

8 TRANSPORT

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement focuses on the transportation impacts associated with the proposed development. It draws on the detailed analysis set out in the Transport Assessment, which is submitted as *Appendix 2* (under separate cover), of the Environmental Statement.
- 8.1.2 A scoping study outlining the approach and methodology of the Transport Assessment was submitted to Gloucestershire County Council in its role as the local highway authority. Consultation was also held with the Highways Agency in view of its comments on the previous application (reference 05/02098/OUT). The Transport Assessment covers all modes of travel and the demands that the proposed development will place on existing transport infrastructure. The study area covers the highway network in the immediate vicinity of the site including pedestrian and cyclist links to nearby settlements. It also considers public transport provision.

8.2 Planning Policy

- 8.2.1 National transport policies are set out in PPG13 which place great emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport as sustainable modes of travel and introduces the requirement for Transport Assessments to be submitted alongside planning applications that have significant transport implications. It also addresses parking and the importance of travel plans. Further guidance is set out in 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' published in March 2007 and the Department for Transport's Circular 02/2007, also published in March 2007 entitled 'Planning and the Strategic Road Network'.
- 8.2.2 The Government's guidance on tourism is set out in its 'Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism'. The economic impact of tourism is significant and it is recognised that to realise its potential and to cater for changing patterns of tourism, rising standards and expectation, the industry needs to maintain a continuous programme of investment and reinvestment and constant improvements in quality and value for money of the services and facilities of it. The central objective is to achieve "sustainable development".
- 8.2.3 At the regional level, RPG10 published in September 2001 remains the extant guidance. It identifies tourism as one of the region's most important industries and sets out a Regional Transport Strategy comprising a number of policies which include seeking to reduce the need to travel and seeking to improve transport in the rural areas. RPG10 is expected to be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS10) in Summer 2009.

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- 8.2.4 At the strategic level, the Gloucestershire Structure Plan second review was adopted in November 1999 and remains extant policy until replaced by RSS10. It includes policies which seek to minimise the length and number of motorised journeys and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use; seeking to promote the development of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling routes; and seeking to maintain and enhance the bus service and rail networks.
- 8.2.5 In relation to development within the Cotswold Water Park, Policy NHE.8 of the Structure Plan requires proposals for development should facilitate access to and within the Cotswold Water Park using sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.2.6 The County Council's Local Transport Plan raises a number of issues regarding travel within the County and the need to provide better public transport in terms of service and choice in order to promote sustainable methods of travel and reduce the reliance of the private motorcar. Within the LTP, the County Council has set out a number of strategies, one of which is for the Cotswold Water Park. Amongst the objectives of that strategy is the promotion of the Water Park as a location for sustainable tourism. The LTP also contains proposals for the Eastern Spine Road to serve the eastern section of the Water Park.
- 8.2.7 Local planning guidance is set out in the Cotswold District Local Plan adopted in April 2006. Amongst its policies is Policy UT1 which sets out the criteria for development in the Water Park. Amongst the criteria is criterion (g) which requires the avoidance of traffic hazards and the provision of acceptable access arrangements, appropriate parking facilities and improvement and maintenance of public rights of way. The accompanying notes for guidance make it clear that planning applications for development in the Water Park will need to be accompanied by detailed information on a range of key issues which include traffic, access to pedestrian/bus/cycle networks and the impact on the locality including settlements. In November 1999 the District Council published Supplementary Planning Guidance to guide development in the Water Park.
- 8.2.8 Other policies deal with developing a sustainable transport network, travel plans, accessibility to and within new development and parking for vehicles, cycles and motorcycles.

8.3 Methodology

- 8.3.1 Reference has been made to the following guidance in undertaking this assessment:
- 'Guidelines on Transport Assessment';
 - 'Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic';
 - 'Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan';

- 'Highway Requirements for Development';
- 'Manual for Streets'

8.3.2 Data from the following sources have been used in the assessment:

- Public Rights of Way records;
- Personal injury accident data;
- Traffic flows derived from manual and automatic traffic counts;
- Traffic generation trip rates derived from the TRICS database;
- Traffic growth derived from the National Road Traffic Forecasts (NRTF) adjusted to local conditions using TEMPRO.

8.3.3 Discussions have been held with officers of Gloucestershire County Council concerning the scope of the assessment.

Baseline data

8.3.4 Existing conditions have been examined. These have included a review of the existing access arrangements, the highway network, existing rights of way and public transport services. Existing traffic movements and vehicle speeds have been obtained from survey work and the accident records have been analysed.

Assessment

8.3.5 The development proposals have been assessed using the techniques set out in 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' and 'Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic'.

8.4 Predicted Effects

8.4.1 The anticipated transportation impacts relate to:

- Vehicular traffic impact arising from construction of the development;
- Walking and cycling opportunities in the area;
- Use of and implications for public transport in the area; and
- Vehicular traffic resulting from the occupation of the development.

