

# Land east of Rugby Road, Clifton-upon-Dunsmore

Planning Reference R25/0565



**Desktop Assessment and Supporting Submission for  
Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Parish Council**

**September 2025**

## 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

HD Consulting has been commissioned by Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Parish Council to comment on the highway implications of an outline planning application for the demolition of all buildings and the residential development of up to 160 dwellings, and creation of associated vehicular access off Rugby Road, Clifton-upon-Dunsmore. The application includes “*pedestrian/cycle access points, parking, landscaping, drainage features, open space, children's play area and associated infrastructure*”, with all matters reserved except for the proposed vehicular access off Rugby Road.

The purpose of this report is to assess the high-level transport and traffic implications of the current proposal. It is intended that this report is considered by Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Parish Council with a view to forming part of a formal consultation submission to Rugby Borough Council as part of the planning application process. The report is based on prevailing highway conditions and available illustrative drawings and documents and is restricted in scope by the authorised fee. A site visit has been undertaken to the site.

Ian Taylor has produced this report. Ian is an Incorporated Engineer and a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (I.Eng MICE), with thirty-five years' experience of public and private sector highway infrastructure disciplines including transportation planning, RoSPA accredited accident investigation & prevention, traffic management, road safety audits, traffic regulations, and highway design & construction. Ian has led on numerous major highway schemes for Local Authorities and has presented at Planning Committees, Council meetings, public meetings and drop-in events, and at Public Inquiry.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

The scope of this report is to consider the Development, as currently proposed, with a view to offering expert comments on useability by the travelling public and the impact on the highway network. To provide clarity, this report is separated into the following parts:

- 3 The Development – Background & Review of Existing Highway Network
- 4 Transport & Highway Policy – Review
- 5 General Review of Transport Assessment
- 6 Review of Rugby Road Vehicular Access
  - Impact on Traffic Flows
  - Review of overall proposal by mode
  - Potential Alternatives
- 7 Review of Development Accessibility by Mode of Transport
  - Vehicular & HGV Access
  - Pedestrian Access
  - Cycle Access
  - Public Transport Access
- 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 3 THE DEVELOPMENT – BACKGROUND & REVIEW OF EXISTING HIGHWAY NETWORK

#### 3.1 Background

The Development comprises a residential plot of up to 160 dwellings, and creation of associated vehicular access off Rugby Road, Clifton-upon-Dunsmore. It is located to the south-west of the village, approximately 2.7 kilometres from Rugby town centre. The current planning application is for outline consent, but with all matters reserved except for vehicular access off Rugby Road.

#### 3.2 Proposed Access - Rugby Road

The main access is proposed to be taken from Rugby Road, an illuminated single carriageway road, subject to a 30mph speed limit and traffic calming in the form of speed cushions along its length between Clifton Wharf and the commencement of a 20mph zone approximately 300m to the north-east of the proposed access.

A footway is provided on the eastern side only, of varying width, and no cycle facilities are present. To the north, Rugby Road connects the proposed Development to the village of Clifton-on-Dunsmore, and to the south it provides access to the town of Rugby.



*Figure 1 – Rugby Road, close to the proposed access, looking north, and south*

#### 3.3 Collisions and Road Safety

The Transport Assessment (hereafter referred to as TA) submitted with the planning application indicates that there has been one recorded collision along the Rugby Road frontage of the Development site in the five-year period 2020-2024.

Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Parish Council has also provided traffic data following surveys undertaken in September 2025. These surveys include 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed data on Rugby Road. This is the speed at or below which 85% of vehicles are travelling under free-flowing conditions, meaning that only 15% of drivers exceed this speed and is commonly used in traffic engineering to set speed limits. These surveys have demonstrated that 85<sup>th</sup> percentile traffic speeds are 29.3mph in a north-easterly direction, and 28.3mph in a south westerly direction. As such, the majority of vehicles are travelling within the speed limit. Additionally, the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership reviewed the site in April 2024, concluding that there is a low concern in respect of speeds:

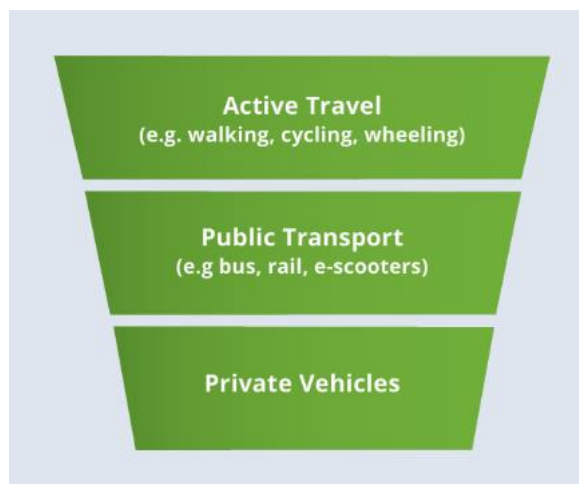
The TA concludes that “*there is no inherent issue within the vicinity of the site access*”. It is considered that this statement is fair, with the low number of collisions likely due to the presence of traffic calming along Rugby Road together with the lack of junctions along the 300m length considered. Rugby Road is also of relatively narrow width (generally 6.0m to 6.5m) with gentle bends in the road. All things together, this likely keeps traffic speeds low and as such collisions are minimal.

#### 4 TRANSPORT & HIGHWAY POLICY – BACKGROUND

There are a number of local and national planning policies that any development proposal should consider prior to the submission of a planning application. This report is focused on those relating to transport and highways, with a selection of these policies detailed below. Sustainable travel to development sites is a key objective for both national and local government.

##### Warwickshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4)

Adopted by Warwickshire County Council in 2023, the Plan sets out the Council’s overall transport strategy and general policies. The Plan contains 4 key themes, namely Environment, Wellbeing, Place, and Economy. To support these themes, a Travel Choices Hierarchy is promoted in order to achieve “*a shift in travel behaviours to use forms of transport that promote wellbeing and are environmentally sustainable*”. The hierarchy is as follows:



##### Rugby Net Zero

Rugby Borough Council has published a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, within which one its core seven themes relates to transport. The Transport 2030 Goals within the strategy are identified below:

- *The Borough will benefit from an integrated and affordable sustainable transport system, where public transport is a viable and affordable option.*
- *The Borough will benefit from infrastructure which enables residents and visitors to make more journeys by active transport such as walking and cycling.*

- *The Borough will benefit from a transport system that is resilient to the changing climate.*
- *We will lead by example by transitioning the Council's own fleet to low or zero emissions alternatives by 2030*

### **Active Travel England**

ATE is the government body responsible for encouraging everyone to make walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for short journeys, and assess the active travel merits of a development proposal. Their objective is to ensure that at least 50% of short trips are made by sustainable modes by 2030. ATE fundamentally comments on larger planning applications, and therefore it is highly likely that they will be requiring measures to ensure that people can travel by sustainable modes.

### **Local Transport Note 1/20**

LTN 1/20 provides advice to local authorities on delivering high quality, cycle infrastructure, providing specific guidance on how such infrastructure should be designed and implemented.

## **5 GENERAL REVIEW OF TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1 Trip Generation**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024 is used by Councils in assessing planning applications. Paragraph 116 is specifically concerned with highways, and states that: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe”*.

The Transport Assessment (TA) does not provide any definitive statement that the impact on the highway network is not severe. The TA confirms however that a Transport Assessment Addendum (TAA) is to be submitted, covering further traffic modelling work and other proposals. This is unavailable as yet, so further analysis cannot yet be reviewed. However, it is considered unlikely that a ‘severe’ impact will be presented in the TAA, in view of the number of dwellings being constructed.

