

Burnett, James

From: Planning (SMDC)
Subject: FW: smd/2016/0378
Attachments: Paul mew technical note.pdf; moneystone park.xls; Further Objections .docx; Further Objections to SMD part 4.docx; Traffic photos.docx; Further Objections to 0378.docx; ATT00001.txt

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

From: Alison Conybeare
Sent: Sunday, August 14, 2016 3:34 PM
To: Curley, Jane
Cc: Planning (SMDC)
Subject: smd/2016/0378

Dear Mrs Curley

Please see attached some further documents objecting to the above planning application.

Thank you

Alison



Whiston Eaves Lane near the entrance to Moneystone Quarry



Local children playing in Whiston's Children's Play Area. Whiston Eaves Lane (visible on the right) has no path.



Annual migratory toads mating on the road outside the entrance to Moneystone Quarry – regularly squashed!



Someone else thought Whiston Eaves Lane was bigger than it is! The police had to come and move the cars so the lorry could get down and the road was blocked for hours.



These two vehicles took 5 minutes to get past each other in Denstone.



Just another day after Alton Towers.



One of the other residents of Whiston Eaves Lane. Imagine the chaos he could cause if managed to get out onto the road full of tourists (and being a goat he is an expert escape artist)!

Decision Notices - Whiston

‘The need for consistency in the making of planning decisions is not strictly a principle of law. It is a principle of good practice in development control which the court has recognized.’ Lindblom J (Pertemps Investments Ltd vs Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (2015) EWHC 2308 (Admin) at 52-53)

Here are a number of direct quotations taken from planning decision notices refusing planning permissions within the Whiston area.

Jane Curley (Case Officer) 2 December 2015 in relation to the Moneystone Park application (which is virtually identical to this application):

*Notwithstanding the fact that this site is identified in the Churnet Valley Masterplan as an Opportunity Site for a high quality leisure venue with a maximum of 250 lodges, the Masterplan is clear in the Concept Statement for the Moneystone Quarry Opportunity Site at paragraph 7.6.5 that **development needs to be of a scale which does not undermine the tranquillity and character of this sensitive part of the Churnet Valley. Policy DC3 of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document requires the Council to protect and where possible, enhance the local landscape.** Policy SS7 refers specifically to development within the Churnet Valley and, whilst it provides support for visitor accommodation and the provision of new tourist attraction and facilities, it requires them to be both **compatible with the area and to be of a scale and nature, which conserves and enhances the landscape.** It further confirms that **consideration of landscape protection will be paramount in all development proposals.***

*It is considered that within the area identified as Multi Activity Hub area on the submitted Parameters Plan the **intensity of activity, the extent of built development (see indicative Schedule of Accommodation)** and height of buildings (up to 12m in parts) would **result in a development that was visually intrusive,** particularly from the public footpath which runs directly to the west of this part of the site and in wider views from Eaves Lane to the north and from public footpaths to the west and east. It would **fail to respond to and respect this small scale landscape which the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment confirms to be particularly sensitive to change.** Similarly, the area identified as*

Black Plantation occupies an elevated location, visually and physically isolated from the remainder of the proposed development. In this location and notwithstanding the submitted Woodland Approach Notes setting out a proposed phasing approach to development within this woodland, it is considered that there is potential for development to be readily visible near the skyline in near and more distant views to the south. As such the proposal is in conflict with Policies DC3 and SS7 of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document, the Adopted Churnet Valley Masterplan SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to protect and enhance valued landscapes.

2. The traffic generated from the proposed leisure development comprising up to 250 holiday lodges together with traffic generated from day visitors to the proposed leisure facilities would result in a significant increase in the amount of traffic accessing the surrounding rural road network and particular Eaves Lane/Carr Bank to the east of the site access which would provide a direct route from the development to Alton Towers and Farley Lane which links Oakamoor and Farley. It is considered that the increase in traffic would lead to unacceptable congestion on these narrow country roads. Carr Bank, for example is largely single track with limited passing places and a steep gradient as the road enters the village of Oakamoor. Although there is an offer to agree a signage scheme, an intention to run a shuttle bus to Alton Towers as part of a Travel Plan to be secured by way of planning obligation and improve the A52/Whiston Eaves Junction, these measures would not prevent guests using the aforementioned rural routes. Furthermore guests from Black Plantation will be heavily reliant upon the car to access all facilities within the Hub area via the wider rural highway network given that it is physically detached and remote from the main venue with no pedestrian connectivity provided due to the change in levels in this area. It is for these reasons that it is considered that traffic from the proposal will not be satisfactorily accommodated on the highway network and that the proposal fails to provide and/or encourage satisfactorily the use of sustainable travel modes contrary to Policy T1 of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

