

**FOR INFORMATION****SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)****DATE: 10 MARCH 2016****LEAD OFFICER: ANDY STOKES, PRINCIPAL TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT PLANNING OFFICER****SUBJECT: FRIMLEY GREEN TRAFFIC LIGHTS****DIVISION: FRIMLEY GREEN AND MYTCHETT****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Frimley Green residents submitted a petition to the Surrey Heath Local Committee on 10 December 2015 requesting that the proposed traffic light installation at the junctions of Wharf Road and Frimley Green Road and Guildford Road and Sturt Road with Frimley Green Road, be deferred until after the completion of the Deepcut Development is complete.

The petition was accompanied by a supporting note (attached at Annexe 1) setting out in more depth the concerns of residents. This report aims to address those concerns.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to note the contents and conclusion of this report.**

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The report is a response to a residents' petition seeking a change to the terms of the existing planning consent to redevelop Princess Royal Barracks in Deepcut. The Local Committee is unable to change the terms of the planning consent, neither can it require that the terms of the planning consent be renegotiated.

In response to the petition, the Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 Prior to the submission of the planning Application, Surrey Heath Borough Council produced its Core Strategy in 2012 where the principle of development at Princess Royal Barracks was agreed at an Examination in Public by The Planning Inspectorate. The Deepcut Supplementary Planning Document was subsequently adopted by the Borough Council setting out the additional and more detailed planning requirements to be considered by any subsequent planning application.

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- 1.2 The planning application seeking permission to redevelop Princess Royal Barracks was registered by Surrey Heath Borough Council on 19 November 2012.
- 1.3 The role of the Highway Authority in the context of a planning application is to consider the applicant's submission and in responding to the Borough Council's consultation, to provide comments on the technical acceptability of a proposal. Such comments will either raise no-objections, or seek the inclusion of conditions or requirements to mitigate the transport impact. Where the impact is severe, a reason or reasons for refusal may be recommended. In this instance the Highway Authority raised no objection subject to conditions and a transport mitigation package with a value of up to £10m.
- 1.4 It is the role of the applicant to consider the most appropriate solution when considering the best way to mitigate the impact of a development. If through the planning application process, either the Highway Authority, other consultee, stakeholder or the Borough Council deems the nature of the mitigation to be inappropriate, concerns can be raised with the applicant and other options explored prior to the determination of the application. In this instance the Highway Authority had no reason to request an alternative solution than that of traffic signals.
- 1.5 Surrey Heath Borough Council resolved to grant planning permission on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013. In summary the development will provide:
  - 1200 dwellings
  - supermarket
  - primary school
  - library building with co-located police desk and village visitor centre
  - care home
  - public house
  - sports Hub
  - nursery
  - GP surgery
  - local shops
  - public open space (SANGS, village green, allotments, parkland etc)
  - Associated highway, transport and Sustainable Urban Drainage infrastructure.
- 1.6 Surrey Heath Members voted 22 in favour and 10 against with 1 abstention. In arriving at their resolution to grant permission, Members took into account representations made by local residents, residents groups, business and other stakeholders.
- 1.7 Planning permission was subsequently granted on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014. The s106 Legal Agreement that accompanies the planning permission secures a broad range of measures to mitigate the impact of the development. One of these comprises a commitment to provide traffic lights in Frimley Green prior to the occupation of 450 dwellings or within 42 months from the commencement or development.
- 1.8 Assuming development on the main site commences in Spring 2016, it is envisaged that the junction works at Frimley Green will need to be constructed by the end of 2019.

- 1.9 Whilst the presence of the Planning consent fixes the nature of the mitigation measures proposed, any change to the terms of the s106 Agreement must be mutually agreed by all signatories to the Agreement, namely Surrey Heath Borough Council, Surrey County Council and The Secretary of State for Defence.
- 1.10 Full details of the committed planning obligations are contained within the completed s106 Agreement, a copy of which is available on the Borough Council web site.
- 1.11 In the absence of any request from the Developer (on behalf of The Secretary of State for Defence) to vary the terms of the Agreement the agreed obligations contained within the Agreement remain in force.

