

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

At a meeting for **Plans** at the Memorial Hall on **Tuesday 27th June 2023 at 7.00pm.**

Present: Councillors H King (Chairman), H Clarke, K Cogman, P Duigan, S Green, A Brooks, L Monument, C Coleman, A Greenwood and R O'Callaghan

Also Present: Town Clerk T Needham and Deputy Town Clerk J Barron

1. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Councillors P Morton H Jones-Seymour

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. 3PL/2022/0580/F

15 Yaxham Road – Dereham

Demolition of existing building and erection of a new discount food store (Use Class E) with access, Car parking, Landscaping and other associated works

The Council objected to this application due to its impact on highways. The committee concurred with all the points identified in the committee report with the following additional comments.

Concern relating to whether the uplift in traffic has been given due regard especially as they is expected to be an uplift in sales from the current site. There seems to be no analysis of how much additional traffic will be generated by the new Lidl and the impact of diverting the existing traffic along with the uplift from current site to the proposed site.

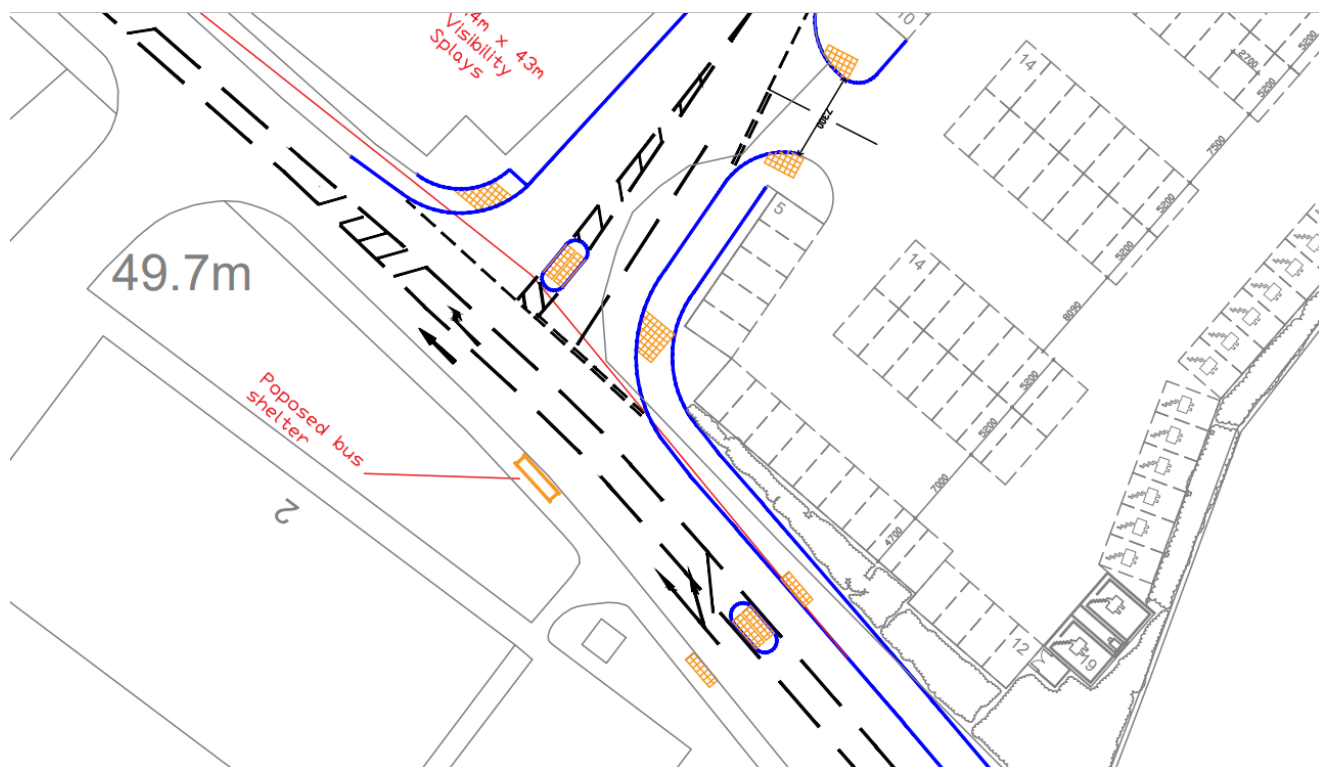
The delivery bay for Lidl seems in an inaccessible place, it seems impossible for a lorry to reverse into the delivery bay.

Yaxham Road already has issues with lorries waiting on Yaxham Road and reversing into Home Base delivery yard. These issues don't appear to have been taken into account in the assessment of current Highway Conditions.

The Following was submitted to Breckland Council

3PL/2022/0590/F Revised layout for Dereham Lidl

The proposed revised lay out is set out below.



The proposed revised layout is an improvement on the original, as the applicant has now given some consideration to pedestrian and cycle movements.