As stated in 3.3 above, Clifton-upon-Dunsmore Parish Council has undertaken traffic surveys in September 2025, providing up-to-date traffic flow data compared to that in the TA which takes data from 2023. It is recommended that this survey data is used in any further assessments to ensure an accurate assessment is made.

### **5.2 Road Safety**

The NPPF requires a development to have an ‘unacceptable’ impact on safety for the development to be refused.

As stated in paragraph 3.3 earlier in this report, the TA suggests that there are no incumbent safety considerations on Rugby Road close to the Development site. Assessing safety statistics over the most recent 5-year period is common practise and as such there are no significant, existing safety concerns that should prevent the Development obtaining planning consent. It is imperative however that any new junction connecting the site to Rugby Road is

safe. Nonetheless, should the Development go ahead, consideration could be given to reducing the speed limit to 20mph.

It is acknowledged that the proposed site access has been subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA), and introduces no insurmountable issues, but the TA states in its conclusions that the site access is to be assessed further by way of a TAA. Again, this TAA (addendum) has yet to be made available so any revised proposals are not available for review. As such, it is considered that no definite statement can be made on highway safety as it stands, and that a decision on the Development should be deferred until such time this has been provided. However, comments on the current proposed access have been provided in Section 6 as it is unlikely to alter significantly.

## 6 REVIEW OF RUGBY ROAD PROPOSED VEHICULAR ACCESS

### 6.1 Proposed Site Access

The current proposal includes a straightforward priority junction into the site from Rugby Road (see Figure 2 below). Minor widening is proposed on Rugby Road, with a realignment of Newall Close to accommodate the new access road. Further discussion, with regard to an assessment of each mode of transport, can be found in the following paragraphs below.

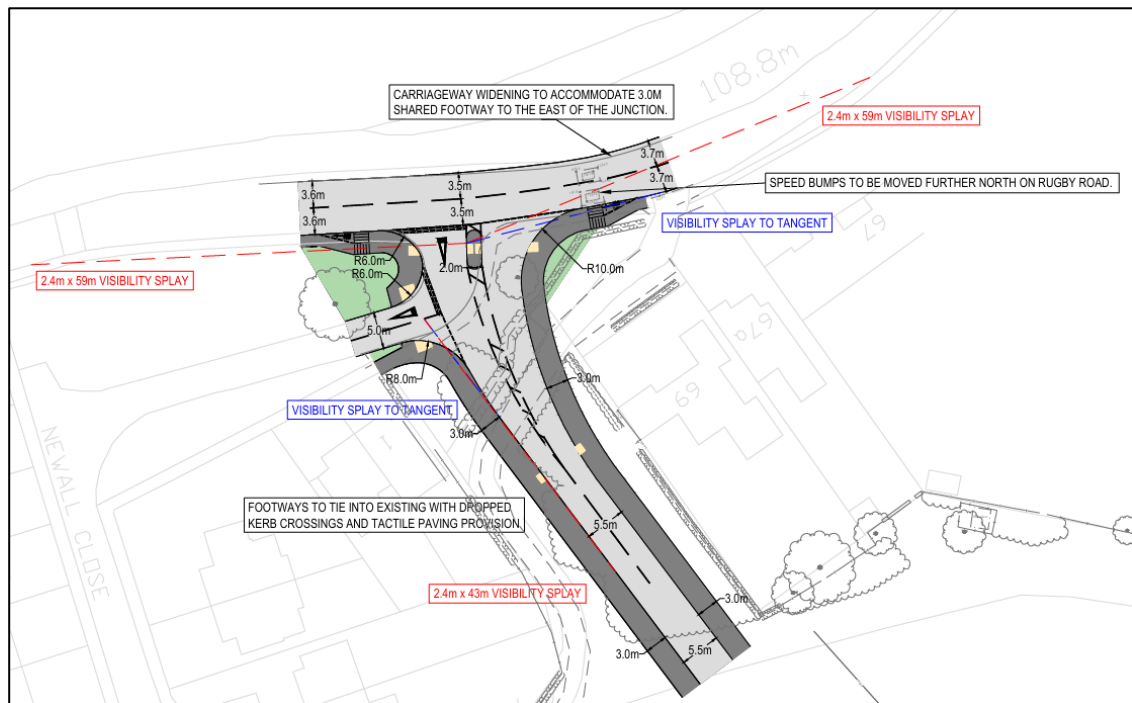


Figure 2 – Rugby Road proposal (taken from Transport Assessment)

