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CITY OF YORK LOCAL PLAN

PHASE 4 HEARINGS

MATTER 7: TRANSPORT AND AIR QUALITY

STATEMENT BY FULFORD PARISH COUNCIL

AUGUST 2022

Q7.1: Will the transport impacts of the Plan fall within reasonable bounds. In other words, having regard to paragraph 32 of the Framework, can improvements be undertaken within the transport network that cost cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development or will the residual cumulative impacts be severe?

- 1 The only information in the Submitted Local Plan on the impact of its proposals on the highway network is set out in paragraph 14.15 and table 15.1. Paragraph 15.1 concludes that the predicted increase in travel time across the network is approximately 30% and the increase in network delay is approximately 55% with the result that there could be “significant delays being experienced on the radial routes into York, the outer ring road (A64 and A1237) and all routes within the outer ring road.” Table 15.1 identifies particular increases in delays on the A19 through Fulford (24.5% and 39.7% in the AM and PM peaks), A1079 Hull Road (26.6% in PM peak), B1363 Wigginton Road (51.2% in PM peak), Haxby Road (23.1% in PM peak), and Leeman Road (34.8%). On the basis of these predicted delays, the residual transport impacts must be judged to be severe and not acceptable (NPPF paragraph 32).
- 2 On 30 June 2022, CYC published new traffic delay predictions based upon its VISUM traffic network model. This model applies the trip growth forecasts produced by DfT in their TEMPRO dataset. We consider the merits of how CYC has applied this national database to York later.
- 3 EX/CYC/87 Table 3 shows the results of the new modelling to the radial routes around York up to 2033. It demonstrates significant increases in delay on various important roads (Change Base-DSLP) including the A1237, A1079 Hull Road, Waterend, Bishopthorpe Road, and the Inner Ring Road. However, the table does not take into account the full traffic impacts of proposals phased for development beyond 2033 which includes ST15.

This information is contained in Table 7.1 of EX/CYC/87a which gives the journey times at 2040 assuming the full build out of the Local Plan proposals. Unhelpfully, this table does contain percentage increases in journey times from the base which we have had to calculate manually for the routes of particular interest to Fulford residents. Our calculations show significant increases in delay of above 20% for Route 1 (A1237), Route 3 (A1036 Tadcaster Road), Route 4 (A19 Fulford Road), and Route 5 (A1037 Hull Road). For the A19 Fulford Road and A1079 Hull Road, increases in delay time of between 32% and 48% are shown, presumably as a result of the full development of ST15. Such increase in delay must be considered to be severe and not acceptable in terms of NPPF paragraph 32.

4 We also consider that CYC's model and its use of the TEMPRO data under-estimates the traffic implications of the Local Plan for the following reasons:

1. CYC gives great weight to the low traffic growth in York since 2010 and assumes that a similar growth pattern will continue in the future. However this is unlikely. Between 2010 and 2019, there was relatively little large-scale housing development taking place in the outer parts of York. There was also only a relatively small growth in total employment. Most of the increase in jobs was due to a move towards part-time employment away from full-time employment. The Submitted Local Plan intends to reverse these trends with very substantial growth around the periphery of York, especially in locations such as ST15 which will be car-dependent. The successful development of York Central will also create substantial traffic around the centre of York, especially on the inner Ring Road.
2. Public transport and active travel will have a significant role in mitigating traffic impacts. However some of the largest planned developments including ST15 are not in locations where such transport modes are likely to be attractive choices for most users. EX/CYC/87 makes much of the increase in bus usage since 2012 but a large part of this increase is due to the growth of the University and better services to it. EX/CYC/87 also ignores the fact that there was a significant decline in bus usage between 2017 and 2019. This decline is reported to have continued over the past three years.
3. The TEMPRO datasets assume that the bulk of York's population increase will come from those aged over 75. This is, of course, in accordance with the ONS sub-national population projections. However the Local Plan is based on a substantial increase in the economically active population in order to meet the projected job

growth. Economically active people generate far more vehicle trips than the very elderly.

4. The Council's VISUM model assumes that trips will be suppressed by congestion. It is true on certain routes such as the A19 through Fulford existing traffic levels are already above capacity during peak hours and there is little space for additional traffic. However this often leads not to total trips being suppressed but peak spreading as people seek to avoid the busiest period during the day. This is not taken into account by the modelling results.
 5. The CYC model takes no account of major developments being planned just outside the City boundaries. Of particular concern to Fulford is the proposed new village of 3800 dwellings at Escrick which is now a proposal of the soon-to-be-submitted Selby Local Plan. This development will use the A19 as its main access into York and will greatly increase traffic flows through Fulford if it goes forward.
- 5 The Parish Council has particular concerns over two matters relating to the traffic forecasts for ST15.