3. The proposed development will have an adverse impact on the setting of Little Eaves Farm, a Grade II Listed building which lies to the west of the site. There will be direct views from this

heritage asset to the south/southeast into the Multi Activity Hub Area owing to gaps in existing planting. Although it may be possible to provide landscaping within this area to filter views, the exact siting of the buildings, their form, mass and design is unknown. The existence of overhead power lines crossing into the site will compromise the ability to provide effective screening and in any event planning will take many years to establish. In the wider landscape there would be views of the heritage asset particularly from Whiston Eaves Lane, from the public footpath which runs through the site and from the site itself. In these views the asset would be read in conjunction with the proposed development which would erode the agricultural hinterland in which the asset is experience. The close proximity of the asset to the central Multi Activity Hub Area would also result in loss of tranquillity and seclusion, elements which also make a positive contribution to the significance of the asset. Considerable weight has been given to the harm that would be caused to the heritage asset as required by section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 when carrying out the exercise. The harm is judged to be less than substantial in terms of paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework but it is not considered that the public benefits arising from the proposal outweigh the harm. As such there is conflict with Policy DC2 of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document which seeks to safeguard and where possible enhance the historic environment.

4. Overall, the benefits of this leisure scheme when considered together would not be sufficient in this case to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm identified above contrary to Policies DC2, DC3, SS7 and T1 of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document; the Adopted Churnet Valley Masterplan SPD and the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework).

Arne Swithenbank (Case Officer) 5 March 2015 in relation to a Solar farm in Moneystone Quarry:

A balance must be struck against competing negating considerations: principally in this case the degree to which the scale and nature of the proposal impacts upon the landscape. The Council's Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008) places the location partly within the Dissected Sandstone Highland

*Fringe and partly within the Dissected Sandstone Cloughs and Valleys Landscape Character Types and the site falls within areas 1b and 3a of the Churnet Valley Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2011), both documents being supporting evidence to the Core Strategy. The assessment identifies ... that “redevelopment proposals should take into account the sensitive nature of the small scale landscape in terms of its protection”. The Staffordshire County Council landscape assessment: Planning for Landscape Change (2001) considered the quality of the two identified character areas to be either high or very high and of highest landscape sensitivity. **The area overall must therefore be considered to have low or limited capacity to absorb developments into the landscape successfully.** Notwithstanding the current un-restored or part-restored quarry state of the application site the proposal is assessed against the approved ‘green field’ restoration plan environment. **The proposal itself would be a significant and unusual development at odds with the landscape features which characterise the area and would dominate its setting...** There would therefore be a clear and demonstrable harm to the landscape character. In turn the visible impacts of the development for users of nearby public footpaths numbers 49 (Kingsley) and 7 (Oakamoor); from Whiston Eaves Lane and certain more distant viewpoints compounds the harm through visual impact. Core Strategy Policy SS7 – the Churnet Valley Area Strategy – states, “Any development should be of a scale and nature and of a high standard of design which conserves and enhances the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area...” and that, “the consideration of landscape character will be paramount in all development proposals...” The proposal gains little of the particular support available from policy SS7 and fails to meet the required consideration of landscape at the core of this policy.*

.....Accordingly, the proposal is considered to conflict with Policies SS1 (last three points); SS1a; SS6c(3); SS7; SD2; DC3 and R1 of the adopted SMDC Core Strategy Development Plan (2014); the SMDC Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2011); the Churnet Valley Masterplan (2014) and the National Planning Policy Framework. (SMD/2014/0432)

Jane Curley (Case Officer) 15 May 2014 in relation to one dwelling on Whiston Eaves Lane:

The proposal would conflict with policies because Whiston is identified as a Small Village in recognition of its limited services and facilities where an Infill boundary will be defined within which limited appropriate development will be allowed. The supporting text to Policy SS6b confirms that these boundaries will be more tightly drawn than existing development boundaries so as to accommodate infilling but to restrict peripheral growth. Furthermore the application fails to make effective use of land by using Greenfield land contrary to Policies SD1 and SS1 of the Core Strategy which require a sequential approach to new development. For these reasons the principle of development is unacceptable and the proposal is contrary to Policies SS6, SS6b, SS6c, SD1 and SS1 of the adopted Core Strategy.