### 6.2 Vehicular Access

The proposal caters for vehicle access and allows for all manoeuvres with sufficient visibility in all directions.

It is considered that a significant length of waiting restrictions – in the form of “no loading or waiting at any time” - would be required to keep the junction clear of parked vehicles. This would ensure that vehicles turning in and out of the Development and Newall Close are not impeded, thereby keeping delays to a minimum, but more importantly visibility splays for all users would be protected. This is particularly crucial for pedestrians when making a judgement on crossing the road.

Any restrictions should extend at least 5 metres past the uncontrolled crossing points on the access road and Newall Close, and the length of the proposed visibility splays on Rugby Road. The requirement to advertise restrictions through the Traffic Regulation Order process would have to be secured by condition in any planning consent.

### **6.3 HGV Access**

The TA demonstrates that the priority junction caters for all HGV movements. Such manoeuvres are expected to be minimal and there are no concerns.

### **6.4 Pedestrian Access**

It is clear that pedestrians are affected by this proposal. Newall Close is currently a quiet, residential cul-de-sac with extremely low traffic movements and as such crossing the road is not problematic, but the traffic generated by the Development means the situation will become more difficult. Whilst provision of uncontrolled crossing points at the junction is welcomed, and visibility for those crossing is good in all directions, there will still be fewer gaps in traffic for people to cross.

It is acknowledged that a pedestrian island is proposed on the access road, but the width of the proposed island is insubstantial at just 2.0m and should be made wider to accommodate those with buggies and wheelchairs, or groups of people. Also, provision of shared use footways is not ideal from a pedestrian perspective. This is discussed further in 6.5 below.

### **6.5 Cycle Access**

It is acknowledged that provision for cyclists has been included in the junction design, in the form of shared use facilities linking the access road to Rugby Road. However, Local Transport Note 1/20 (hereafter referred to as LTN 1/20) paragraph 6.5.4 indicates that *“Shared use facilities are generally not favoured by either pedestrians or cyclists, particularly when flows are high. It can create particular difficulties for visually impaired people. Actual conflict may be rare, but the interactions between people moving at different speeds can be perceived to be unsafe and inaccessible, particularly by vulnerable pedestrians. This adversely affects the comfort of both types of user, as well as directness for the cyclist.”*

The proposed shared use footways are of 3.0m in width and in accordance with LTN 1/20 standards. Regardless, it is considered that the current proposal is of limited value to cyclists, particularly those of a less confident nature. Accessing the Development by bicycle would already be difficult, as cyclists would have to use the busy and relatively narrow Rugby Road (see paragraph 6 for further discussion) and it is likely that any cyclists would find little merit in coming off the main carriageway to use a short section of shared use facility before re-joining the carriageway on the access road. As such, the current cycle provision within the design is of little merit and appears to be a weak attempt to satisfy sustainable transport requirements.

Whilst both pedestrian and cycle numbers are expected to be relatively low, there is an opportunity to provide better segregated cycle facilities at the junction. This should be explored further.

## 6.6 Potential Alternatives

The proposed priority junction is not without merit, subject to further consideration as discussed above. Nonetheless, there are other potential options that may be more suitable, address concerns, and improve the situation for residents should the Development go ahead.

### Mini Roundabout

Investigation could be made into the suitability of a mini roundabout, rather than a priority junction. There would appear to be sufficient space to accommodate such a feature and incorporate the required deflections, and it would complement the existing traffic calming on Rugby Road by assisting in reducing vehicle speeds.

