



Access to Site H27: Rook Farm, Hayling Island

(A topic paper supporting the examination)

July 2021



Introduction

1. During the Stage 1 Hearings, at the Inspector's request the Council agreed to prepare a note on the highway safety and capacity issues related to each of the potential highway access points for the Rook Farm allocation (policy H27).
2. This paper sets out the Borough's justification for its preference to access the site from Lulworth Close.

Background

3. The Council originally proposed that access be provided from Manor Road, across third party land to the west of the proposed allocation. Following representations from the site promoter and further analysis the Council has proposed a change to the Local Plan, through CD27b, to require access to be provided from Lulworth Close across third party land to the north of the proposed allocation. The site promoter has made representations and provided hearing statements seeking to justify providing access from St. Mary's Road over land within its control.
4. Paragraphs 110 and 111 of the NPPF (2021) outline government policy in relation to assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans. The requirements that are considered to be relevant to assessing the Rook Farm access are that:
 - Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users
 - The design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code
 - Any significant impacts from development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, or the cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe
 - Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual impacts on the road network would be severe.

Manor Road Site Access

5. The Council accepts that the engineering challenges to achieve a safe junction with Manor Road, either through the provision of adequate sight lines or a signalised junction, mean that a safe and suitable access in this location is unlikely to be achievable.

Lulworth Close Site Access

6. The Council's preferred location for the Rook Farm site access is via Lulworth Close. This location would avoid the disadvantages of the St. Mary's Road access proposed by the site promoter which are covered in further detail below.
7. Lulworth Close is of sufficient width to provide access to the Rook Farm development and the junction with Church Road benefits from adequate visibility splays and this section of Church Road is straight with an existing right turn lane to access Lulworth Close from the north.
8. The Council acknowledges that the access would require third party land and would pass St. Mary's Church, a Grade II* listed building, located to the west of Church Road. The formal Listing is available on the Historic England website [here](#). Officers have discussed this issue with the

Council's Heritage Office. As a result, the Council acknowledges that there would be a likely heritage impact, albeit less than substantial harm to the setting of a listed building that may be capable of mitigation through landscaping.

St. Mary's Road Site Access

9. The Council's examination hearing statement (MIQ06) refers to St. Mary's Road and surrounding Roads representing a constrained section of highway with the following:
 - Access being directly on to a narrower section of carriageway
 - Close proximity to the nearby junction of St. Mary's Road onto Church Road with businesses accessed directly off that junction
 - Close proximity to Mengham Infant School.
10. Whilst the Council does not have any specific evidence relating to the implications of the proposed access via St. Mary's Road in terms of highway safety or capacity it would wish to expand on the points raised above as follows:
 - St. Mary's Road is significantly narrower than Church Road and its width would not be sufficient to allow for a dedicated right turn lane for traffic accessing the development site from the north whereas Church Road already benefits from right hand turn lane to allow access to Lulworth Close.
 - Notwithstanding the presence of double yellow lines on the northern section of St. Mary's Road, any vehicles stopping for deliveries or dropping off passengers will effectively reduce the road to the capacity of a single track road.
 - The access would only be approximately 40 metres from the St Mary's Road/Church Road junction. The close proximity of the junction to St. Mary's Road is further exacerbated by the presence of an existing builders merchants business immediately to the north of the St. Mary's Road/Church Road junction. This business receives deliveries from flat-bed lorries that park partly on the edge of the road and partly on the footway. This means that the left hand lane approaching the junction from the southwest is often partially blocked and if traffic waiting to turn right into the site was backed up, then traffic travelling northeast on St. Mary's Road would be prevented from passing a parked delivery vehicle, potentially backing up and blocking the site access. It is acknowledged that this is likely to be capable of mitigation.
 - The Gladman hearing statement (MIQ46) sets out the proposed access arrangements, including the junction with Church Road, at appendix 3 containing drawings produced by Prime Transport Planning. It should be noted that the suggested pedestrian refuge would not be able to be accommodated in the position shown, as this would result in the carriageway being blocked when deliveries to the builder merchants are taking place, though an alternative design may be possible.
 - The access to Mengham Infant School is located approximately 180 metres to the south of the proposed site access. Notwithstanding the presence of double yellow lines on the northern section of St. Mary's Road, the road gets extremely congested a school drop off and pick up times with parked cars.
11. The Council notes that whilst it is unlikely that the above causes of 'friction' would be apparent in the transport modelling, given they will appear either infrequently or sporadically, they are real constraints that can have a considerable impact on congestion in the area when they do occur.

12. The Gladman hearing statement (MIQ46) states, 'The proposed access arrangement has been subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) by qualified and independent specialists. The audit has not raised any significant issues that would preclude access in the location shown, nor any issues with this form of junction.'. Council officers have had sight of the RSA and it is noted that the RSA has not been submitted to nor signed off by Hampshire County Council as Highway Authority. However, Council officers also note that this level of detail would usually be provided at planning application stage, rather than at the local plan allocation stage. Given the issues raised above there may be local site-specific issues that haven't been picked up and would affect the RSA.
13. Therefore, whilst the Council's preference is that access be provided from Lulworth Close, it confirms that it has no evidence to prove that the St. Mary's Road access would not be able to be delivered in a way that does not have significant impacts on the highway network (in terms of capacity and congestion) nor that there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Summary and Conclusions

14. The Council accepts that a safe and suitable access from Manor Road is unlikely to be achievable.
15. The Council's preference is that access is provided from Lulworth close and considers that this would provide the best form of access in terms of highway safety and capacity. It has not been demonstrated by the site promoter that this access is not possible to achieve.
16. The Council does not have any specific evidence to demonstrate that the access from St. Mary's Road is not achievable. At this point in time, the site promoter has not demonstrated that an appropriate access could be delivered without a detrimental impact on highway capacity or safety, albeit it is rare for that to be conclusively demonstrated at the plan making stage.
17. However, whichever access option is included in the final policy for H8 Rook Farm, it is noted that all of the policies of the local plan will apply and any development will need to demonstrate compliance with policy IN3 Transport and Parking which requires that 'safe and suitable access to the site is provided for all people and modes of transport'. On this basis the St. Mary's Road access would only be permitted subject to the provision of a safe and suitable access.