*...[the area] very much has the character and appearance of being part of the open countryside. Indeed the Landscape and Settlement Character Appraisal confirms one of the key characteristics of this landscape type to be its small/medium pastoral landscape with side and distant views. The application site is very much an integral part of this pastoral landscape, being part of a larger field with open views across it. **This landscape is identified as being very sensitive to the impacts of development and land use change.** Policy DC3 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect such landscapes from harmful development. The government also continues to attach importance in the NPPF to conserving and enhancing the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes such as this. Two of the Core planning principles confirm that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and conserve and enhance the natural environment. It is considered that, having regard to the above, the development of the application site ... would have a very harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area and conflict with policy DC3 of the Core Strategy and policies in the Framework which seek to protect such landscapes from harmful development.*

... It is considered that the totality of the harm is significant and demonstrably outweighs the benefit... (SMD/2014/0166)

Jane Curley (Case Officer) 15 December 2011 in relation to reconstruction of a Listed Building from Moneystone Quarry:

The site lies outside of the settlement boundary of Whiston in open countryside which is designated as Special Landscape Area. In such locations national and local planning policies seek to strictly control new development and to direct new housing development to within existing settlement boundaries. It is considered that the very special justification needed to support ... holiday accommodation such as this is not made. The application site is an open and highly prominent site and its development as proposed would be damaging to the character and appearance of the area. Given the impending restoration... of Moneystone Quarry (420 acres or thereabouts) it is disappointing that there does not seem to have been any discussion to secure a suitable location within this site. As such there would be a significant breach of Policies N8, N9, H4, H7 and R17 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and national advice in PPS1, PPS3, PPS4 and PPS7.

...the very character and integrity of the building and its setting, which planning permission SM98-0282LB sought to preserve has been lost. (SMD/2011/0832).

Lisa Goldstraw (Case Officer) 20 July 2010 in relation to one dwelling on the A52/Whiston Eaves Lane junction:

The application site is located within the Special Landscape Area and outside of the Whiston Village Development Boundary and as such is afforded protection from inappropriate development. Policies H4, H7 and H15 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan seek to resist residential development other than where the scheme is in connection with agriculture or forestry, can meet a proven local need that could otherwise not be met or involves the conversion of a rural building in accordance with policy B21, the application does not meet any of these requirements and is thus contrary to policy. The proposed development would also detract from the spacious and open character of the Special Landscape Area at this point contrary to policy N8 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. In reaching this decision regard has also been had to the previously refused application on the site reference 01/00267/OUT for a detached dwelling and the dismissed appeal decision to the east between Brook Cottage and The Sneyds Arms (APP/B3438/A/08/2070060) also for residential development.

The traffic generated by the proposed development would be likely to result in an increase in highway danger owing to increased use of the existing access which affords restricted visibility for drivers emerging from the access and pedestrians and drivers of vehicles at the access. The application is therefore contrary to policy T14 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and PPG13 'Transport'. (SMD/2010/0318).

Theresa Critchlow (Case Officer) 6 February 2008 in relation to two dwellings on the A52/Whiston Eaves Lane junction:

The application site comprises of a green field site which lies outside any recognised development boundary within an attractive area of open countryside designated as Special Landscape Area... no specific information has been submitted to demonstrate a proven local need that would not otherwise be met... It is considered that the proposed scheme represents a cramped form of development which would in this open undeveloped and prominent positing represent a significant visual intrusion that would be harmful to both the character and appearance of the landscape. In this respect the proposal would be contrary to Policies N8 and N9 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. (SMD/2007/1243).