## **2. ANALYSIS:**

- 2.1 Concerns of local residents have culminated in the presentation of a petition by residents and submitted to the County Council stating:
- “As part of the proposed Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut development, it is proposed to install four-way traffic lights on the approach roads to Frimley Green to counter the anticipated increase in traffic flows through Frimley Green. There is local concern that this proposal will have an adverse effect on traffic congestion and will likely cause greater delay than currently experienced during peak times. Consideration should therefore be given to delaying road infrastructure changes until the extent of increase traffic flows can actually be measured. Frimley Green is not a town centre it is a village and as such the installation of four-way traffic lights and the associated congestion and pollution this will likely cause is considered a step too far in preserving Frimley Green as a village.”*
- 2.2 A supplementary note in support of the petition has also been produced and is attached at Annexe 1.
- 2.3 The Planning Application included the submission of a Transport Assessment to demonstrate the likely impact of the proposed development on roads and junctions in the local area. The Assessment was produced by a recognised Transport Consultancy, commissioned by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.
- 2.4 In considering the impact of any new development the Highway Authority is primarily concerned with the peak hours of traffic flow, simply because additional traffic at these times has the greatest influence on people’s travel and upon local businesses. During the off peak times, traffic moves more freely and the development impact is lessened.
- 2.5 In order to predict the impact of the development the existing traffic flows in the local area were firstly counted to establish the current situation. These flows were adjusted to remove existing military traffic and increased using recognised traffic growth factors to estimate projected traffic levels by the year 2026, (the time at which the construction of the development is expected to be complete). The estimated development traffic flows were then added, (these being determined by factoring up existing traffic flows counted at the

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existing Dettingden Park development). The flows were then distributed across the highway network, some remaining within the development itself and the remainder mirroring existing patterns of distribution to determine how much traffic is likely to pass through each of the local junctions. This practice is an industry wide method to estimate the likely impact of development throughout the UK.

- 2.6 The existing junctions in the area were analysed using recognised transport modelling software to understand the impacts at specific locations. The results considered the existing levels of congestion and that which might occur in the future from both the impact of the development and from a predicted year on year general increase in traffic.
- 2.7 A summary of these impacts is illustrated at Annexe 2.
- 2.8 In terms of vehicle delay the applicant's analysis states that there will be less delay resulting from the proposed traffic signals in 2026 than would be the case if the roundabouts were to remain. This is consistent with the prediction that queuing will also be reduced.
- 2.9 The traffic modelling indicates very small increases in queuing (up to 5 additional vehicles) on some approaches, with reductions (up to 12) on others. This prediction includes the additional traffic arising from the development and the general year on year background increases between now and 2026. Because of this it is unlikely that the number of short-cuts taken locally will increase. In comparison Annexe 2 indicates that significant queuing could occur if the traffic lights are not constructed.
- 2.10 In the resident's note supporting the petition, residents ask whether the proposed traffic lights could be delayed until the impact of the development is known.
- 2.11 The current obligation requires the development to provide the junction improvements within 42 months of the commencement of development or prior to the occupation of 450 dwellings. This trigger point was agreed in order that the works are constructed to cater for the impact as it arises and not before.
- 2.12 If the installation is delayed until after the development impact is known, traffic levels would progressively increase in the area in the meantime, including at the existing mini-roundabouts. As a result the local area would endure gradually increasing congestion and harm to road safety before the eventual mitigation is constructed. Importantly, as the development impact begins to take effect, it is likely that drivers would begin to deviate from their existing routes. Whilst this could have the effect of reducing the level of development traffic passing through the Frimley Green junctions, it could also have the effect of increasing traffic levels and 'rat-running' on other parts of the highway network where no mitigation has been secured from the development.
- 2.13 In the scenario where the installation of the traffic lights is delayed, residents have also questioned whether temporary traffic lights could be installed to test their effect of local conditions. Temporary lights could not be configured in the same way as a permanent set of traffic lights and would not offer a

meaningful reflection of the permanent installation. A temporary trial would therefore provide little in the way of a meaningful test.