The TA refers to 80% of traffic exiting the developing turning left out of the access road, so the impact on northbound traffic flows would be minimal. Traffic coming from Clifton-upon-Dunsmore would have priority over development traffic so again impacts would likely be insignificant. Such a proposal would mean that queuing on Rugby Road would be rare and have less of an impact as right turners into the Development would be unlikely to block the road prior to making the turn.

### Separate Newall Close Access

It could be feasible to provide a separate access to Newall Close, rather than taking access off the new access road. This would have the benefit of simplifying the access road layout and provide better pedestrian and cycle facilities as users would not have to cross Newall Close. Rather, an access could possibly be taken off the existing turning head of Newall Close, removing the grass verge.



**Figure 3 – Potential new location for an access to Newall Close**



## 7 REVIEW OF OVERALL ACCESSIBILITY BY MODE OF TRANSPORT

### 7.1 Vehicular & HGV Access

As discussed in 5.1, the expected trip generation has not been confirmed and therefore the overall impact of the Development on the highway network is yet to be established. However, it is considered that the wider road network does provide sufficient access for vehicular traffic to a residential development of this type.

### 7.2 Pedestrian Access

Access to the site for pedestrians is via existing footways on Rugby Road. These are generally narrow in width at approximately 1.5 metres and immediately adjacent to the carriageway, which is itself narrow and means traffic is very close to people on the footway. See Figure 4 below. It can be reasonably assumed that these footways will see increased usage should the Development be progressed, so measures should be developed to cater for this increase.



**Figure 4 – Narrow Footways and Bus Stop on Rugby Road**

Whilst the Department for Transport Manual for Streets (2007) confirms that “*there is no minimum width for footway, they should generally be designed so that they provide safety for pedestrians from traffic*”. In this instance, there would appear to be scope for the footways to be widened to cater for the likely increased usage, by utilising some of the grassed verges.

Such footway widening would help provide improved pedestrian access from the Development in a north easterly direction to Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, but issues remain in a south westerly direction where the footway is extremely narrow (less than 1 metre) over the railway bridge.

Without substantial investment, there is little that can be done to improve pedestrian provision at this location. The TA refers to the potential for a traffic signal scheme being developed such that the road is narrowed to one lane over the bridge and the footway being widened accordingly. Whilst this would be welcome from a pedestrian (and cycle – should such facilities be incorporated) point of view this proposal has not yet been developed and so cannot be assessed at this time.

It is probable however that a signalisation of the bridge would not be acceptable to the Highway Authority. The duration of the traffic signal timing plan required to operate the signals safely would likely be extensive and may well lead to significant queuing at peak times, with queues potentially extending down to the existing signals at Houlton Way and causing further impact. Whilst the proposal is awaited, is it considered unlikely that improvements for pedestrians can be achieved at the bridge, thereby reducing the attractiveness of walking and leading to a continued reliance on the use of private cars.

### **7.3 Cycle Access**

Access to the site by cycle is particularly poor. As discussed in 6.5, rather unambitious provision has been proposed at the junction, but other than this cyclists are simply expected to manage 'on-carriageway' when travelling to and from the Development. Rugby Road is limited in width and caters for significant HGV and light vehicle movements and accordingly is not an attractive cycle route that would encourage residents to cycle.