Teresa Edgecox (Case Officer) 15 August 2007 in relation to one dwelling on the A52/Whiston Eaves Lane junction:

The proposal represents inappropriate development in the open countryside that would be detrimental to the open character of the countryside and the appearance of the Special Landscape Area. In this respect the proposal would be contrary to Policies H4 and H5 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan which seeks to concentrate new housing development within the development boundaries of towns and villages. The proposal is not in relation to a demonstrable farming or forestry need nor is it seeking to convert an existing building and as such fails to satisfy the exceptions made under Policies N1, H7 and B21 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. Given that the proposal would amount to inappropriate development, it would, by definition impact upon the high quality character and appearance of the landscape. As such the proposal conflicts with the Local Plan Policies above, which are aimed at protecting the countryside and with national planning advice on development in the

countryside contained within PPS7; Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

The site lies within the Special Landscape Area. It is considered that a new dwelling in this open, undeveloped and prominent position would represent a significant visual intrusion that would be harmful to both the character and appearance of the landscape. In this respect the proposal would be contrary to Policies N8 and N9 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. (SMD/2007/0844).

Mike Green 9 June 2004 in relation to a single storey side extension:

The proposal would harm the open character and visual appearance of the Special Landscape Area by reason of an excessive size increase and a prominent siting of the proposals. Moreover, the proposal would harm the countryside amenity enjoyed by users of Ross Road and the A52. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies N8 and H13 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. (SMD/2004/0005).

Mike Green 24 July 2002 in relation to a replacement bungalow:

The proposed dwelling, by reason of its design, size and mass and proximity to Eavesford Farm, a Grade II Listed Building, will detract from the setting of this historic building, this would be contrary to Policy B9 of Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan.

The proposal represents a significant increase in size and mass compared to the existing dwelling, contrary to the provisions of Policy H12 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. (SMD/2002/0403).



Villagers on a walk down Whiston Eaves Lane to object to the proposals at Moneystone Quarry



Lodges on route to Alton Towers



Lodge delivery down Farley Lane, Oakamoor.