- 2.14 The proposed works include the widening of Frimley Green Road, utilising part of Frimley Green. Advice has been sought from SCC's Legal Services Highway & Planning Solicitor regarding the status of Frimley Green. The land is a registered common under the Commons Registration Act 1965. In order to complete the works prior consent will be required from the Secretary of State under s38 of the Commons Act 2006. The landowner (Surrey Heath Borough Council) will be required to make the application. If the application is unsuccessful a lesser scheme that does not include controlled pedestrian crossings could be delivered that would reduce the impact of the Deepcut development.
- 2.15 In addition to the applicants own Transport Assessment, a fully independent Assessment was also carried out by the Borough Council to test the impact of the development. As expected that Assessment used the same broad methodology as the Assessment produced by the applicant. However, whilst the independent Assessment recommended a lesser range of mitigation and did not include outline junction designs, it too stated that traffic lights would be needed at Frimley Green to mitigate the impact of traffic arising from Princess Royal Barracks.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 The Highway Authority will make the Developer aware of the residents' concerns regarding the impact of traffic signals at Frimley Green
- 3.2 The Highway Authority will consider the visual and amenity impact of the proposed traffic lights and ensure that the works minimise street clutter and specify materials and design features that are sympathetic to the village nature of Frimley Green.
- 3.3 If the Commons Act application to the Secretary of State is unsuccessful the highway authority will work with the developer to deliver a lesser scheme, which it is anticipated will include fewer controlled pedestrian crossing provisions, using the same principles as set out at paragraph 3.2.

### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 The public consultation required of development related highway works is undertaken at the planning application stage. In the context of this development, the application included drawings illustrating the range of highway improvements to be delivered by the development. The planning application process consulted with residents, resident groups and stakeholders, whose views were considered prior to the determination of the planning application.
- 4.2 Whilst further consultation is not required to consider the principal or design of the works, further statutory consultation will be required in regard to traffic orders and the designation of part of The Green for highway purposes.

**5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 As with any development related highway works, the cost of their installation, including any costs incurred by the County Council, will be fully borne by the developer. The Highway Authority will also require the Developer to pay for the future maintenance burden of the proposed works.
- 5.2 As a result there are no adverse cost implications to the County Council

**6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 The proposed works include enhanced provisions for all highway users. These include controlled pedestrian crossings and tactile paving for visually impaired pedestrians.
- 6.2 As part of the detailed design the works will make provision for vulnerable users by employing appropriate highway design standards and features. The works will be safety audited to ensure the safe operation of the junction for all users.

**7. LOCALISM:**

- 7.1 No significant implications arising from this report.

**8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	The provision of additional pedestrian crossing points will aid transport sustainability and contribute towards the reduction of car borne journeys.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.

**9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 9.1 To make the Developer aware of the residents' concerns regarding the impact of traffic signals at Frimley Green.
- 9.2 To consider the visual and amenity impact of the proposed traffic lights and ensure that the works minimise street clutter and specify materials and design features that are sympathetic to the village nature of Frimley Green.

- 9.3 In the event that the Commons Act application to the Secretary of State is unsuccessful, to work with the developer to deliver a lesser scheme using the same principles set out at 9.2

## **10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 The delivery of the works is not required until 2019. The Highway Authority will liaise and share the detail of the proposed works with Members and residents as the detailed design emerges prior to construction. The Highway Authority will also positively encourage the developer to engage with residents in regard to the final design.

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### **Annexes:**

Annexe 1 – Residents supporting note to the petition.  
Annexe 2 – Summary of Transport impact at Frimley Green.  
Annexe 3 – Approved Junction Layout

### **Sources/background papers:**

Surrey Heath Development Project Web Pages:

<http://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/planning-supplementary-planning-documents/deepcut-development>

Completed Planning Application Documents including S106 (Town & Country Planning Act 1980) Legal Agreement:

<http://isharemaps.surreyheath.gov.uk/ishare54/custom/planning/?requesttype=parseTemplate&template=DevelopmentControlApplication.tmplt&Filter=^SYSTEMKEY^='30731'&backurl=custom/planning?>

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