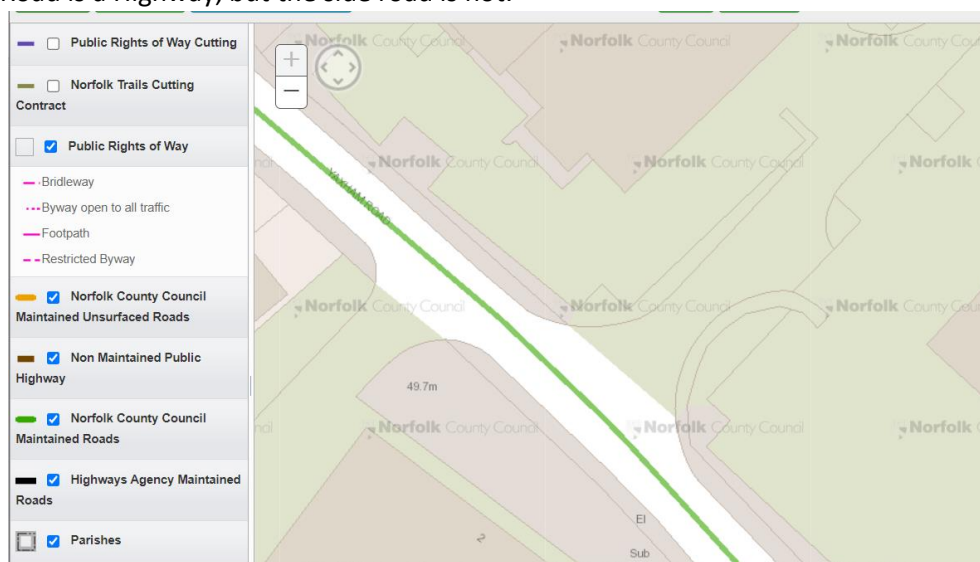
The revised layout does still raise several concerns.

- 1) As detailed in the Town Council's original comments, the application will have a negative impact on the capacity of the Tavern Lane junction, without factoring the increased traffic movements. The Applicant states that they are expecting an uplift in sales of 20% from the move, the presumably means that the current traffic Aldi traffic + 20% will be diverted from the Yaxham Road Roundabout to the these junctions. This uplift and displacement of vehicles does not seem to have been taken into consideration. There will be a reduction in queuing capacity heading south at Tavern Lane, because drivers already use the hatched area for queuing. The Junction is already operating over its design capacity at peak times, any changes which reduce its capacity still further, will increase queuing particularly on the north side of the junction. Queues on this arm of the junction already routinely reaches back, and impact on, the mini roundabout at Lynn Hill. At peak times it is not uncommon for queuing to reach back to Commercial Road junction and the entrance to the leisure centre entrance. Any additional queuing due to reduced capacity could lead to queuing as far back as Norwich Road.
- 2) The crossing island on Yaxham Road could be a significant benefit to pedestrians. At peak times however, the route across the road on the northern side, will either be obstructed by queuing vehicles or traffic will be flowing, making it difficult to cross safely. The southern side, changes to the Tavern Lane lights a few years ago reduced the inter-green period at the Tavern Lane lights. This change effectively reduced how much of a gap there was between one arm of the junction clearing through the lights and another arm of the junction starting to flow. This is important for when a pedestrian needs to cross Yaxham Road, they will only

be able to do so when there is a gap in the traffic created by this inter-green period. In addition to the traffic island, it may be beneficial to include road markings to prevent vehicles stopping on the crossing when queuing, keeping the route free for pedestrians. It is always the case that what is a difficult crossing for an abled bodied individual will be extremely difficult for somebody with a disability.

- 3) Location of the bus stop. While the location of the bus stop may not have changed, this does have potential to cause conflict between road users due to the new right turn lane. When a bus stops, at the bus stop, there will be a temptation for drivers to use the right turn lane to pass the stationary bus and come into conflict with right-turn traffic exiting the Halfords-Lidl junction. It would be better to move the bus stop further south, closer to the pedestrian crossing island, to prevent drivers trying to overtake the bus while stopped. This will also create a gap in the traffic to allow queued right turn traffic leaving Lidl to clear through.
- 4) Crossing and pedestrian island across the Halford's – Lidl side road. If this can be achieved it would be a great improvement on the current situation. Mindful of the situation at the Swanton Road level crossing, it is not clear that the applicant has control over the land on the Halfords side of the junction where the pedestrian footway is proposed to be widened. Nor does the land in question appear to be Highways land. **It is imperative that it is confirmed that the applicant can deliver the scheme proposed.**

Yaxham Road is a Highway, but the side road is not.



The Highway boundary can be clearly seen by the change in tarmac (red line).



- 5) All these junctions are extremely busy at peak times. If the crossing and island across the Halford's – Lidl side road can be delivered there will be a high level of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. In January 2022 the Highway Code introduced a new Rule H2,

which stipulates that traffic should give way to pedestrians crossing side roads. The design proposed would be acceptable prior to 2022, however due to the high vehicle movements in this area the crossing should be designed as a pedestrian priority junction to encourage drivers to comply with Rule H2 of the Highway Code. The same should be applied to the entrance junction at Lidl.

