

Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council

Westbury-sub-Mendip: **Proposed Development at Roughmoor Lane:** **Highways Scoping Report**

Introduction

The Somerset Local Plan includes the development of land adjacent to Roughmoor Lane, Westbury-sub-Mendip. The site is HELAA reference WSM006.

The Local Plan states:-

‘11.27 Westbury sub Mendip

11.27.1 Westbury-sub-Mendip is a medium sized village within the southern slopes of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and extending down to the edge of the Somerset Levels. It is located along the A371, around five miles from Wells and six miles from Cheddar.

11.27.2 Westbury-sub-Mendip is designated in the LPP1 as a Primary Village. It is expected to deliver at least 50 new homes over the Local Plan period 2006-2029. 38 houses are still to be delivered.

Site Allocations

11.27.3 Due to the number of homes still to be developed, and the level of past development, an allocation is proposed on Land at Court House Farm (off Roughmoor Lane) (part of HELAA site WSM006). This is a suitable site, which could deliver the required number of homes but remain proportional to the size, needs and limitations of the settlement. Traffic generation will need to be carefully considered, as the access from Roughmoor Lane onto the A371 will require assessment. There is also scope to include community facilities on the site, which is adjacent to the village playing fields. The Parish Council have identified a need for improved community facilities including a village hall.

- **Land South of Roughmoor Lane (HELAA site WSM006) to be allocated for residential development under Policy WM1.**

Windfall Development

11.27.4 Westbury Sub Mendip continues to have an identified development limit. Over the lifetime of the plan additional small-scale development could potentially come forward within this boundary to meet the residual requirement.

Development Limit

11.27.5 Amendments at Torlea, Wells Road and at Stable Cottages to allow for committed development have been made to the development limit.’

and

‘WM1: Land south of Roughmoor Lane (HELAA site WSM006)

Context

The site is part of a large single field adjacent to but outside the development limit on the south western edge of the village. The site contains a number of farm buildings on its eastern side, abuts sporadic mixed development along its eastern edge (including undeveloped areas) and abuts open countryside on its western and southern edges. There is also a playing field adjacent to the western edge.

The site is well related to the village and accessible to most village facilities. It is enclosed by development on two sides and while it is visible across open land to the south, it is not prominent in the landscape. The site could provide for the residual housing requirement in the village. Traffic generation and access onto the A371 will need to be carefully considered. There is also scope to include community facilities on the site, which is adjacent to the village playing fields. Additional land is included in the site area to allow for this.

Landscape & Ecology

The site is visible in the landscape across open and gently sloping fields to the south. It is visually well contained from the east, west and north. It adjoins the edge of the settlement and a well-designed scheme would read as the edge of the village. The site would have an impact on views from Roughmoor Lane across currently open farmland. The site would also be visible from Lodge Hill industrial estate to the south of the village, but appear as distant development.

The site is part of a large arable field with hedgerow to the west, located in Band C of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. Provisionally any masterplan should include 0.13 ha of accessible replacement habitat. In combination effects with other developments affecting the SAC around Cheddar should be further investigated. Common pipistrelle, serotine, lesser horseshoe and the rare barbastelle bats are also possibly present at low density. The potential impact of phosphates should be taken into account in mitigating the environmental impact of the development. However, wastewater flows from this settlement are not considered to be hydrologically linked to designated RAMSAR site.

Heritage

The north-east corner of the site falls within the Westbury-sub-Mendip Conservation Area. There are a number of listed buildings nearby - to the east at Grade II Court House Farm House, Grade II* Church of St Lawrence, and Grade II Westbury House. The north-east corner of the site falls within the Area of High Archaeological Potential.

Highways

The site can be accessed from Roughmoor Lane or onto the A371 (Stoke Road). Further investigation will be required to establish access options.’

and

‘Policy WM1: Development Requirements and Design Principles

1. A minimum of 40 dwellings including affordable housing consistent with relevant policy.
2. Have particular regard to site layout, building height, and soft landscaping, to minimise the visual impact of the development in this rural location.
3. New development should reflect the local materials and style.
4. The site should be designed to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.
5. Opportunities should be taken to maintain or enhance biodiversity and particular consideration will be needed of the impact on designated sites. 0.13 ha of accessible bat habitat should be provided.
6. Further investigation will be required of traffic impacts and a safe access onto the A371 will be required. Safe pedestrian links should be provided to enable access on foot to the village core.
7. The impact on nearby listed buildings and the Conservation Area will need to be carefully considered.
8. Up to 0.1ha of land will be made available for the delivery of a community facility. No further contributions towards community facilities will be sought from the site.’

Interpretation

Policy WM1 point 6 requires that ‘safe pedestrian links should be provided to enable access on foot to the village core’. The village core includes the existing village hall, the shop, the pub and the school, all north of the A371.

In addition, the proposed site is to include space for community land, assumed to be a community hall facility. Existing residential development in Westbury-sub-Mendip generally lies north of the A371. These existing residents will need to gain safe access to the proposed community facility.

The Policy therefore clearly requires that a safe pedestrian crossing of the A371 and safe links to such a crossing be provided as part of the development proposals.

This Scoping Report

This Scoping Report addresses the requirements leading from point 6 above. It gives the scope of information required to satisfactorily investigate the highway impacts of the development by planners, highway officers, other statutory consultees and interested parties such as residents of Westbury-sub-Mendip.

