

Statement from the Pilton Residents Group (P.R.G.) in relation to the DC Highways Authority and Pilton Planning Applications.

*****Cumulative traffic implications ignored by DCC Highways*****

DCC Highways Report dated 15th August 2013 had stated the following in response to the Trayne Farm application (56047).

Recommendation:

THE HEAD OF PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT, ON BEHALF OF DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL, AS LOCAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY, RECOMMENDS THAT PERMISSION BE REFUSED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:-

HIGHWAYS REASONS FOR REFUSAL

1. The proposed development will worsen traffic conditions at a junction that is the only means of access to a major hospital and the main point of access for all police response units across Northern Devon which without any mitigation will result in a severe residual cumulative impact and is therefore contrary to paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposed development will result in additional delay and queuing of traffic at the already at capacity junction of Pilton Causeway which is considered a severe residual cumulative impact and is therefore contrary to paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

As a result the Trayne Farm applicant then submitted a Transport Assessment Addendum on October 2013 after DCC Highways claimed that Pilton Causeway had not been assessed correctly.

**The new assessment clearly showed that predicted junction saturation at Pilton Causeway would be *more* severe than first predicted.
(This follows in view of the junction being more realistically assessed.)**

Despite this conclusion a new DCC Highways report followed almost immediately on 25th October 2013 and removed both reasons for refusal.

Reason 1 - Understandably dealt with by proposing traffic mitigation measures at hospital junction.

Reason 2 - relating to severe cumulative residual impact at Pilton Causeway was casually dismissed.

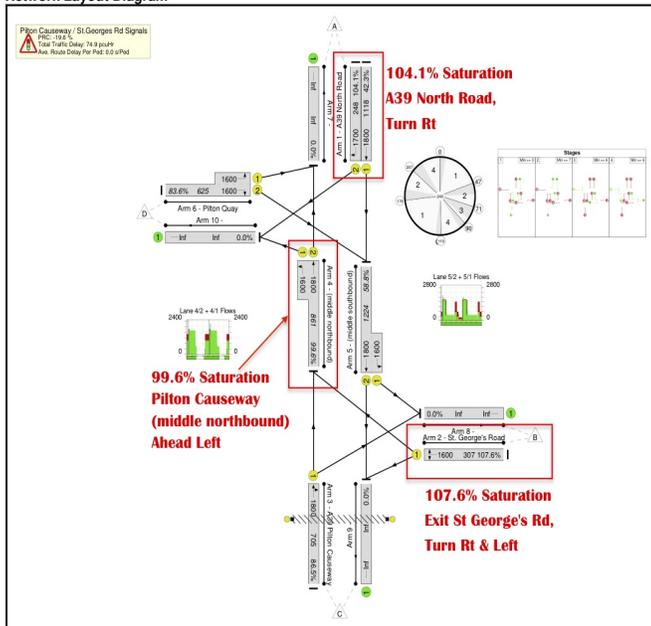
*****This was a complete and unexplained U Turn on the part of DCC Highways***.**

The report states;

Conclusion

Having reviewed the data submitted as to the impact at the Pilton Causeway, this junction will experience an increase in traffic, but such an increase is not considered to result in a problematic impact.

Basic Results Summary
 Scenario 4: '2018 with Dev AM Peak' (FG4: '2018 Base with Dev AM Peak', Plan 1: 'MAX')
 Network Layout Diagram



2018 'Base' with committed development (Hospital)
 and proposed Trayne Farm development.
 AM peak

**NB: NO INCLUSION OF ANY OTHER PILTON DEVELOPMENTS,
 NOR ILFRACOMBE SOUTHERN EXTENSION**

Source:
 Land at Trayne Farm Barnstaple
 Traffic Assessment Addendum
 FMW Consultancy October 2013
 (PDF p.100)

The above diagram was extracted from the Trayne Farm applicants Transport Assessment Addendum of October 2013 and clearly shows that Pilton Causeway is predicted to have saturation ranging from 99.6% to 107.6% across several legs by 2018.

This does not take into account the remaining developments proposed for Pilton and additional traffic flow resulting from the Ilfracombe Southern Extension.

According to the developer's own model, and Devon County Highways' opinion, the addition of Trayne Farm traffic will make almost no difference to the congestion at Pilton Causeway, taking it (at 3 separate points) from over-capacity to slightly more over-capacity.

*******Hospital Junction traffic mitigation*******

Reports by DCC Highways for both Trayne Farm and Westaway Park said the following about the applicant's own alternative traffic mitigation scheme for the Hospital junction. This was the same proposal put forward by FMW for both applications.

Trayne Farm (56047) DCC Highways Report dated 25th October 2013

I do not agree that the scheme proposed by the applicant would have the desired effect, but I do agree that a contribution towards a scheme which Devon County Council (DCC) is designing would be an appropriate way forward. The value of this contribution will be proportional to the cost of the DCC scheme.

Westaway Park (56685) DCC Highways Report dated 24th December 2013

modelling for the applicant's proposed junction improvement is not acceptable and neither is the proposed design for the junction improvement. Should the DCC not be able to be delivered, ideally the applicant would work with other developers in the area to deliver phased improvements to the Hospital junction which shall have been agreed with the Highway Authority.