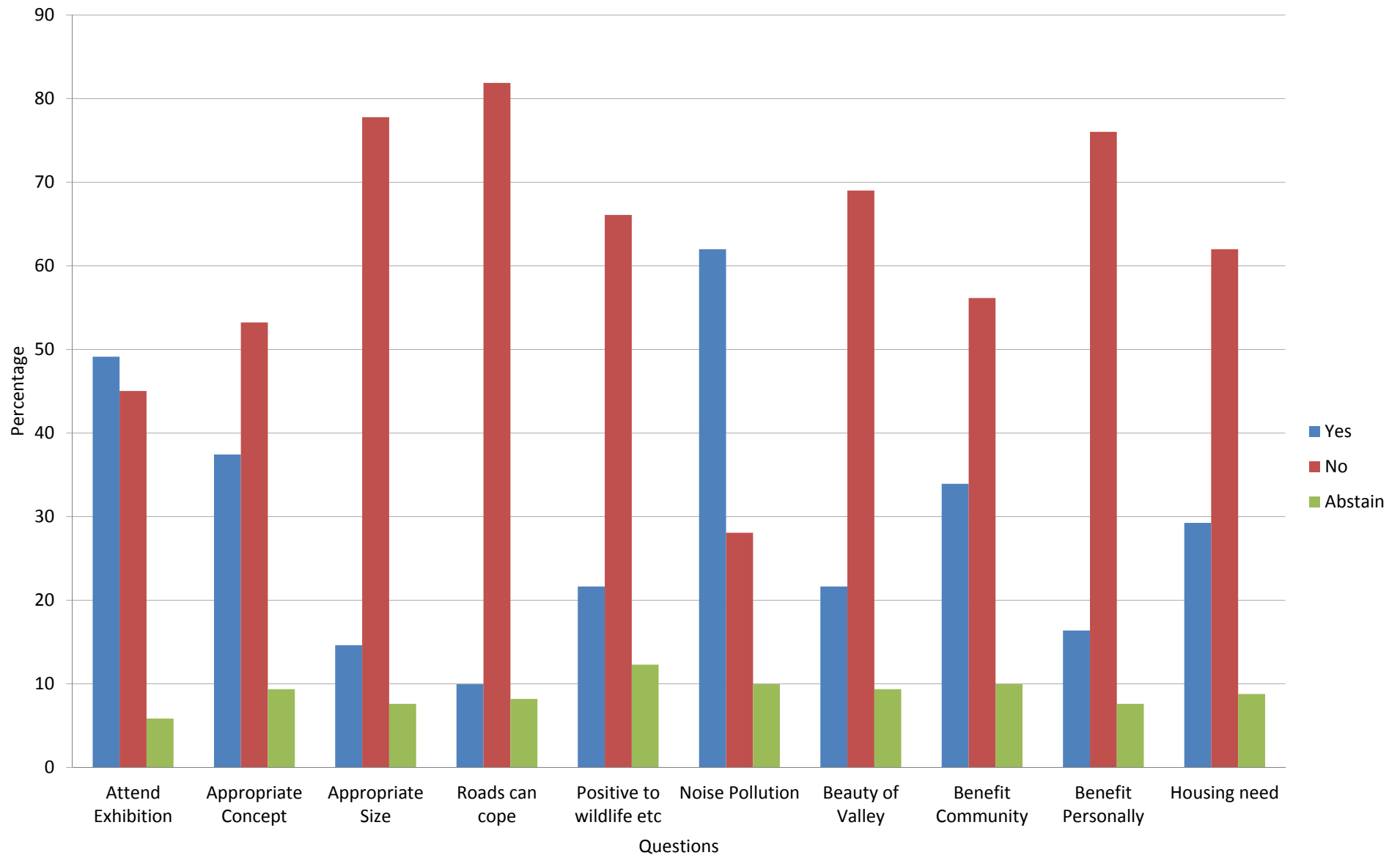


Whiston Eaves Lane/A52 Junction. Vision can be cured with a 30mph speed limit!



Blakely Lane, the road for 100 lodges ingress & egress.

Whiston Responses





PAUL MEW ASSOCIATES

TRAFFIC CONSULTANTS

TECHNICAL NOTE

Project: PI 302: Junction A52/Whiston Eaves Lane
Date: 13/10/15
Title: Moneystone Quarry – Junction Sight Line Assessment

Introduction

1 Paul Mew associates were instructed by the Whiston Action Group to provide an expert witness report on the suitability of the proposed junction improvements at Whiston Eaves Lane junction with the A52 to accommodate new traffic generated by the Moneystone Quarry redevelopment.

2 This report has been prepared by Paul Mew BSc, MSc, MCIHT, MCIT. Mr Mew is a registered Law Society expert witness and has given traffic evidence at many public enquiries including major developments of motorway service areas covering aspects such as junction design, junction capacity and road safety.

Sight Lines

3 Jim Long wrote to Mark Lynch at High Peak DC regarding sightlines stating that the proposed junction layout

'struggles to meet the standards set out in DMRB'.

4 Brian Laird the Technical Director (Transport UK North) Infrastructure said

"although the layout of the junction is substandard the accident history does not indicate an inherent road safety issue".

5 Both agreed that the junction has substandard sight lines however because there have been no accidents and that a 30mph speed limit is to be introduced the design should be acceptable.

6 The applicant claims that a speed limit of 30mph can be introduced on the A52 however there is no guarantee that this speed will be achieved unless physical traffic calming such as road humps or chicanes are introduced and this would be unlikely for a road of this status, being an A road serving as a regional distributor road. In the absence of speed restraint measures it is usual to assume drivers will travel above the speed limit when designing visibility splays.



7 As there is no certainty that speeds will remain at or below 30mph, Manual for Streets 2 [MfS2] says that in 30mph speed limits the 37mph 85th percentile will generally be achieved [MfS2 10.1.3]. A speed of 37mph would require a visibility splay stopping sight distance of 59m [MfS1 Table 7.1]. The maximum achievable sightline to the right is 30m and to the left is 34m [Brian Laird Email to Staffordshire CC]. This is confirmed by a safety audit that was carried out. This document flagged up the poor sight lines as an issue. Paragraphs 9.6.3 states that

“the existing sight lines with a 2.4m setback are only 34m looking left from Whiston Eaves Lane and 30m looking right from Whiston Eaves Lane”

