



TECHNICAL NOTE 1

DATE:	28 June 2023	CONFIDENTIALITY:	Confidential
SUBJECT:	McDonalds and Petrol Filling Station – Weaver View		
PROJECT:	NW XX	AUTHOR:	LJB
CHECKED:	NMcK	APPROVED:	NMcK

INTRODUCTION

Preamble

National Highways have been appointed by the Secretary of State as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015. National Highways is responsible for operating, maintaining, and improving the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in England, in accordance with the License issued by the Secretary of State for Transport (April 2015) and Government policies and objectives.

National Highways' approach to engaging with the planning system is governed by the advice set out in:

The Strategic Road Network: Planning for the Future – A guide to working with National Highways on Planning Matters (2015)

The document is written in the context of statutory responsibilities as set out in National Highways' License, and in light of Government policy and regulation, including the:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Town and Country Planning Development Management (Procedure) Order (England) 2015 (DMPO); and
- DfT Circular 01/2022 The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development (“the circular”).

As a statutory consultee in the planning system; National Highways have a regulatory duty to co-operate. Consequently, National Highways are obliged to consider all proposals received and to provide appropriate, timely and substantive responses.

National Highways' desire to be a proactive planning partner goes beyond the statutory role, but follows the spirit of the license which stipulates that National Highways should:

“Support local and national economic growth and regeneration”

Task Overview

ADL Traffic and Highways Engineering (ADL) have been appointed by the developer, Impero (Development Management) Ltd, to prepare a Transport Assessment (TA) in support of the planning application (Reference: 23/00018/FUL) for the redevelopment of land at Weaver View, Runcorn. The planning application proposes a McDonald's restaurant with drive thru facilities and a Petrol Filling Station (PFS) with a convenience store and rapid Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers.

National Highways were first consulted by Halton Borough Council (HBC) in January 2023. WSP reviewed the TA on behalf of National Highways who in turn advised that a holding recommendation was put in place until 6th July 2023 to ensure that the impacts of the proposed development may have on the M56 Junction 12 are understood and amendments to the proposed signage are made.



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Subsequently, HBC have reconsulted National Highways as ADL have provided a reviewed TA. National Highways again have requested WSP through their role on the Spatial Planning Framework (SPF) to review the advised TA to ensure a suitable approach has been taken to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on the SRN and to assess if the amendments to the signage have been made.

PREVIOUS COMMENTS

In the previous review, the following comments were raised to ADL which are contained in Table 1 alongside their current status.

Detailed comment for those required are provided in the following section of this note.

Table 1 Comment Status

WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
As the development proposals differ in the proposed use for the site, the site is not considered to be allocated. Therefore, a full transport assessment should be undertaken in support of the planning application.	An updated transport assessment has been provided.	Comment resolved.
There is no reference made to the Department for Transport Circular 01/2022 or National Highways' 'Strategic Road Network: Planning for the Future' within the policy review. It is recommended that ADL should use these documents for guidance when preparing a TA for a proposed development that could have an impact on the SRN.	Addressed in Section 10.4 and 10.5	Comment resolved.

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WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
To ensure a robust assessment, it is requested that the base traffic survey data is uplifted.	Addressed in Section 7.1 – ADL have not adjusted the surveys as based on their analysis the difference in the surveyed flows and DfT count points they have obtained for Weston Point Expressway is ‘daily variation’ and therefore it isn’t considered necessary to use an adjustment factor.	Detailed response provided below. Comment unresolved.
It is requested that the collision data analysis study area is extended to include the full extent of the slip roads at the M56 J12.	Addressed in Section 2.3. ADL have reviewed PIC data obtained from HBC since June 2016 (when the Weaver Roundabout upgrades were completed) up and to the present day (excluding the COVID period between 01 st March 2020 and September 2021). Six collisions were recorded at Rocksavage roundabout (5 slight, 1 severe). Analysis shows a mixture of causalities underpinning the collisions and no apparent highway safety issues with the operation of the roundabout.	WSP accept ADL’s PIC review. Comment resolved.
Whilst access will be provided from the Local Road Network, the existing access junction – which is proposed to be used to access the new development – is approximately 80m from	No response provided	In the absence of a response from ADL – WSP have reviewed the PICADY outputs which show a max queue of 1 PCU during the 2030 Weekday PM peak and



