

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CALLED IN PLANNING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED HEYSHAM TO M6 LINK ROAD

LAND TO THE NORTH OF LANCASTER BEGINNING AT THE
END OF THE A683 HEYSHAM TO M6 LINK PHASE 1 AND
RUNNING IN AN EASTERLY DIRECTION TO CONNECT WITH
THE M6 AT JUNCTION 34 OF THE M6

Planning Inspectorate reference:
APP/Q2371/N/07/1200928 and
APP/Q2371/N/07/1200929

LPA reference:
01/05/1584

PROOF OF EVIDENCE - SUMMARY ADRIAN CHARLES WORTHINGTON

Group Manager Transport Planning

Complementary Measures

June 2007

1.0 INTRODUCTION.

1.1 I am Adrian Charles Worthington, Group Manager Transport Planning with Lancashire County Council. I have a BSc in Civil Engineering and I am a Chartered Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. I have 27 years experience working in the development of transport schemes for the County Council and for a major engineering consultant.

1.2 This proof will demonstrate how the proposal forms part of the County Council's broader transport proposals for Lancaster and Morecambe and how the proposals are consistent with the guidance of PPG13.

1.3 The County Council implements an ongoing programme of schemes to promote more sustainable transport choices and to promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling. The removal of traffic from unsuitable routes onto the new road will provide further benefits. The policy of the County Council is that the reductions in congestion on other routes will be utilised to develop further measures to promote public transport, cycling and walking.

1.4 Access to the Morecambe and Heysham peninsula is severely constrained by the existing crossings over the River Lune, the historic Skerton Bridge, built in 1782, and the Greyhound Bridge, built in 1910. This limited highway access serves an area which has a resident population of 72,000 people and includes the Port of Heysham and

coastal resort of Morecambe. The concentration of traffic on these two bridges also causes difficulties in maintaining the bridges.

1.5 The County and City Councils are working closely with the Lancaster and Morecambe Vision Board to develop holistic proposals for transport in Lancaster and Morecambe. A study has been jointly commissioned to examine transport options and to develop recommendations for integrated solutions to be taken forward over the next 20 to 30 years.

2. ACCESS TO THE INDUSTRIAL SITES AND THE PORT OF HEYSHAM.

2.1 The Port of Heysham is a major economic asset with annual cargo volume over 3.5 million tonnes. In 2005 a North West Regional Development Agency study concluded with regard to Heysham Port “ its future role is likely to be as a significant RoRo facility serving the GB-Ireland market (i.e. a national role).”

2.2 The Port carried 3.676 million tonnes of goods in 2005. From 1995 to 2005, tonnage through Heysham increased by 35.7% against a UK increase of 6.8%. Over the same period, accompanied passenger vehicles rose by 34% to 67,000.

2.3 68% of the District's vacant employment land is located on the

Morecambe/Heysham peninsula. The development potential would be significantly enhanced with improved access to the national motorway network. The Port of Heysham and the adjacent industrial areas generate significant Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements.

- 2.4 Department for Transport forecasts are that traffic growth for HGVs in urban areas will grow from the year 2000 baseline by 54% by 2015 and 74% by 2025. In my opinion the current access to the Trunk Road network is inadequate for a Major Port and extensive industrial area.

3. RAIL OPTIONS FOR HEYSHAM PORT.

- 3.1 The majority of freight through Heysham Port is containerised and unsuitable for transfer to rail. In 2005 over 90% of the goods carried through Heysham was Roll on Roll off traffic. Therefore in my opinion the development of rail freight facilities will not significantly change the demand for road access to the port.

4. SAFETY.

- 4.1 The construction of the Heysham to M6 Link is forecast to reduce the number of road casualties. Over the 60 year appraisal period there are forecast to be 22 fewer fatalities, 190 fewer people seriously injured and 703 fewer people slightly injured. Therefore in my opinion the proposals comply with section 29 of PPG13.