The Suggested Proposals

Drawing CMP.01, Composite Masterplan has been prepared for the Church Commissioners of England by Thrive Architects and is attached to this report. It is recognised that this is a preliminary document. This shows a realignment of Roughmoor Lane to a new junction with Stoke Road east of its existing junction with Stoke Road. An access to the proposed development site is shown from the realigned Roughmoor Lane.

Data Gathering

The A371 runs between Wincanton and Weston-super-Mare. Locally, it runs between Wells to the east and Cheddar to the west. Through Westbury-sub-Mendip two-way traffic flows are in excess of 5,000 vehicle per day. HGV's comprise about 4% of the flow. The speed limit in Westbury-sub-Mendip is 30 miles per hour. Locally the A371 is known as Stoke Road.

The proposal site lies south of Stoke Road. The village core including village facilities such as the school and post office shop lie north of Stoke Road. Pedestrians from the proposed development will need to cross Stoke Road to access these facilities.

Vehicle access to the proposed development will need to be safe and fit for purpose. Account will need to be taken of frequent large agricultural machinery using Roughmoor Lane.

To ensure that the proposals for pedestrian and vehicle movements meets the requirements of the Local Plan Policy WM1, it will be necessary to gather data on vehicle and pedestrian flows. It will be necessary to understand traffic speeds adjacent to the pedestrian and vehicle routes. It will be necessary to survey the existing highway around the proposed site access and along pedestrian routes.

Following from this data gathering exercise, it will be necessary to test a number of means of ensuring vehicle speeds are tempered to create a safe and attracting walking environment. Various means of crossing Stoke Road will need to be considered to ensure safe and attractive walking route crossing facilities are provided. Safe access by all means and users to the proposal site will need to be designed.

Information Required

All information shall be available in electronic format such as dwg/dxf, word, excel such that it can be manipulated by recipients. Pdf files shall not generally be provided. The information required is:-

Seven day 24 hour directional speed and classified vehicle survey on Stoke Road west of Roughmoor Lane relating to visibility splays and seven day 24 hour directional speed and classified vehicle survey on Wells Road between School Hill and Duck Lane. Data shall be presented of ¼ hourly counts/speeds with usual totals and statistical results. The data shall also be extracted complying with DMRB CA185.

Three 12 hour weekday directional surveys of pedestrian flows across Stoke Road west of School Hill on different days and consecutive weeks by 15 minute intervals.

Three 12 hour weekday surveys of parking on Stoke Road east of Roughmoor Lane (Mortar Pits) on different days and consecutive weeks by 15 minute intervals.

One 16 hour junction turning count at Stoke Road/Roughmoor Road;

One 16 hour junction turning count at Stoke Road/School Hill/Crow Lane

A topographical survey of Stoke Road and Wells Road from 150 metres west of Roughmoor Lane to Station Road. The survey shall be between highway boundaries. The survey shall have a measured centreline. Measured cross-sections by feature every 10 metres shall be provided in tabulated form.

The Extent of Highway as declared by the Highway Authority over the extent of the topographical survey or greater.

The Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council may be able to assist in the secure placement of equipment for the above surveys.

Features to be Tested

To ensure safe links between the village core and the proposal site, it will be necessary to consider the following matters:-

- the route of pedestrian links to and from the village core;

- the provision of pedestrian facilities meeting standards;

- the crossing feature for the A371;

- safe access to the site from the A371 including accommodating existing pedestrian and vehicular traffic (attention is drawn to the extensive use of Roughmoor Lane by large agricultural vehicles);

- replacing parking lost from Mortar Pits.

Therefore, the following shall be tested and a critique provided for each tested feature. The list below is not exclusive. Further tests may be offered and/or required following data collection. The test shall include drawings and modelling using appropriate software:-

- a priority junction of the realigned Roughmoor Lane with Stoke Road;

- a mini-roundabout junction of the realigned Roughmoor Lane with Stoke Road;

- a mini-roundabout junction of Stoke Road, Wells Road and School Hill;

- a non-ghost island junction of Stoke Road, Wells Road and School Hill by realigning the southern kerbline northward;

explore traffic calming facilities to limit speeds to 20 miles per hour between Roughmoor Lane and Station Road.

explore various pedestrian crossing facilities on Stoke Road to suit trips between the proposal site and the village core;

show replacement parking for that lost at Mortar Pits;

show replacement bus stop facility;

give-way/priority outbound gateways at each end of the village

show safe pedestrian links between existing development on Roughmoor Lane and the village core

show how land in the control of the applicant might be used to improve traffic movements along the retained part of Roughmoor Lane.

The design of proposed features shall be mindful of the possible expansion of development at Westbury-sub-Mendip and of increased vehicular traffic on and to the A371 due to traffic growth. Facilities should therefore not be designed to be at capacity at the year of opening of the proposal development. Capacity for future growth shall be considered.

Summary

Policy WM1 includes the requirement that safe pedestrian links be provided between the development site and the village core, that is crossing the A371. Developers are reminded that all eight points of WM1 need to be addressed and satisfactorily delivered for any proposal to meet the site specific planning requirements of the proposed development. Safe access to/from the site and to destinations in the village and beyond is required for all highway users. No sub-set of highway users can be considered to be more important than any other sub-set.



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