national guidance and emerging local standards aimed at reducing direct access points on high-volume, high-speed roads. Given the function and traffic volume of the B3016, it is considered unsuitable for new access points, particularly for developments requiring turning space for large vehicles.
- 4.27. Therefore, considering the merits of all proposals as submitted, the highway authority considers that any development of the site should first consider options to access the site from Warren Lane. Given the spatial constraints the

¹ [TRL | The Manual for Streets: evidence and research](#) Report 661

Highway Authority might give greater weight to ensuring that all vehicles can enter and leave the site safely in forward gear. However, as the proposals fall short of both objectives, it has proven challenging to assist the appellants to find a solution.

5. Site Sustainability

- 5.1. The Highway authority recognises the distance to access local facilities and amenities is proportionate to the scale of development. However, the environment for walking and cycling to public transport, local facilities and amenities for the southern pitch is not safe nor attractive. The consequence of this will be an unacceptable level of dependency on the car, which is contrary to the Development Plan and NPPF listed below:

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document

- 5.2. Policy CP1 states that development should:
10. *“Provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes”*
 11. *“Demonstrate how they support opportunities for reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car in line with CP6”.*
- 5.3. Policy CP3 states development should *‘provide a functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable scheme’*.
- 5.4. The supporting information in policy CP6 of the Core Strategy states that:
- ‘Paragraph 2.16 recognises that the borough has one of the highest car ownership rates of any English local authority. To reduce the likelihood that these vehicles will be used and to encourage modal shift, it is important to ensure all proposals achieve sustainable development.’*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.5. Para 117 of the NPPF states that applications for development should:
- a) ***“give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;***
 - b) *address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;*
 - c) *create places that are **safe, secure and attractive** – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;*
 - d) *allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and*
 - e) *be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.” [my emphasis]*

- 5.6. Both the council's Core Strategy and NPPF highlight the importance for providing safe and attractive walking and cycling environment to local services.
- 5.7. The B3016 Finchampstead Road is a classified road subject 40mph speed limit. There are no continuous footways, dropped kerbs nor tactile paving along the western side of the B3016 Finchampstead Road, between Warren Close and 60m north of Church Lane. Indeed, the crossing position (east to west) has constrained visibility, making walking trips less safe and therefore unattractive.
- 5.8. Paragraph 83 of NPPF states "*To promote sustainable development in rural areas... [development] should be located where it **will** enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.*"[my emphasis]
- 5.9. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF sets some context in terms of sustainable travel in rural areas stating "...it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings...[and] **exploits any opportunities** to make a location more sustainable". [my emphasis]
- 5.10. The appellant has not expressed the intention to improve the walking environment nor crossing facilities for the pedestrians, but suggesting that '*the MDD does not require 'sustainable forms of transport' to access services and facilities it just requires access to a range of services and facilities*', which is in contrary to the Development Plan and NPPF.