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WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
Rocksavage Roundabout. As the roundabout provides access to the on and off-slips of the M56 eastbound, the applicant must ensure that traffic waiting to enter the site does not block back to the roundabout.		Saturday peak on the Weaver View (Right in) arm. Given the predicted queue length it is unlikely that blocking back to the SRN junction will arise. Comment resolved.
Parking is a matter for the Local Planning Authority, and should be designed in accordance with local parking design standards.	No response elicited.	Comment resolved.
ADL propose alterations to signs at Rocksavage Roundabout, including on the M56 off-slip. Any alterations to signage on the SRN should be agreed to and approved by National Highways (Roadside Facilities Team). WSP note that the location, size of signs may need to be adjusted and therefore will require a detailed review. The lane destination markings may also require amendments, these are missing from the above plan. As it is proposed for the development site to be labelled ‘Services’ on both the SRN and Local Road Network signage,	Addressed in Section 10.4. Signage is not proposed from the M56 main carriageway only from the Rocksavage roundabout. This is considered necessary for highway safety reasons to direct customers around the roundabout to the local service facility and inform the HGV drivers that no access to the services is available.	Detailed response provided below. Comment unresolved.



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WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
the proposed development must meet the minimum requirements set out in Annex A: Table 1 of the DfT Circular (01/2022) to be eligible for signing from the SRN. WSP request further details on the classification of the proposed development.		
WSP have undertaken an independent check of the traffic growth factors, using TEMPro and the NTM AF15 dataset. Following this, the traffic growth factors used are deemed to be robust and suitable for use in this assessment.	No response elicited.	Comment resolved.
ADL should consult HBC as to whether any committed developments should be considered in the assessment. Confirmation of this should be provided to National Highways.	None identified	For completeness, confirmation should still be provided to confirm such liaison with HBC has been undertaken. Comment unresolved.
WSP have undertaken an independent check of the trip rates derived from the TRICS database. Upon review, the trip rates ADL have derived for the Weekday AM and PM Peak are	No response elicited.	Comment resolved.



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WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
<p>considered to be robust for the purpose of comparison. Furthermore, as the proposed trip generation is higher than this, the trip generation is considered to be reasonable for use in this application. However, the TRICS trip rate for the Saturday Peak is considered to be low. It is noted that one of the surveys used for this scenario was undertaken on a Tuesday, which may impact the trip rate for this time period.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, WSP have undertaken an independent check of the higher trip rates which were derived in their analysis, and the resulting trip generation is still marginally lower than the ADL trip rates. Therefore, they are accepted on account of this independent check.</p>		
<p>WSP have also used TRICS to derive an independent trip rate for the PFS. As there is a convenience store (Morrisons Daily) set to also be developed alongside the PFS, it would be expected that the Land Use 13-B (Petrol Filling Station with</p>	<p>Addressed in Section 5.1. Trip rates have been updated for the PFS with Retail.</p>	<p>WSP have reviewed the revised PFS trip rates provided by ADL.</p> <p>WSP accept the proposed trip rates to be acceptable in this instance.</p> <p>Comment resolved.</p>



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WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
Retail) is used to account for all potential trips associated with the proposed development. It is requested that the trip rates for the PFS are revisited to also account for the trips that will be generated by the convenience store.		
WSP have reviewed the locations of the PFS surrounding the site, particularly in Runcorn. As there are other PFS sites in closer proximity to these residential areas, it is deemed to be suitable to make this assumption on the distribution of trips to and from the PFS at the proposed development.	No response elicited	Comment resolved.
The trip distribution proposes that no additional development trips are proposed to use the SRN. However, as the diverted trips will increase the flow of traffic on the eastbound slip roads, further capacity modelling should be undertaken to ensure the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the junction.	ADL have produced and carried out an assessment of the Rocksavage roundabout using LinSig.	Detailed response provided below. Comment unresolved.