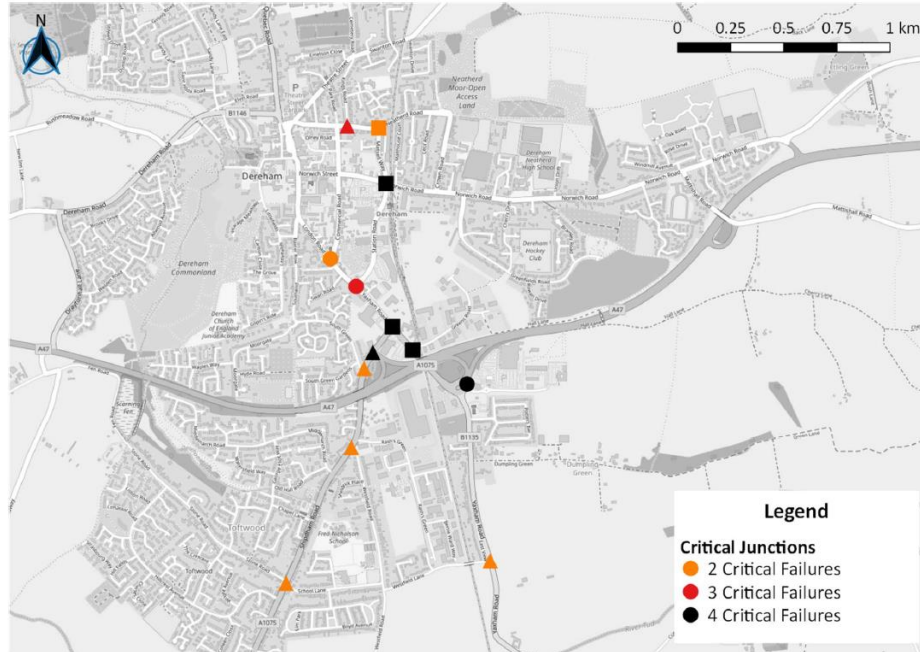
Example of pedestrian priority junction in busy high street.



While the improved pedestrian crossing facilities are welcome it is not clear how suitable these crossings are for people with disabilities given the volume and nature of traffic in this area.

- 6) The loading bay for the Lidl seem inaccessible unless the car park is completely empty even then there is a risk the lorries reversing from Yaxham Road, has a swept path analysis been seen to demonstrate that a lorry would not need to reverse off Yaxham Road to make a delivery?
- 7) It is well known that lorries waiting to deliver to Homebase regularly either reverse into Homebase from Yaxham Road or wait on Yaxham Road for the barrier into home base to be opened, both causing issues on this stretch of road.
- 8) Access by cycles. While few people will do their main shopping by bicycle, the applicant expects cyclists to visit and has provided cycle parking for this purpose, this could be for people who work at the store. It is welcomed that the applicant is leaving space for a shared use cycle lane along the front of the development site. This, of course, only benefits cyclist coming from the south (for a very short distance). Any cyclist leaving towards the north, turning right onto Yaxham Road, would be put into an extremely hazardous situation trying to cross 3 lanes of traffic. This right turn movement will be very difficult for drivers due to the introduction of the right turn lane, but car drivers are much better protected than cyclists. The Applicant has not demonstrated how an employee could safely access (or leave) the site from all possible directions. The Town Council commissioned an expert assessment of cycling safety in this area of Dereham. This independent professional assessment identified that cycling at these would be unsafe and a major discouragement to cyclists. An extract from the cycling report is below.

Figure 7: Plan showing junctions with severity of critical cycling safety conditions



The report notes that the Government's technical guidance states that the amount of 'Critical Junctions' on a cycling route should be significantly reduced or, if possible, removed completely. Therefore, a route exhibiting a string of junctions failing one or more of the criteria would significantly discourage cyclists and this is demonstrated to be the case in Dereham. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that significant intervention and improvements are needed to encourage people in Dereham to make regular cycling trips.

The application should be refused because it has not fully complied with Policy TR01 which states that developments should **"provide safe, suitable and convenient access for all users"** and **"demonstrate how they will maximise connectivity within and through a development and to the surrounding areas, including the provision of high quality and safe pedestrian and cycle routes"**.

Paragraph 4.11 of the Breckland Local Plan states that **"When considering the opportunities to encourage walking and cycling within the district, it is also necessary to consider the perceptions of safety. Studies have shown that the perceptions of safety in relation to both walking and cycling can result in people choosing to make journeys by the private car"**.

Paragraph 112 of the NPPF confirms that applications for development should:

- "Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas"
- "Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- "Create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles"

The Council felt that that application has not done enough to meet the requirements of both the Local Plan and the NPPF.

Chairman