5. CYCLING AND WALKING.

- 5.1 In the period from 2001 to 2005 there has been an increase in the length of off road cycle paths from 25km to 50km. In 2007/08 a further 15km will be added.
- 5.2 Between 2002 and 2005 cycle use in Lancaster increased by 19%. Lancaster has been selected as a Cycling Demonstration Town by the Department for Transport. The project aims to show how increased investment can encourage more cycling. The Government has provided £500,000 per year for three years.
- 5.3 An assessment of the effects of the proposed Link Road concluded, “Although the route does sever existing non-vehicular corridors these will all be maintained. Additionally, a new unbroken cycle/pedestrian route will be provided along the majority of the route. The removal of significant levels of traffic, and particularly rat-running traffic, from inappropriate roads will also lead to improved conditions for pedestrians, cyclist and equestrians.”
- 5.4 In my opinion the walking and cycle provision associated with the proposed Link Road will increase walking and cycling opportunities in the area and with the extensive programme of walking and cycling improvements being delivered by the County and City Councils, this

will provide a firm foundation for growth in walking and cycling in accordance with the guidance of PPG13.

6. BUS SERVICES.

6.1 Buses are the main form of public transport in Lancaster and the services have been substantially improved in recent years through Quality Bus Partnerships. Buses in Lancaster District currently provide over 7 million passenger journeys per year. From 2003 to 2004, passenger numbers grew by 12% which was the 10th highest level of growth for a bus network in England.

6.2 The Heysham to M6 Link will reduce traffic levels on a number of key routes which will open up opportunities for bus priority in Lancaster. These include potential for bus priority on the Greyhound Bridge to improve services from Lancaster to Morecambe and Bus Priority on Caton Road. Therefore in my opinion the proposed link road will enable the continued improvement of accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport.

7. RAIL SERVICES.

7.1 Lancaster is very well served by trains. Journeys from and to Lancaster Station have increased by 22% from 2001/02 to 2005/06 with over 1.5 million journeys arriving or departing through Lancaster Station in 2005/06.

7.2 Whilst the County Council will continue to seek improvements in rail services these will not significantly change the need for improved road access to the Morecambe/Heysham peninsula.

8. PARK & RIDE.

8.1 Following consideration of a number of options the County Council has selected a proposed site for a Park & Ride operation to serve Lancaster. The site is adjacent to the proposed M6 Junction 34 and would utilise land between the proposed northbound off slip road and the motorway. The proposal is the subject of a separate planning application.

8.2 The Park & Ride facility with approximately 630 spaces will be located near Junction 34 of the M6. In my opinion the proposed Park & Ride will provide added value to the highway proposals by further reducing traffic travelling into the City and contributing to improvements in air quality in the City both of which are consistent with the guidance of PPG13.

9. TRAVEL PLANNING.

9.1 The County and City Council has implemented extensive programmes of travel planning to encourage modal shift.

The travel plan programme comprises

- School Travel Plans to promote walking and cycling on journeys to school.

- Travel plans for business to reduce car journeys. Business or Green Travel Plans are a requirement for all significant new development.
- Personalised Travel Planning - an extensive programme providing travel information to 25,000 households in Lancaster and Morecambe.

Lancashire County Council is committed to an ongoing programme of Travel Planning to encourage sustainable travel consistent with the guidance of PPG13.

10. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT.

10.1 The traffic control system for Lancaster uses a system known as SCOOT which typically reduces traffic delay by 20% in urban areas. In Lancaster the system gives priority to buses approaching the traffic signals. In my opinion the traffic control systems makes the best use of the existing transport infrastructure to minimise congestion whilst providing priority for public transport in line with the guidance of PPG13.

11. CAR PARKING IN LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE.

11.1 Lancaster's Local Plan policies for parking are based on the need to provide sufficient parking to meet the economic needs and to progressively reduce all day parking for people working in the centre. Since 1997 parking standards for the County have set maximum amounts of parking that may be permitted to accompany development.

Residents Parking Schemes are used to discourage commuter parking in residential areas. Therefore in my opinion the car parking policies are being used to discourage car commuting which is consistent with the guidance of PPG13.

12. CONCLUSION.

12.1 In my opinion the County Council has a range of policies and programmes for transport that will ensure that the core principles of PPG13 are delivered in Lancaster District and the ongoing work with Lancaster Vision Board will ensure that the Heysham to M6 link forms part of an integrated transport solution for the whole of the district.