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WSP Comment	ADL Response	Comment Status
As the site access junction is located on the Local Road Network, it should be designed to comply with the standards of the Local Highways Authority.	No further response elicited.	Comment resolved.
It is requested that ADL provide the LINSIG model files to National Highways to enable the model to be audited. This will enable National Highways to provide further comment on the suitability of the model. It is also requested that the signal specification which has been used is provided along with details on how this information has been obtained. As queue surveys have been undertaken at Rocksavage Roundabout, this data should be used to validate the model results. Confirmation of this validation should also be provided to National Highways.	Addressed in Section 8.2. The model has been validated against the queue surveys. The results have also been compared to Halton Highway Authority Transyt model for the roundabout.	Detailed response provided below. Comment unresolved.
National Highways would welcome the production of a Travel Plan.	No Travel Plan provided. ADL state that a Travel Plan could be secured by condition if required.	It is requested that a Travel Plan is secured via condition. Comment requires action.



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OUTSTANDING COMMENTS

BASELINE TRAFFIC SURVEY DATA

Within the initial review WSP requested that ADL uplifted the base traffic survey data as an analysis of the survey compared with WebTRIS showed that the flows for the non-neutral day (Friday) were lower than those recorded on WebTRIS for the non-neutral weekdays of the same week.

Within ADL’s response, in Section 7.1, ADL outline their rationale for not uplifting the base traffic surveys. ADL state that they have obtained DfT traffic data for the Weston Point Expressway for a Thursday which they have compared their surveyed Friday flows, shown in Table 2.

Table 2 ADL Comparison of Thursday (DfT Count Data) and Friday (Surveyed) Flows

	Am Peak		Pm Peak	
	02/09/21 Thursday	03/03/22 Friday	02/09/21 Thursday	03/03/22 Friday
2021	3509		3696	
2022		3579		3621

ADL analysis of the flows shown in Table 2 concludes that the recorded flows are similar and that the differences can be expected based on the +/-5% daily variation. Therefore they determine that no adjustment factor is required.

WSP Comment

Detail is not provided on where on the Weston Point Expressway the DfT count point is located whereas the location of the WebTRIS site (7269/1) data was obtained from for WSP’s previous review is noted to be in the same located to that surveyed (M56 eastbound off-slip).

Notwithstanding this information, WSP do not accept the analysis nor conclusion provided by ADL in regards to the base survey data being representative of typical flows. WSP maintain the stance that the base traffic surveys require uplifting as they were undertaken on a non-neutral day and the WebTRIS comparison exercise in the previous response provided by WSP highlighting the variation in the flows for the M56 off-slip between the non-neutral weekdays and the surveyed Friday which exceeded anything that could be attributed to ‘daily variation’.

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WSP therefore request the base traffic survey flows are updated, and these updated flows are used to re-run the LinSig model for the Rocksavage Roundabout.

SITE ACCESS JUNCTION – QUEUEING

Within WSP's previous review it was requested that

Whilst access will be provided from the Local Road Network, the existing access junction – which is proposed to be used to access the new development – is approximately 80m from Rocksavage Roundabout. As the roundabout provides access to the on and off-slips of the M56 eastbound, the applicant must ensure that traffic waiting to enter the site does not block back to the roundabout.

Within the revised TA, no direct response has been provided to this comment.

WSP Comment

In the absence of a response from ADL, WSP have reviewed the PICADY outputs which show a max queue of 1 PCU during the 2030 Weekday PM peak and Saturday peak on the Weaver View (Right in) arm.

This forecast level of queueing is unlikely to result in queueing back to the Rocksavage Roundabout.

SIGNAGE

Within Section 10.4 ADL note that they have provided a response to the comment made by WSP in the previous review regarding signage.

In response to this, ADL list that:

- The development is for a services facility to primarily serve local traffic
- There is no access proposed from the SRN
- The site is accessible by non car modes
- EV charging is proposed to be provided
- The proposal does not provide for HGV or parking for larger vehicles due to the scale and level of the development
- The proposals comply with the mandatory requirements for all purpose trunk roads (APTR)s in terms of operation
 - o Be open 8am-8pm apart from Christmas day boxing day and new years day
 - o Provide free parking for a minimum of two hours for all vehicles permitted to use the services
 - o Have CCTV and appropriate lighting

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- Provide free to use toilets and a disabled toilet
- Provide fuel facilities for petrol, diesel and electric vehicles
- Provide hot drinks and food for sale between 8am-8pm for consumption on the site
- Provide free wi-fi at McDonalds

In regard to signage directly, ADL state that:

- It is not proposed the development is signed from the M56 main carriageway
- Signage is proposed to be provided on the approach from M56 off-slip
- Signage is proposed to be provided on Rocksavage roundabout to direct customers around the roundabout and inform HGV drivers there is no access to the services

Furthermore, ADL note that the above proposals accord with DfT Circular 01/2022.