The first concern is over the assumption that 30% of the vehicular traffic will access ST15 via Elvington Lane. This is highly unlikely to be the case once the GSJ onto the A64 is open which will provide a much faster and more convenient route to the urban area and the wider strategic network than Elvington Lane. In this respect, there are no realistic measures which could be incorporated into the design of the new village that would prevent traffic from the earlier phases of the development using the GSJ for access.

The second concern is the assumption that 25% of the trips from ST15 will be to the University of York (UoY). This has never been justified and seems implausible. The UoY does not provide any opportunities for primary or secondary education, shopping or most forms of leisure. Although a large employer in the City, it is unlikely to be the dominant one amongst village residents. For this to happen, the new village would have to be the choice of residence for a large proportion of UoY's employees. In contrast the new village is likely to be highly attractive for people wishing to commute to Leeds and other parts of West Yorkshire using the rapid access to the A64. A more reasonable estimate of trips to UoY would result in higher levels of traffic being modelled on the A64 and adjacent radials including the A19 and A1079.

Q7.2: Are Policies T1 to T9 justified and would they be effective?

- 6 National Planning Practice Guidance sets out the transport information which should accompany a local plan in the form of a transport assessment.(54-006). It makes clear that this information should be used to inform appraisal of options and should be fully complete by submission stage (54-004). The transport information which accompanied the submission draft fell well short of the requirements set out in the Practice Guidance (54-005). Although CYC has made efforts to fill some of the gaps, there are still large areas required by national guidance where there is no evidence, including highway safety and accident analysis (54-007 and 54-009). On this basis, the Local Plan proposals cannot be said to be justified.
- 6 Policy T2 states that “a dedicated public transport/cycle route linking the new settlement (ST15) to a suitable access on York’s highway network in the urban centre of York (subject to confirmation of developers access proposals to site ST15 so not shown on the proposals map) will be implemented in the medium-term (2022-2027).”
- 7 This proposal should be struck out for uncertainty. As Policy T2 states, there is no route shown on the proposals map for this new public transport/cycle route which would be over 5.5kms long and potentially run through environmentally sensitive areas including conservation areas. There is also no indication whether it is new infrastructure or modification of existing highway space. In effect, the Local Plan is seeking in-principle approval of a proposal about which there is no information about its nature, extent or potential impacts. Needless to say, it has not been properly SAed.
- 8 Similarly the last part of Policy T2 states that the Plan will support development proposals that “facilitate the relocation of the Designer Outlet Park and Ride facility.” The intent of this policy statement is unclear. The Proposals Map shows no site for the relocated park and ride facility nor is there any suggestion that the existing facility is in any way inadequate. If the purpose is to allow the expansion of the Designer Outlet onto the existing park and ride area, this would be contrary to the retail policies of the Local Plan.

Q7.3: Will the (cumulative) effect of the Plan on air quality be acceptable.

- 9 The Council has provided no technical assessment, high level or otherwise, of the impacts of the Plan’s proposals on air quality. The Council’s own information shows that traffic levels and congestion will be significantly increased on the main radial routes within the Main Urban Area including within the designated Air Quality Areas. Without such technical

information there can be no certainty that the proposals are consistent with NPPF paragraph 124 which states:

“Planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas.”

- 10 Such evidence should have been collected pre-submission and used to shape the contents of the Plan. This is made clear in the NPPF (para 128) and the PINS guidance. It is also expressly stated in the relevant National Planning Practice Guidance which states (12-0306):

“The evidence needs to inform what is in the plan and shape its development rather than being collected retrospectively.”

CYC has stated during the hearing sessions that evidence gathering and submission at the Examination stage is justified because it is part of a “responsive and iterative” process. We note that no such wording appears in the Framework or any of its accompanying guidance. There is a clear distinction to be made between evidence which requires updating (such as population and housing information) and wholly new evidence which should have informed the development of the plan.

Q7.4: Will Policy ENV1 prove effective?

- 11 FPC supports the principle of Policy ENV12 but considers the policy should be strengthened as follows so that it better reflects the NPPF and the NPPG and the importance these give to AQMAs:

Development will only be permitted if the impact on air quality is acceptable and mechanisms are put in place to mitigate fully any adverse impacts and prevent further exposure to poor air quality. Proposals which would worsen air quality in and around Air Quality Management Areas after mitigation, either individually or cumulatively, will not be allowed. This is in order to protect human health.

This proposed change would reflect the priority given to AQMAs by the NPPG on Air Quality. It says:

“Local plans can affect air quality in a number of ways, including through what development is proposed and where, and the encouragement given to sustainable transport. Therefore in plan-making it is important to take into account air quality management areas and other areas where there are specific requirements or limitations on new development because of air quality.”

At present the policy makes no reference to AQMAs.