



TRANSPORT TECHNICAL NOTE

Site: Land East of Sand Hill, Boxford, Sudbury

Client: Boxford Parish Council

Prepared by: DHA

Date: September 2020

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 DHA has been appointed by Boxford Parish Council (BPC) to provide highway design advice in relation to the off-site footway works associated with the proposed residential development at Land East of Sand Hill in Boxford, Sudbury, Suffolk.

1.1.2 A resolution to grant planning consent for the construction of 64 dwellings on the site has recently been passed by the Local Planning Authority; however BPC is concerned that the footway works proposed on Ellis Street may be undeliverable.

1.1.3 DHA has therefore undertaken an independent review of the footway works; a summary of which is provided in this Technical Note (TN).

1.2 Proposal

1.2.1 The Transport Assessment (TA) submitted with the planning application states at Paragraph 4.3.3 that following discussions with the Local Highway Authority, a scheme to extend the 1.2m width footway approximately 60m northwards along Ellis Street from the Sand Hill / Ellis Street / Cox Hill priority junction has been identified. These works are shown on Drawing 19217-03c; a copy of which is included at **Appendix A** for reference. It is proposed that they will be delivered by way of a Section 278 Agreement with the Highway Authority.

1.3 Commentary

1.3.1 Given the scale of the proposed development, it is considered entirely appropriate that a continuous footway link should be provided between the site and the village centre.

1.3.2 Paragraph 6.3.22 of Manual for Streets (MfS) states that there is no maximum width for footways and that in lightly used streets (such as those with a purely residential function), the minimum unobstructed width for safe pedestrian movement should generally be 2.0m. These standards can be applied to existing footways as well as new ones, particularly where significant additional footfall is envisaged as a result of new development.

- 1.3.3 Further guidance on the minimum safe and accessible footway widths is provided in the Government publication Inclusive Mobility. Section 2.2 of this document states that:-

"Someone who does not use a walking aid can manage to walk along a passage way less than 700mm wide, but just using a walking stick requires greater width than this; a minimum of 750mm. A person who uses two sticks or crutches, or a walking frame needs a minimum of 900mm, a blind person using a long cane or with an assistance dog needs 1100mm. A visually impaired person who is being guided needs a width of 1200mm. A wheelchair user and an ambulant person side-by-side need 1500mm width."

- 1.3.4 It is further noted at Section 3.1 that a clear width of 2.0m allows two wheelchairs to pass one another and that this should be regarded as the minimum under normal circumstances. Where this is not possible due to physical constraints, 1.5m should be regarded as the minimum acceptable under most circumstances, allowing space for a wheelchair user to pass a pedestrian. The absolute minimum, where there is a specific obstacle, should be 1.0m and the maximum length of the restricted width should be 6.0m. Again, this guidance is applicable to existing footways as well as new ones.
- 1.3.5 It is evident that both the existing and proposed footways on Sand Hill and Ellis Street fall below the minimum acceptable width of 1.5m and well below the desirable minimum of 2.0m. Given that these roads would serve as the principal pedestrian route between the proposed development and the village services and facilities (including the primary school), it is considered that these standards should be complied with.
- 1.3.6 With regard to the deliverability of the works, Drawing 19217-03c does not overlay the highway boundary plan (whereas Drawing 19217-01 – showing the site access design – does provide this information). It is understood from BPC that the owner of the adjacent property (No. 5 Ellis Street) considers that the land required for the works falls within their ownership; however there is currently no information available to DHA to verify this assertion.
- 1.3.7 Nevertheless, it is apparent from both on-site observations and Drawing 19217-03c that it would not be possible to construct the footway without potentially impacting the stability of the garden land of No. 5 Ellis Street; both due to the level difference and the presence of a substantial tree in this location. Subject to the land ownership point above, this would likely represent a party wall issue which would need to be addressed between the developer and the landowner.
- 1.3.8 As part of the footway works, it is proposed that formalised parking bays would be introduced on the southern side of Ellis Street. The combination of the new footway and these parking bays would narrow the effective carriageway width considerably for some 70m (or 14 car lengths), with the majority of this length being insufficiently wide (under 4.1m) for two cars to pass when parked vehicles are present.
- 1.3.9 It is not considered that drivers would be able to make a sound judgement as to when to enter this length of effective one-way working unobstructed, and as such vehicles would be regularly required to reverse considerable distances when

opposing vehicles are present. This represents a highway safety risk, which would be exacerbated by the inadequate footway width proposed. It would also provide a further hazard for pedestrians passing at No 22 en route from the village, where the wall abuts the highway providing no means of safe escape should two cars or a wide vehicle choose to pass.

- 1.3.10 It is noted that heavy goods vehicles, buses and agricultural vehicles are required to use Ellis Street in order to access Cox Hill due to the substandard Sand Hill / Ellis Street / Cox Hill priority junction not being able to accommodate a right hand turn from Sand Hill into Cox Hill for long vehicles. HGV advisory signs are in place to route such vehicles through the village. The combination of large vehicles and narrow carriageways and footways is considered to present a safety hazard to pedestrians.

1.4 Conclusion

- 1.4.1 This Transport Technical Note (TN) has been prepared on behalf of Boxford Parish Council (BPC) to provide highway design advice in relation to the off-site footway works associated with the proposed residential development at Land East of Sand Hill in Boxford, Sudbury, Suffolk.
- 1.4.2 Having conducted an independent review of the proposed footway works it is considered that with or without the bank in disputed ownership, the proposal does not meet current guidance. A consequence of the proposal is that the useable highway would be narrowed, and vehicle and pedestrian safety significantly compromised. There also remains a concern that given the levels and existing tree on the bank whether the scheme can be delivered without effecting the adjacent property.

APPENDIX
A