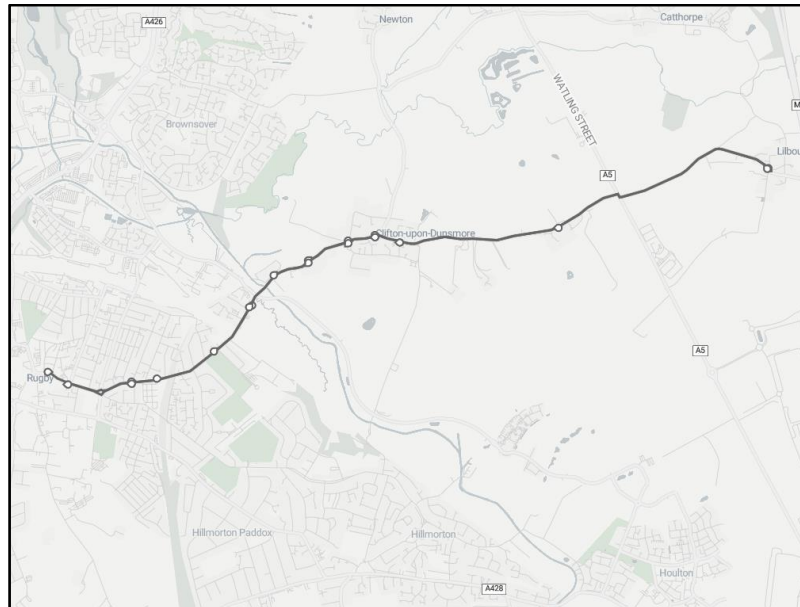
The Development site has clearly not been designed to accommodate and provide quality access by bicycle, despite the TA (paragraph 4.4) suggesting that the '*local area is suitable for cyclists of all abilities*', a statement that is hard to justify. It does not meet Active Travel and sustainability policy objectives as referred to in paragraph 4.

It is considered that further measures to encourage cycling should be investigated, in particular other routes that avoid Rugby Road and which might provide better, safer and more attractive access for cyclists.

### **7.4 Public Transport Access**

Bus stops are located approximately 100 metres from the access to the Development, and within a 400m walk (the generally accepted maximum), and therefore are considered to be sufficiently close to the Development.

However, these stops are served by an extremely limited bus service network with only the L1 service operating along Rugby Road between Lilbourne and Rugby. Service frequency is minimal, with just one service per day on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. See Figure 5 below.



**Figure 5 – Bus Service L1 Route Map**

Additionally, both the northbound and southbound bus stops are simple flag and pole stops with no raised kerbs or tactile paving, no bus stop clearways to keep the approaches clear of parked vehicles, and no bus shelters (see Figure 4 above).

The TA (para 5.30) refers to a potential scheme being developed which provides better access to the bus stops. This is unavailable as yet. Whilst such measures would be welcome, with the extremely limited service provision it is highly unlikely that future residents of the Development would consider public transport as a regular mode of travel and as a consequence will see a greater reliance on the use of private cars.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, it is considered there are grounds for objection to the application. Insufficient data has been provided that would allow for a decision to be made about the severity of the impact on the highway.

- The TA makes reference to a further Addendum (TAA) which will provide further details on the traffic implications of the Development, as well as additional proposals for highway improvements on Rugby Road. This is not yet available and therefore there is currently insufficient information available in order to determine the application. The lack of further detail also means that the Development cannot, at this time, be said to not have an ‘unacceptable impact on highway safety’ as required by NPPF.

The application should be refused until such time that the TAA has been submitted and subsequently made available for public comment.

- The assertion in the TA (para 4.58) that the ‘*future residents of the site will be able to travel by several sustainable travel options*’ is extremely optimistic and it is considered the Development does not meet the sustainable policy objectives of LTP4, Rugby Net Zero and other active travel ambitions. The application should be refused on sustainability grounds unless more defined, area-wide proposals for improving access by more

sustainable modes such as cycling, walking and public transport are developed in principle.

- The proposed access on Rugby Road should be re-considered to improve access by sustainable modes and an improved junction layout be developed and consulted upon.

## REFERENCES

### **Transport Assessment:**

[T25501 TA](#)

### **GG119 Road Safety Audit:**

<https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/69517ebd-ed8d-4558-b101-c1e80611000a>

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

### **L1 Bus Service frequency:**

[L1 - Lilbourne - Rugby – Lilbourne Community Bus – Bus Times](#)

### **Department for Transport Manual for Streets (2007):**

[Manual for the Streets](#)