

CLIENT:	City View Estates
PROJECT:	Lord Raglan, Mount Pleasant, Nangreaves, Bury, BL9 6SP
SUBJECT:	Conversion of Existing Public House to 5no Apartments
JOB NO.:	ST20131
DATE:	January 2025
PREPARED BY:	Ian Cronshaw, Technical Director, Transport Planning

BURY COUNCIL DEPARTMENT FOR OPERATIONS RESPONSE TO PLANNING APPLICATION REF 24/067

Wardell Armstrong (WA) is in receipt of the Bury Council Department for Operations consultation response to the above planning application. The response is to Highway Aspects only, and recommends refusal of the planning application.

The applicant, City View Estates has instructed WA to review the reasons for refusal and provide further information with regard to the highways aspects of the planning application.

1. Vehicular and Pedestrian Site Access Arrangements

The consultation response states: *“The vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements proposed to serve the 5 No. apartments are sub-standard, which would be detrimental to highway safety and maintaining the free flow of traffic on Walmersley Old Road.”*

The planning application is supported by a Transport Statement prepared by WA (ref ST20131 0001) which demonstrates that:

- There is sufficient visibility for vehicles emerging from the site access in line with advice in Manual for Streets (MfS) based on a 30mph speed limit (refer WA drawing number ST20131-004);
- A large refuse collection vehicle has sufficient space to utilise the proposed site access for turning (refer WA drawing number ST20131-005).

Whilst it is recognised that reversing manoeuvres present a higher safety risk than forward manoeuvres, it should also be acknowledged that existing traffic flows on this part of Walmersley Lane are very low, and this will not be materially changed by the proposed development. Therefore, the chances of any interactions with existing vehicles are very low, and this turning manoeuvre is similar in nature a turning manoeuvre at the end of a residential cul-de-sac. Even if a full turning area is provided for a refuse vehicle within the car park, it seems unlikely in practice that a refuse vehicle would choose to enter the car park rather than turn within the access.

2. Car Parking – Quantity

The consultation response states: *“The proposed car parking arrangements/provision are sub-standard/is inadequate at a site where off-highway parking could be easily accommodated, which will lead to vehicles parking and carrying out manoeuvres on Walmersley Old Road to the detriment of the free flow of traffic and road safety.”*

The applicant would be required to pay a substantial overage that would make the scheme unviable should the existing car park be used to enable the development. The highway authority should view technical merits of the scheme as presented, utilising land within the red line, rather than proposing alternatives that are not feasible for the applicant to provide.

The Transport Assessment presents census data from 2021 that shows that the overwhelming majority of households within the existing village own 1 or 2 cars. There is no reason to assume that future residents of the proposed development would have a higher prevalence of car ownership, particularly as the development comprises apartments.

The standards which are referred to were published in 2007, and the evidence base for these standards is older still. It is understood from published cabinet papers that Bury Council are to consult on revised parking standards. It is hoped that, following consultation, these revised parking standards will present a more pragmatic level of provision for housing of this type. The current standard of 2.5 spaces per dwelling is a substantial overprovision for housing of this type, and is contrary of local and national policy aims of making efficient use of land and of promoting sustainable transport.

Regardless of level of provision to the rear of the building, on-road spaces at the front of building will still be attractive to some users of the development. There is no practical way of limiting this, as a TRO remote from other TROs would be unenforceable. It is much better that they are accommodated through suitable design. It is proposed that the Walmersley Old Road kerb line is extended along the front of the building, providing suitable residual width for vehicles to park and traffic to pass. This is preferable to overprovision of spaces behind the building, a proportion of which are likely to remain unused due to preference by some for kerbside parking.

The link between parking provision and propensity for vehicle ownership should also not be ignored when assessing the merits of the scheme. Future residents will be aware of the level of provision prior to occupation, and high car ownership households will be deterred from living in this location if provision is kept to a level which is suitable for accommodation type. Furthermore, the incorporation of high-quality secure cycle storage, including for storage of equipment and clothing, promotes and enables the use non-car modes. Furthermore, the close proximity of a bus service, the patronage of which the development may make a small but positive contribution, further enables a genuine choice of travel modes.

3. Car Parking Layout

The consultation response states: *“The proposal to incorporate formal parking spaces parallel to the adopted highway within the pedestrian access route to the site from the end of the existing footway on Walmersley Old Road obstructs pedestrian access to the site and visibility from the proposed apartment car park access, which would be detrimental to pedestrian and road safety.”*

This proposal was put forward by the applicant to provide parking as close as possible to the current standard. As set out above, a more practical and workable solution would be to extend the Walmersley Old Road kerb line along the front of the building leaving suitable residual width for kerbside parking and for vehicles to pass. A total width of 5.5m (5m absolute minimum) would be sufficient for this purpose, and would leave an unobstructed pedestrian area to the front of the building to connect with the existing Walmersley Old Road footway. This arrangement would not present any material pedestrian or road safety issue.

4. Refuse and Emergency Access

The consultation response states: *“The application and submitted plans contain insufficient information, (topographical survey based where appropriate), in order to properly assess the following highway aspects of the proposed development:*

- *Mitigation measures required to overcome the site’s emergency access deficiencies from a fire safety perspective in view of the site’s remote location and excessive cul-de-sac length effectively involved, especially due to a section of the cul-de-sac being a motorway bridge;*
- *Adequate, accessible refuse collection arrangements for the apartments in order to comply with Waste Management’s ‘Guide to Refuse Collection Requirements & Storage Methods for New Developments’.*”

Regarding fire safety, the applicant has consulted Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) who are satisfied with the proposals, subject to provision of a sprinkler system which the applicant is providing. Provision of five apartments in this location does not present a material increased risk, particularly when compared to the previous public house use of the site.

The Transport Assessment presents suitable horizontal layouts, with swept path analysis, showing how refuse collection vehicles are able to service this development. This is complemented by cross sections and long sections of the site shown of Debtal Architecture drawing (DA18037.0. 221) which is provided with this note. The refuse collection vehicle is able to reverse to the level area of the car park, where bins can be wheeled to the rear of the vehicle.

5. Summary of Case Officer Consultation

WA attended a meeting with the case officer on 3rd January 2025, in which the highways merits of the scheme were discussed. It was agreed that the submission needs to address

genuine matters of highway safety, but that there needs to be a pragmatic approach to some of the concerns raised by the highway authority. The aspects of the scheme that were discussed included:

- Walmersley Old Road has negligible amounts of through traffic, as there is only a single farm served by the road to the north of the site;
- The scheme is designed with sustainable travel as a key part of proposals, with high quality indoor cycle storage, equipment storage and dry changing areas. Provision of this type of infrastructure will help to attract tenants who have an interest in undertaking cycle trips, eg to Bury town centre which is less than 3 miles from the site. This contributes positively to lower levels of car usage;
- Walmersley Old Road is a cobbled street, that effectively made single-track by existing kerbside parking, leading to a low-speed environment;
- Kerbside parking is part of the existing character of the road, and continuation of this at the site frontage will have no material impact on the operation of the road.

Commentary on the impacts of the scheme on highway safety and the free-flow of traffic should be viewed in the context of these pertinent factors.