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- 8.4.2 In relation to development within the Cotswold Water Park, Policy NHE.8 of the Structure Plan requires proposals for development should facilitate access to and within the Cotswold Water Park using sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.4.3 The development will generate construction traffic throughout its development period. The proposal involves earthworks to reshape the lakes. It is intended that all excavated material will be retained on site, however there will be a need for building materials to be brought to the site. As part of current good practice for construction works, it is proposed to agree a lorry routing arrangement, and to install a wheel wash facility and implement road cleaning procedures to minimise the likelihood of mud being deposited on the carriageway.
- 8.4.4 The proposed development will give rise to an overall increase in travel demand in the area increasing traffic flows on the surrounding highway network, increasing the demand for public transport, increasing the use of walking and cycling routes and increasing the potential for road traffic accidents. Without the development there will be an increase in traffic flow generally on the highway network due to natural growth including the implementation of other developments in the area which are likely to come forward in the period to 2011 and beyond. In addition, there are some network changes which are likely to take place which will result in some redistribution of existing traffic movements.
- 8.4.5 It is predicted that the proposed development will generate in the order of 1000 vehicle movements per day. The precise number will depend on the number of people using the leisure facilities. The busiest hour of the day is likely to be 17:00 – 18:00 on a weekday, when traffic flows are predicted to be around 100 vehicle movements. These will be distributed on the network with around 40% that is to say around 40 vehicles, travelling to and from Fairford. A smaller number, around 30 will be travelling to and from Lechlade. These numbers are smaller than the previous development proposal due to the reduced scale and scope of development. The additional traffic in percentage terms is below the thresholds set out in environmental guidance that results in an impact.
- 8.4.6 There will an increase in the use of footpaths in the area for walking for a variety of purposes including trips to and from retail outlets and other facilities in Fairford and at the nearby petrol filling station, and more generally for recreation.
- 8.4.7 The effects of construction traffic on the local road network will be relatively short term and depends on the level and stage of construction. It is estimated that the number of HGV trips to and from the site will be unlikely to exceed 30 - 40 movements per day, and should therefore not have any further consequences for the A417 London Road in terms of highway link capacity.

- 8.4.8 In order to reduce the travel demands and impacts of the proposed development and to ensure that in travel terms the development is sustainable, a number of mitigation measures are required.
- 8.4.9 A new purpose-built access onto the A417, London Road is to be built approximately mid-way along the site frontage to Lake 104 to replace the existing access at the north east corner, *Fig 8.1 Proposed Site Access and Associated Footway/Cycleway Details*. This will enable the existing access to Milestone to also be closed. The new access will incorporate a ghost island right turn lane to assist movements into and out of the site in accordance with advice in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. In addition there will be a new footway/cycleway and the provision of bus stops on both sides of the road. This arrangement was proposed as part of the previous development proposals.
- 8.4.10 The construction of this new junction will complement the County Council's proposal to improve the existing Whelford Road junction possibly converting it from a T-junction to a roundabout and it raises the potential to introduce a speed limit of 50 mph on this section of the A417.
- 8.4.11 In terms of construction traffic, as the site access adjoins the strategic lorry network, it is proposed construction traffic will use the existing access junction serving Lake 103 until such time that the proposed access is complete. As part of current good practice for construction works, it is proposed to install a wheel wash and implement road cleaning procedures to minimise the likelihood of mud being deposited on the carriageway.
- 8.4.12 It is proposed to construct a footway along the A417, London Road linking to existing footways in Fairford and eastwards towards Whelford Road to link into the section funded by development on Lake 105. Where space permits this will be built for joint use as a footway/cycleway. It is also proposed to improve the surface of the off-road footpath between the site and the town to ensure it is passable at all times of the year.

8.5 Summary

- 8.5.1 It is predicted that the proposed development will generate relatively small levels of traffic which will be served by the principal road network, which is in accordance with the relevant local plan policy and accompanying supplementary planning guidance. The A417 is an existing bus route and there are plans to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, making this a sustainable transport corridor. The development can help to bring those aspirations forward.
- 8.5.2 The development will provide a new access to replace a number of existing accesses, which

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will incorporate new a footway/cycleway and bus stops. It is also proposed to construct a footway along the A417, London Road linking to existing footways in Fairford and eastwards towards Whelford Road.

8.6 References

'The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' published by The Stationery Office;

'Guidelines on Transport Assessment' March 2007 published by the Department for Transport and the Department for Communities and Local Government;

'Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic' published by the Institute of Environmental Assessment;

'Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan' published by Gloucestershire County Council;

'Highway Requirements for Development' published by Gloucestershire County Council;

'Manual for Streets' published by the Department for Transport;

Local Transport Note 2/08 'Cycle Infrastructure Design' October 2008 published by the Department for Transport.