

email from Mike Kelly, Planning Manager NDDC to PRG 22.4.15

----- Original Message -----

From: [planning](#)

To: geoffreypugsley@talktalk.net

Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2015 4:23 PM

Subject: Applications for Development in Pilton, Barnstaple

Dear Mr Pugsley

Thank you for copying me in to your e-mail of 18th April 2015 in respect of recent applications to develop in and around Pilton, Barnstaple.

I would apologise for the delay in replying to your earlier e-mail but would stress that the advice I provide below is consistent with the advice Members of the Council's Planning Committee have received from respective Case Officers and officers of Devon County Council in its capacity as Local Highway Authority on each occasion the major residential applications relating to sites in Pilton have been discussed at meetings of the Planning Committee.

In this respect, I would confirm that the Transport Assessments that have accompanied these applications, in accordance with the guidance set out in paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), do include as part of the methodology an allowance for future traffic projections based on changes in household formation and population growth.

Formerly Government advice on Transport Assessments was set out in the document 'Guidance on Transport Assessment'. In October 2014 this was removed from the recommended guidance and replaced by the transport sections within the National Planning Policy Guidance. In terms of assessment of traffic flows, the latter guidance advises that the transport assessment should include 'an assessment of trips from all directly relevant committed development in the area (i.e. development that there is a reasonable degree of certainty will proceed within the next three years)'.

The guidance also states that 'the timeframe that the assessment covers should be agreed with the local planning authority in consultation with the relevant transport network operators and service providers. However, in circumstances where there will be an impact on a national transport network, this period will be set out in the relevant Government policy.'

Devon County Council as Local Highway Authority usually agree with the applicant's transport consultants the relevant timeframes and in the case of the recent Pilton applications this has been an assessment of the current year and 5 years later.

As advised Planning Committee 18th April 2015, the entirety of the proposed Ilfracombe Southern Extension will not be completed by 2018, but it is likely that a proportion of the proposed development will be

implemented. Of that figure, the traffic modelling that supports the application reasonably anticipates that the majority of daily trips will be to Ilfracombe; furthermore, of the traffic movements to Barnstaple not all of those trips will use Pilton Causeway given the choice of routes available.

The NPPG also states 'In general, assessments should be based on normal traffic flow and usage conditions (e.g. non-school holiday periods, typical weather conditions) but it may be necessary to consider the implications for any regular peak traffic and usage periods (such as rush hours). Projections should use local traffic forecasts such as TEMPro drawing where necessary on National Road Traffic Forecasts for traffic data.'

For example, Transport Assessments submitted to date include a 7% uplift for summertime traffic (12% for Saturdays), which is above the requirement to consider 'normal traffic flow and usage conditions'.

To provide the context, future traffic projections in the submitted Transport Assessments have used TEMPro (Trip End Model Presentation Program which is a Department for Transport computer program), in accordance with recommended best practice which forecasts transport patterns across the UK based on changes in households and population; employment and jobs; and household car ownership, based on data from the National Transport Model (NTM). Analysis of the data can be any combination of geographical area (down to a 'zonal' level of resolution, with each local authority area divided into several zones); transport mode; time of day of travel; purpose of journey; years of interest (from 2001 to 2041) and type of analysis (trips in terms of producing/attracting, origin/destination or car ownership). Results are presented either in terms of growth over the selected period or in terms of the raw trip-end data.

The model also allows the underlying planning data used in generating the pre-processed data to be viewed and alternative planning assumptions to be entered to see what impact these would have on trip-end data.

Specifically for the Pilton applications, the Transport Assessments have used the above methodology to determine the growth in car trips in peak hours between the years 2013 and 2018. This includes planning assumptions that a number of new dwellings will have been built in and around the area in this time, as well as new employment opportunities.

As I have already noted, these planning assumptions result in a growth factor that includes a proportion of the Ilfracombe Southern Extension that will be completed by 2018. Importantly, as part of this modelling exercise, the individual development at Ilfracombe would not need to have been explicitly noted, forming as it does part of the background growth factor; nor would it need to have been specifically minuted as part of any Planning Committee resolution or decision.

By including growth through TEMPro, summertime traffic and adding the known adjacent local development sites specifically on top (rather than just using TEMPro) the respective Transport Assessments have considered the realistic worst case impact on the road network.

I would add that the modelling does not explicitly model the impact and anticipated reduction in traffic as a result of sustainable transport measures that include improved public transport, cycling or walking facilities and changes in driving behaviour (for example, 'peak spreading' as has been described by the Local Highway Authority at recent meetings of the Planning Committee in respect of development proposals in the Pilton area.

To further advise, the agent from the Northfield Lane application (56685) has recently confirmed in correspondence (16 April 2015) that the applicant's Highway Consultants advise that the scope of the submitted Transport Assessment (TA) for their application was agreed with Devon County Council's highway officers prior to submission of the planning application. It was agreed that the TA would assess the traffic impact of the application site and four other committed and known developments in the north Barnstaple area; namely, the permitted hospital development, the proposed Devonshire Homes development at Westaway Plain, the proposed Gleeson development at Trayne Farm and the Proposed Taylor Wimpey development at Raleigh Road.

Consistent with the Raleigh Park application, the TA also considered the impact of background traffic growth, i.e. traffic associated with non-specific developments that occur over a wider area. This background traffic growth was calculated using the above noted TEMPro software and estimated that traffic growth based on anticipated growth in houses and jobs in North Devon.

Importantly, as has been also confirmed by the applicant's agent and highway consultants for the Raleigh Park development, Simon Fitton (Alder King) as agent for the Northfield Lane application specifically advises that the applicant's highway consultants FMW confirm that the development traffic associated with the proposed Ilfracombe Southern Extension would have been considered as part of this background traffic growth and TA modelling.

I trust that the above information clarifies the points you raise in correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Kelly
Chief Planning Officer

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