

## **POINTUES ROCQUES, ST SAMPSON – DRAFT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

### **Extract of Memorandum to Director of Planning Comparing Single and Dual Access Options for the Site. References removed to 3<sup>rd</sup> party landowners**

I refer to an e-mail of 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019 from your Senior Planning Officer, requesting Traffic and Highway Services to provide advice on a comparison of single and dual access options for the Pointues Rocques Housing Allocation Site.

In providing the advice it is worth noting that ARUP has already undertaken a significant amount of work in studying the traffic implications of housing development at this site and has concluded that a single access option adjoining Robergerie Road would be workable in terms of link and junction capacity but this is subject to improving the radius of the northern side of the junction where it joins Route Militaire.

Traffic and Highway Services has accepted the above finding although it challenged whether the modelled peak hour traffic movements heading east through Robergerie Road would in reality work in the predicted manner given there are already disincentives to use the major roads with observed congestion in Vale Road during the morning peak hour and predicted peak hour morning congestion at the Route Militaire/Braye Road signals should committed development in the area reach fruition. ARUPs counter to this is that even with an almost 7 fold increase in development traffic exiting east along Robergerie Road rather than towards Route Militaire (3% inflated to 20%) under the Guidelines for Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic the number of movements would still be viewed as being unlikely to be detrimental to pedestrians.

In considering the impact of development at Pointues Rocques THS is conscious of a number of factors:-

- In the main the roads to the north and south of the site do not have the benefit of footpaths
- There is a primary school located approximately 500m by road from the site
- There is a park, community facilities and part of the College of Further Education nearby
- The site is in the catchment for St Sampsons High School
- Portions of the roads to the south and north of the site are of constrained width either due to private property or regular on-road parking
- The existing site access adjoining Pointues Rocques is single file width with no radii and is located on one of the two blind bends. There is a high wall where there might be an opportunity for an alternative access position further to the west along this road

- The junction of Robergerie Road and Route Militaire is not of suitable design to accommodate 2-way movements as there is an acute left turn in due to the alignment of the privately owned roadside wall
- The sightline in the direction of oncoming traffic when exiting Pointues Rocques onto Route Militaire is restricted due to the height of the roadside walls.
- Approximately a dozen vehicles have been noted parking in unregulated spaces mostly towards the western end of Pointues Rocques. About 10 vehicles have been observed parking in unregulated spaces in Robergerie Road mostly towards the Rue Queripel end

In addition to the above, as highlighted in our memorandum dated 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 of particular relevance at this site is the impact of development on vulnerable road users who sit at the top of the transport hierarchy in respect of Guernsey's Road Transport Strategy (RTS). There is a similar ethos in terms of the policies contained in the Traffic Engineering Guidelines for Guernsey. Policy NCR02 states "on suburban neighbourhood roads, a safe environment should be created for vulnerable road users and through traffic discouraged".

Given the housing site adjoins minor roads with a lack of facilities for vulnerable road users and in the context of ethos of the RTS and the engineering guidelines for Guernsey, despite ARUPs assessments that development can adequately function with a single access, THS is still of the view that there could be benefits to diluting the traffic flows across the minor roads through use of multiple accesses and this report seeks to examine those options.

### **Considerations of Diluting Traffic Flow**

The benefit that THS envisage of a dual access option is that the 30 to 60<sup>1</sup> peak hour vehicle movements generated by the housing development would be spread across Robergerie Road and Pointues Rocques. Even with the diluting of the flows across the 2 roads the impact is likely to be discernible but has more chance of leading to a perception of a comparatively safer environment for vulnerable road users bearing in mind there is a policy aim to encourage these forms of transport. However, it is worth noting that to safely accommodate the access in Pointues Rocques measures would be required to ensure the minimum recommended sightline standards could be achieved (most likely lowering of roadside walls or setting back out of the visibility splay). In addition, measures would be recommended to improve the sightline in the direction of oncoming traffic at the western end of Pointues Rocques.

Whatever access option is chosen, both THS and ARUP have suggested there will be a need for public road junction improvements and those improvements would require negotiation with private landowners by the developer. Of the 2 improvements that are strongly recommended the Robergerie Road/Route Militaire increase in turning radius is for traffic management reasons whereas the Pointues Rocques/Route Militaire improvement to sightline would be for road safety reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> *difference in peak hour traffic generation between low density and high density housing*

In addition to the above, it is worth highlighting that the dual access option is likely to generate more public comment because the additional flows and potential measures to manage the impact of those flows will affect a greater number of residents rather than focussing issues primarily on a single road.

### **Pedestrian Safety & One-Way systems**

THS is unaware of a specific pedestrian safety issue in Pointues Rocques or Robergerie Road, i.e. no reported pedestrian accident data. Nevertheless it is common for road users in that grouping to feel vulnerable if there is no segregated facility and there are occasions where they are required to walk within close proximity of passing vehicles. These concerns can be heightened when it involves inexperienced road users such as children walking to/from school. The level of concern is often raised if proposed development would lead to increased traffic flows such as is in the case of this site.