Without Prejudice

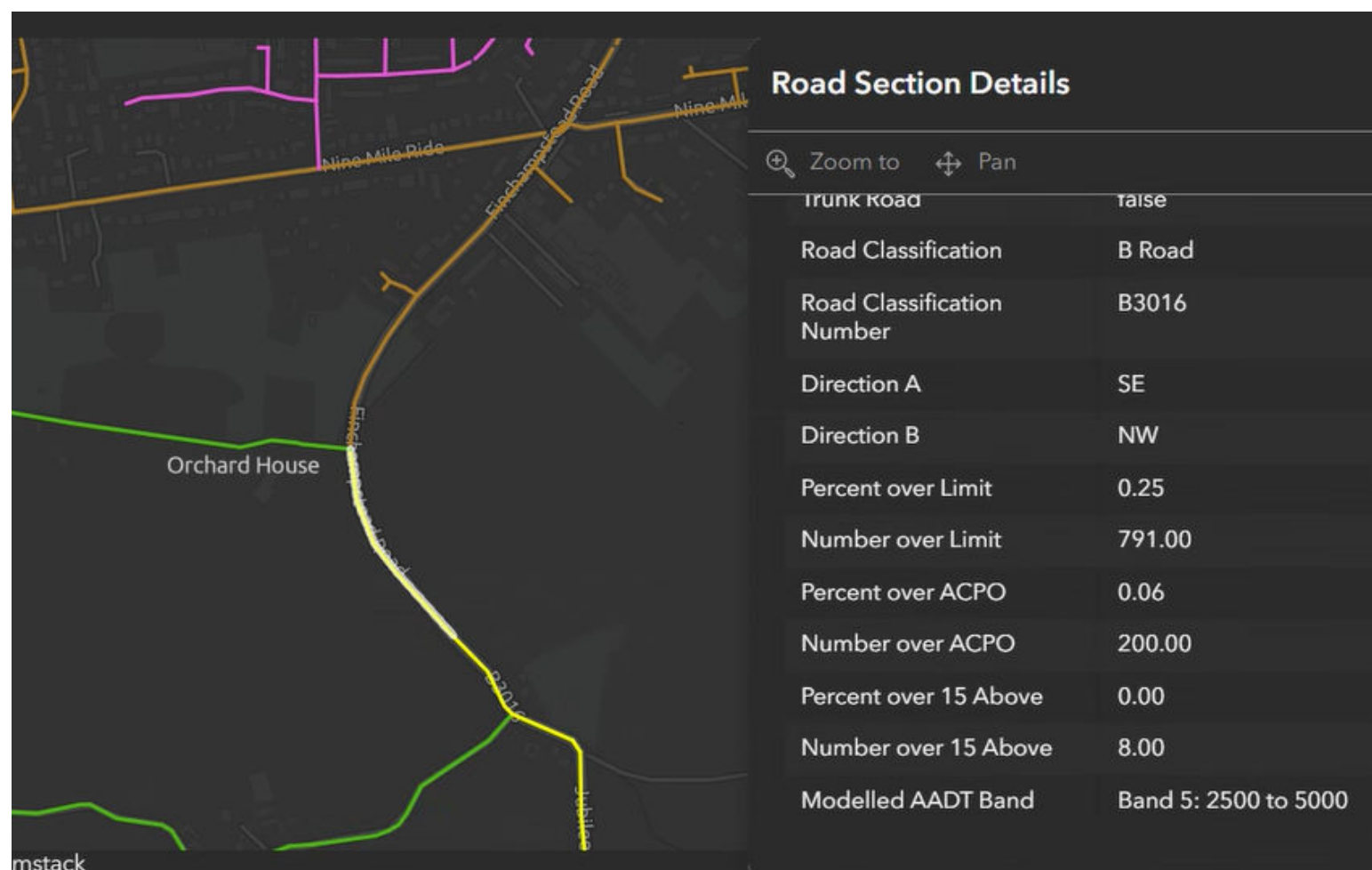
- 5.11. If the Inspector were minded to allow the appeal, I recognise that the development scale is insufficient on its own to justify comprehensive highway mitigation. I do, however, consider the NPPF tests would support a proportion mitigation delivering a pedestrian refuge and connecting footways north of Warren Lane, thereby being directly related and in reasonable scale and kind.
- 5.12. The need for this mitigation would be secured through a S.106 obligation, with the works themselves to be delivered via a S.278 agreement with the highway authority. Such a measure would assist existing and future occupiers access local facilities and services.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. This statement provides additional evidence which supports refusal numbers 3 and 4.
- 6.2. I would have considered the proposal to be acceptable if safe and lawful access, parking and turning arrangements had have been proposed to demonstrate that the development will not have an adverse impact on highway safety. However, through the application process, the applicant did not amend the submission nor provide supplementary information that would have met the Highways expectations, ultimately leading to the refusal.
- 6.3. Furthermore, I do not see the appellants have given 'priority to pedestrian and cycle movements', particularly for the southern pitch, they are not 'safe secure and attractive'. The appellant has not exploited opportunities to make the location more sustainable nor shown how the proposals could meet the definition of sustainable development.
- 6.4. I respectfully request that the appeal to be dismissed.

Appendix H1

An Estimate of AADT along the B3016 Finchampstead Road



Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

Appendix H2

Coordinated Link Design of Rural Road Types (Extracted from Appendix A of DMRB CD109)

Appendix A. Coordinated link design

The tables below give guidance on layout features for the various rural road types that can help to provide coordinated link design. The contents of the tables are not exhaustive and not intended to supersede requirements and advice included in the wider Design Manual for Roads and Bridges requirements and advice documents, and the requirements and advice in the appropriate highway design requirements and advice documents take precedence.