8 The Transport Assessment report in support of the application sets out how sight lines could be improved and 2 options are proposed;

9 Option 1 proposes a 30mph speed limit and a right turn lane that improves sight lines to the left to 49m with sight lines to the right remaining at 30m. The right turn lane is considered necessary to meet the mandatory requirement that a right turn lane should be considered where the two-way flow of traffic on the minor road (Whiston Eaves Lane) exceeds 500vpd as would be the case with the proposed development. [DMRB TD42/95]

10 Option 2 proposes a kerb build out with a narrowing of the A52 however no right turn lane is provided in this option. With this option there is no scope to provide a pedestrian refuge or footway along the northern side of the A52 adjacent to the public house. This option bring the give way line further forward and as such has a visibility of 45m to the left and 53m to the right. If this scheme is considered viable it could almost achieve the visibility criteria set out in Manual for Streets provided that the 85th percentile speeds can be reduced to 37mph. Further information is required to justify why a right turn lane, although considered necessary for the first option was dropped for the second option. Discussion should also be provided on the lack of footpath and pedestrian crossing in this option.

11 Option 1 is favoured and this design is for a right turn lane. However as said, it does not improve sight lines looking to the right from Whiston Eaves Lane. Visibility to the right is especially important where approaching vehicles on the A52 are approaching the junction down a fairly steep hill and would be hidden from the view of a driver turning out of Whiston Eaves Lane until only 30 metres away.



12 The safety audit flagged up the limit that is placed on forward visibility created by the wall on the south side of the A52 to the east of the junction (looking right from Whiston Eaves Lane)

13 It is accepted that there have been no reported personal injury accidents in the 5 year period studied however it is a fact that reported injury accidents are rare events and for this reason it is very difficult to correlate accidents and substandard visibility.

14 The proposed Moneystone Quarry development would significantly increase traffic using Whiston Eaves Lane introducing new drivers to the junction where visibility distance to the right is around half of that recommended by Manual for Streets. The Royal Haskoning Transport Assessment Report dated October 2014 advised that

'the proposed development will generate a significant increase in traffic flow at this junction'. At paragraph 9.6.3 it is stated that 'the increase on Whiston Eaves Lane will be 150%. On the west arm of the A52 the increase will be 20% and on the east arm of the A52 the increase will be 9%'. These are all significant increases.

15 In summary, while it is reasonable to apply some common sense to the interpretation of design standards, the achievable sight lines are so far below standards that it is a serious safety concern to consider loading more traffic onto a substandard junction that is not capable of providing reasonable sight lines. By doing so the risk of injury accidents occurring would increase.

Sneyd Arms

16 The decision notice for planning consent that was granted for a development on the Sneyd Arms pub site for dog training. This is a relatively minor traffic generator however the applicant's consent was conditioned such that they have to safeguard a visibility distance of 120m along the A52 in the interests of highway safety. [Condition 6 of planning consent decision letter SMD/2014/0676]. Obviously this requirement is based on a speed limit of 40mph and that visibility meets the DMRB stopping distance for a speed of up to 44mph. It does illustrate that speed and sightlines are taken to be an important consideration along this stretch of road and that the appropriate stopping sight distances should apply.

17 This site is on the outside of a bend in the A52 and as such it will enjoy longer sight lines than is afforded to traffic emerging from Whiston Eaves Lane which is on the inside of a bend of the A52. I regard this sightline requirement as setting an important precedent for later planning applications, that sightline standards should be rigorously applied.

18 In summary the proposed development will add new traffic to a junction where visibility is poor and falls well short of the required standard for highway safety. As such the junction should not be used to access the proposed development.



Traffic in Oakamoor courtesy of SMDC's Conservation Area Appraisal, Oakamoor.



Parking at the Rambler's Retreat – popular Churnet Valley visitor spot. 2012.



Parking at the Rambler's Retreat – popular Churnet Valley visitor spot. 2012.



Parking at Rudyard Lake, 2012.



Parking on the road at Rudyard, same day as above.



The same day at the Roaches

All these photos were taken on the same day 4 years ago. The traffic is much worse now. The video is much more dramatic. Please see the full video by searching for Staffs Parking on Youtube.com for the full effect.