The options to limit impact on pedestrians could be limited to ensuring the site is permeable and facilities are included along the site frontages to ensure pedestrians can walk off road.

On-road improvements such as a painted walkway could be made through the introduction of a one-way system in Pointues Rocques. However, before this could take place, THS would need to understand whether all existing driveways could be reasonably accessed from the permitted direction of travel and it would need to evaluate the impact of displaced traffic given many of the nearby roads are narrow, have no footpaths and there is a primary school. In addition, it is THS's experience that traffic speed can increase in roads that are designated one-way which again can be a discouragement to walking. There would be potential to control this through the use of traffic calming although care would need to be taken to limit any noise pollution given the proximity of houses to the road.

Initial assessments have revealed that Pointues Rocques is of adequate width to accommodate at least a 1.2m wide walkway and 3m one-way carriageway. It is relevant that the eastern end of Robergerie Road and a small section of the western end are too narrow to accommodate a painted walkway and traffic flow.

### **Pointues Rocques parking**

In the event that a dual access option is considered desirable but no changes are made to traffic flow in Pointues Rocques, it is probable that THS would recommend to remove the unofficial parking in this road at least between the development access and Route Militaire. This would be in the interests of pedestrian safety and for traffic management reasons. However, the decision on this would most likely to be left until development is occupied and on-site observations could be made to assess the scale of any issues that develop. Should the decision be made to make the road one-way in order to accommodate a painted walkway or even a footpath then THS would recommend that all parking be removed. In this regard removal of a significant level of parking would require Committee approval.

## **Pointues Rocques/Route Militaire junction**

Given the increased traffic flows that would exit onto Route Militaire via Pointues Rocques if an access were to be created in that road, THS would strongly recommend the sightline in the direction of oncoming traffic to be brought up to minimum standards. THS considers no changes would be required to junction priority.

## **How critical is the use of the triangle of land at Robergerie Road/Route Militaire**

ARUP has highlighted that the work to enable a left turn in from Route Militaire when a driver is also waiting at the STOP line is necessary in the single access option and THS concur with this view. This is in the context that Route Militaire is classified as Traffic Priority Route where the functional emphasis is on mobility and free flow of traffic. Therefore, with this in mind it makes sense to have a junction arrangement that is efficient, particularly with throughput of traffic on the major road and this will be compromised if drivers are unable to exit left off of Route Militaire because a driver is waiting at the STOP line. However, it is worth noting that the junction modelling does indicate it will be working well within capacity irrespective of the single or dual access option but is unknown whether the modelling took into account the current constraint on the left turning movement.

The junction improvement is felt to be less critical in the 2 access option because the exiting movements are diluted but still recommended given the function of Route Militaire as highlighted above and the identified risk. For information the relevant peak hour traffic flow data affecting conflict at the junction (source ARUP TIA - 23/05/2017) is included in the table below.

<b>Access Option/Time</b>	<b>Development Density</b>	<b>Traffic Flow – Route Militaire (southbound)</b>	<b>Traffic Flow – Route Militaire left to Robergerie</b>	<b>Traffic Flow – Exiting Robergerie</b>
Single – AM Peak	Low	525	26	110
	High	525	27	120
Single – PM Peak	Low	317	31	64
	High	317	34	71
Dual – AM Peak	Low	525	26	85
	High	525	26	93
Dual – PM Peak	Low	318	30	56
	High	319	32	59

## **Overall conclusions**

It is unsurprising that that this Housing Allocation Site has raised significant public interest from a highway perspective because parts of the road network in the immediate vicinity of the site are of a poor standard and don't readily provide for the needs of vulnerable road users. Within that mix there is also the factor of the schools and leisure facilities nearby. Aside from what can be done along the frontages of the site and through the site, the

options to improve the road environment for the most vulnerable user groups may well be limited. This being primarily due to concerns about displaced traffic.

ARUP has identified that a single access option is workable and THS does not dispute this, but it remains of the opinion that spreading the impact of the additional movements across substandard roads is worthy of serious consideration. Essentially this is identifying that realistically the issues are unlikely to be fully mitigated so they will be spread across 2 roads but at a lower level. However, it should be borne in mind that THS's multiple access suggestion is built around that it would be acceptable for an access to be created adjoining Pointues Rocques that meets the minimum recommended standards and to improve the sightline in the direction of oncoming traffic onto Route Militaire.

It should also be noted that the dual access suggestion comes with a risk that on-street parking will need to be removed from the western end of Pointues Rocques to better manage vehicle movements and the needs of pedestrians.

THS staff do appreciate that this may not be a clear cut decision and will be willing to meet with the Development and Planning Authority to assist wherever possible.

Senior Traffic Services Officer