Within Appendix 6.5 of the TA, the following plan (Figure 1) is provided showing the proposed changes to signs and lines in the vicinity of the site.



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Confirmation should therefore be provided that ADL have liaised with National Highways’ Roadside Facilities Team and National Highways’ Third Party Works team respectively.

COMMITTED DEVELOPMENTS

In the previous comments issued to ADL it was requested that ADL liaise with HBC to ascertain if any committed development should be include within the traffic assessments.

Within ADL’s response it is noted that no committed developments have been identified – however no details of any correspondence with HBC are provided.

WSP Comment

For completeness, confirmation should still be provided to confirm such liaison with HBC has been undertaken.

PFS (WITH RETAIL) TRIP RATES

As requested, ADL have revisited the trip rates and generation exercise for the petrol filling station of the development to ensure the trip rates derived incorporate a retail element to the petrol filling station.

WSP Comment

WSP have reviewed the revised PFS trip rates provided by ADL and WSP accept the proposed trip rates to be acceptable in this instance.

LinSig Review

As requested in the previous review, ADL has provided the LinSig model file and signal controller specifications of Rocksavage Roundabout to WSP to audit. The model has been developed for the following 15 scenarios:

- 2022 Surveyed AM
- 2022 Surveyed PM
- 2022 Surveyed Saturday
- 2023 Base AM
- 2023 Base PM
- 2023 Base Saturday
- 2023 Total AM
- 2023 Total PM
- 2023 Total Saturday
- 2030 Base AM
- 2030 Base PM
- 2030 Base Saturday
- 2030 Total AM
- 2030 Total PM
- 2030 Total Saturday.



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SIGNAL CONTROL

The Rocksavage Roundabout consists of two signal controllers: south and north. WSP have audited the coded signal control in comparison with the provided signal specifications.

WSP Comment

The modelled phasing, staging and intergreens appear consistent with information provided within the signal specifications. However, modelled average green times exceed the maximum green times stated in the signal specifications for both the north and south controllers. For example:

- South controller – Phase A maximum green time is 20/30 seconds depending on the plan used. The 2023 Base AM runs Phase A for 38 seconds.
- South controller – Phase F maximum green time is 20/30 seconds depending on the plan used. The 2023 Base AM runs Phase F for 39 seconds.
- North controller – Phase B maximum green time is 20/30 seconds depending on the plan used. The 2023 Base AM runs Phase B for 38 seconds.
- North controller – Phase I maximum green time is 30/40 seconds depending on the plan used. The 2023 Base PM runs Phase I for 49 seconds.

Therefore, the signal timings are not considered representative of existing conditions since they exceed the maximum green times within the signal controller. WSP request the green times are reduced below the maximum greens stated within the signal specifications by reducing the cycle time for each scenario.

SATURATION FLOW

ADL have also provided a plan showing the geometry of Rocksavage Roundabout. These geometries have been used to estimate the saturation flow of the roundabout using RR67.

WSP Comment

RR67 should not be used to estimate the saturation flow for roundabout circulatory lanes due to the short distances between stop lines. Therefore, WSP recommend a consistent saturation flow of 1900 PCU/hr is reasonable for the roundabout circulatory lanes. This is also broadly consistent with the lowest saturation flow across the roundabout circulatory (lane 15/1).

MODEL SOFTWARE

The assessment of the development impact to Rocksavage Roundabout has been completed using LinSig. The model consists of entry and exit arms to the roundabout, circulatory lanes and the A557 cut-through. The A557 southbound merges to two lanes south of the junction and there is a roundabout approximately 350m downstream connecting to the M56 Junction 12 westbound slip roads.