After reluctantly agreeing to a public consultation in March 2014 on their proposal for a roundabout at the Hospital junction, DCC Highways conceded that several important issues raised by the community would force reconsideration of the design and as a result it may never be implemented.

This was closely followed by a further U Turn on Trayne Farm in April 2014, when DCC astounded the community by stating to the case officer that *'the applicants own scheme would be now be an acceptable solution'*.

******Yes, a scheme viewed as unfit for purpose is now fully supported. So yet another U Turn by DCC Highways******

The applicant's own scheme was **not** accepted by Planning Committee Members at the meeting to decide the Trayne Farm application in April 2014.

Since then, and because of the insistence by NDC Planning Committee Members that a roundabout be a condition of the Trayne Farm approval, DCC Highways have arrived at a **revised** design, which in essence **is the same as before**, but with a **toucan crossing** sited inconveniently to the South.

The latest proposal does nothing to enable the A39 to be safely crossed at a point where the new Westaway Plain development sites will be located. Equally, the current design has not addressed the issues identified as a result of the public consultation.

Westaway Plain (56396) Officers Report dated 30th May 2014

However, In contrast to *its previous response regarding this application*, having reviewed the traffic analysis of the Hospital Junction, DCC concludes that the estimated level of traffic movements generated by this development (27 and 25 in the AM and PM peaks respectively and 250 in a day) is considered to be low and within the daily variation of traffic at the Hospital Junction. *Therefore, as opposed to other larger developments in the area, it does not recommend a planning condition that limits the construction of the dwellings on this site to after the Hospital Junction has been improved. The Highway Authority is therefore proposing to allow the situation to get slightly worse knowing that there will be a longer term benefit as a result of the financial contribution from this site and others in the locality*

As a result of this statement from DCC Highways, the case officer had no choice but to recommend that this development should be allowed to commence without any traffic mitigation in place *as previously demanded by DCC Highways.*

****** Yet another U turn******

Raleigh Park (57503) DCC Highways Report 14th July 2014 – Impact on Pilton Causeway.

Concerns have been raised about additional vehicles queuing outside of the fire station on North Road at the approach to the traffic signal junction. The level of additional vehicles queuing in this location is not considered to be severe. The fire station also has a 'green wave' button within the station that means they can control the traffic lights to their benefit to get through queuing traffic if required.

This DCC Highways statement is now saying that queuing at Pilton Causeway is not considered to be severe *despite* their statement on 15th August 2013 in relation to Trayne Farm that it would have a *severe cumulative residual impact.*

The Raleigh Park applicant's Transport Assessment dated 11th June 2014 states that the Pilton Causeway junction is *already operating at over capacity* at PM peak and by 2018 without any additional development traffic will also be over capacity at AM peak.

Under the header *Impact on Highway Network* they state;

9.5 In summary, this junction is presently operating over capacity, with its performance worsening with background traffic growth up to 2018. Beyond 2018, with the impact of the Raleigh Park development (and other known north Barnstaple developments), its performance is obviously worsened, though not to any significant degree. The capacity issues at this junction are presently entirely the result of existing traffic.

They summarise by saying;

Summary

9.18 This Section has demonstrated that the proposed development at Raleigh Park will have a relatively minor impact on the performance of the offsite junctions considered. Three of the junctions considered are predicted to operate with reserve capacity under all scenarios considered. The only junction that is predicted to operate over capacity is the Pilton Quay / St. Georges Road junction, where this junction is already operating over capacity in the PM peak. By 2018 (without development traffic), it will operate over capacity in the AM Peak as well.

Raleigh Park (57503) Access onto A39

Raleigh Park applicant's Transport Assessment dated 11th June 2014

The applicant's own survey performed in July 2013 monitored vehicle speed along the A39 and despite there being a 40 m.p.h restriction a significant proportion of vehicles were travelling in excess of this speed. (Some even travelling at speeds *in excess of 60 m.p.h*)

Given that the proposed access to this site is on a sweeping bend, this in combination with excessive vehicle speeds is likely to have a serious impact on the safety of road users entering and leaving the site.

We would want to ask Highways Officers as to whether all these factors have been fully taken into account. We think not.

Barnstaple ATC, A39 North Site (South)
Produced by PCC Traffic Information Consultancy Ltd.

Channel 1 - Northbound Speed Summary Week 1

Speed (MPH)	09/07/2013 Tuesday	10/07/2013 Wednesday	11/07/2013 Thursday	12/07/2013 Friday	13/07/2013 Saturday	14/07/2013 Sunday	15/07/2013 Monday
0-30	528	427	380	311	160	88	367
31-45	5775	5957	5955	6179	4331	3690	5922
46-60	252	235	216	218	287	310	205
61-	5	7	12	9	8	6	7
TOTAL	6560	6626	6563	6717	4786	4094	6501

These and many more examples serve to illustrate that the community, and indeed many District Councilors in North Devon, consider that DCC Highways have repeatedly failed to make credible recommendations relating to Pilton applications.

We would also note that Highways Officers have repeatedly failed to respond to requests that they attend NDC Planning Committee Meetings in order to explain their decisions to Committee Members and members of the local community.