Table A.1 Single carriageway roads

Type of road (see CD 127 [Ref 1.N])	Sub-category	Edge treatment	Direct access treatment (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] for a definition of direct access)	Junction treatment at minor road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Junction treatment at major road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N], CD 122 [Ref 3.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Previous category reference used in TD 9 Table 4 (see note 1)
2 lane single carriageway (S2) - 7.3 metre carriageway	a	Kerbs and raised verges. Pedestrian footways and cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements.	Simple priority junctions. Ghost island junctions.	Ghost island junctions.	1
	b	No pedestrian footways or cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements.	Simple priority junctions. Ghost island junctions.	Ghost island junctions. Single lane dualling. Roundabouts. Traffic signals.	2
	c	No pedestrian footways or cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	Left-in / left-out priority junctions. Ghost island junctions.	Single lane dualling. Roundabouts. Traffic signals.	3A

Table A.1 Single carriageway roads (continued)

Type of road (see CD 127 [Ref 1.N])	Sub-category	Edge treatment	Direct access treatment (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] for a definition of direct access)	Junction treatment at minor road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Junction treatment at major road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N], CD 122 [Ref 3.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Previous category reference used in TD 9 Table 4 (see note 1)
Wide single 2 lane carriageway (WS2) - 10 metre carriageway	a	Pedestrian footways and cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	Left-in / left-out priority junctions. Ghost island junctions. Single lane dualling.	Single lane dualling. Roundabouts.	3B
	b	No pedestrian footways or cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	Left-in / left-out priority junctions. Single lane dualling. Roundabouts. Some side roads stopped up.	Roundabouts.	4
Wide single 2+1 roads (WS2+1) - 11.5 metre carriageway	a	Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Not permitted.	Ghost island junctions.	Left-in / left-out compact grade separated junctions. Ghost island junctions. Roundabouts.	Not previously used

Table A.2 Dual carriageway roads

Type of road (see CD 127 [Ref 1.N])	Sub-category	Edge treatment	Direct access treatment (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] for a definition of direct access)	Junction treatment at minor road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Junction treatment at major road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N], CD 122 [Ref 3.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Previous category reference used in TD 9 Table 4 (see note 1)
Dual 2 lane All-purpose roads (D 2AP) - 7.3 metre carriageway	a	Kerbs and raised verges. Pedestrian footways and cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	Left-in / left-out priority junctions. Priority junctions. No other gaps in the central reserve.	Traffic signals. At-grade roundabouts. Compact grade separation. Grade separation if economically justified.	5
	b	No pedestrian footways or cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Minimise number of direct accesses to avoid standing vehicles and concentrate turning movements. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	No minor junctions at-grade. No gaps in the central reserve.	At-grade roundabouts. Full grade separation.	6
	c	No pedestrian footways or cycle tracks. Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	No access except isolated existing access with left turns only. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	No minor junctions at-grade. No gaps in the central reserve.	Full grade separation.	7A
Dual 3 lane All-purpose roads (D 3AP) - 11 metre carriageway	a	Nearside - hard strip. Offside - hard strip.	Not permitted. Clearway (see TSM Chapter 3 [Ref 7.N])	No minor junctions at-grade. No gaps in the central reserve.	Full grade separation.	7C / 8B (See note 2)

Table A.2 Dual carriageway roads (continued)

Type of road (see CD 127 [Ref 1.N])	Sub-category	Edge treatment	Direct access treatment (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] for a definition of direct access)	Junction treatment at minor road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Junction treatment at major road intersection (see CD 123 [Ref 2.N], CD 122 [Ref 3.N] and CD 116 [Ref 4.N])	Previous category reference used in TD 9 Table 4 (see note 1)
Dual 2 lane motorway (D2M) - 7.3 metre carriageway	a	Nearside - hard shoulder. Offside - hard strip.	Not permitted - Motorway Regulations.	Not permitted - Motorway Regulations.	Full grade separation - motorway standard.	7B / 8A (See note 3)
Dual 3 lane motorway (D3M) - 11 metre carriageway	a	Nearside - hard shoulder. Offside - hard strip.	Not permitted - Motorway Regulations.	Not permitted - Motorway Regulations.	Full grade separation - motorway standard.	9
Dual 4 lane motorway (D4M) - 14.7 metre carriageway	a	Nearside - hard shoulder. Offside - hard strip.	Not permitted - Motorway Regulations.	Not permitted - Motorway Regulations.	Full grade separation - motorway standard.	10

Note 1: Reference is made to the categorisation system used in TD 9 to allow comparison with schemes that are being progressed to the previous standard or have been completed to the previous standard. It is suggested that for developing schemes the categorisation system introduced in the figures above, based on road type and sub-category, is referenced (for example D2APb).

Note 2: The previous categories 7C and 8B in TD 9 essentially duplicated each other and these have been rationalised in this document.

Note 3: The previous categories 7B and 8A in TD essentially duplicated each other and these have been rationalised in this document.