WSP Comment

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Google traffic shows slow moving traffic on the A557 southbound between Rocksavage Roundabout and the A557 / M56 Junction 12 westbound slip roads, as shown in Figure 2. The following factors on this section of the A557 southbound may impact the operation of Rocksavage Roundabout but are not reflected within the LinSig model:

- The merge to two lanes on the southbound exit from Rocksavage Roundabout
- Queueing on the A557 southbound from the A557 / M56 Junction 12 westbound slip roads roundabout blocking back to Rocksavage Roundabout
- Weaving movements on the A557 southbound between Rocksavage Roundabout and the A557 / M56 Junction 12 westbound slip roads roundabout.

Based on the listed factors, WSP notes that the LinSig model may overestimate the capacity of the junction.

Given the comments provided by WSP on the model, it is requested that ADL confirm what they have undertaken to ensure the assessment is representative of network conditions.

Figure 2 – Google typical traffic A557 southbound, south of Rocksavage Roundabout





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QUEUE VALIDATION

ADL state within the TA “the model has been validated against surveyed queues”. The comparison of surveyed and modelled queues are shown in Figure 3. The queue surveys recorded the queue present, by lane, on each approach to the junction each time the light at each stop line turned to green. LinSig models an average cycle, therefore, the modelled Mean Max Queue (MMQ) is broadly comparable with the surveyed average queue during each peak.

Figure 3 – Surveyed and modelled queues

Table 8B LINSIG Validation: Rocksavage Roundabout

Stop Line	Lane	AM Peak				PM Peak				Saturday Peak			
		Min	Max	Ave	Mod	Min	Max	Ave	Mod	Min	Max	Ave	Mod
1	1	7	34	16	13	7	40	24	13	3	15	9	8
	2	3	17	9	14	6	34	18	14	4	15	8	9
	3	1	17	8	14	3	30	15	14	0	11	4	9
2	1	1	8	4	4	1	8	3	2	1	4	2	1
	2	0	7	2	5	0	5	1	3	0	2	1	2
3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	1	0	7	0	2	3	11	7	2	0	3	0	1
	2	0	5	0	2	3	13	4	2	0	1	0	1
	3	0	7	0	2	0	6	1	2	0	0	0	1
5	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1
	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	1	0	9	0	9	0	5	2	10	0	6	1	5
	2	4	15	5	9	5	17	11	10	1	11	5	6
	3	1	17	4	9	4	17	12	10	1	9	4	6
	4	0	7	1	8	1	9	5	9	0	4	1	4
7	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	1
	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1
	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1
8	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	2	1	2
	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	1
9	1	0	2	0	5	0	7	4	5	0	2	0	1
	2	0	0	0	1	0	5	2	1	0	1	0	1
	3	0	0	0	1	0	6	1	1	0	0	0	1
10	1	0	6	0	4	0	6	3	3	0	6	2	2
	2	0	8	0	4	0	8	2	4	0	5	2	3
	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	1	3	0	3	1	3
11	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
	2	0	6	1	5	1	5	2	2	0	5	1	2
12	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
13	1	0	3	0	2	0	3	1	1	0	2	0	1
	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1
	3	0	2	0	7	0	1	0	4	0	2	0	3
	4	1	9	0	0	0	8	4	0	1	6	3	0
14	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1
	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	1
15	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	2
	2	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	3	1	2
16	1	0	2	0	4	0	3	1	4	0	4	0	2
	2	0	2	0	4	0	1	0	5	0	1	0	3
	3	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	2
17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



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WSP Comment

WSP request clarification as to whether the surveyed queues are presented as the number of vehicles or PCUs. Paragraph 7.2.7 references the queue results as the number of vehicles whilst LinSig provides the MMQ in PCUs. The queue comparison should be provided using consistent units.

No analysis of the queue comparison has been provided in regards to how well the surveyed queues match modelled queues. WSP note the surveyed queues at stop line one in the evening peak are higher than modelled. The surveyed queues also suggest uneven lane usage on this approach with higher queues in lane one, whilst modelled queues are broadly similar by lane.

Travel Plan

No Travel Plan has been provided.

WSP Comment

It is requested that a Travel Plan is secured via condition.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As outlined in this note, as summarised in Table 1, there are outstanding comments which require action from ADL in order for WSP to be able to advise National Highways on the proposed impact of the development on the safe and sustainable operation of the SRN.

It is requested that National Highways extend the holding recommendation to allow ADL time to provide clarification on the outstanding matters.