

<b>APPLICATION NUMBER</b>	<b>TA/17/2337</b>
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**DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING ROADS**  
**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER 1992**

**Applicant:** Chartwell Land Ltd

**Location:** Micawbers, 2 Westerham Road, Limpsfield

**Development:** Demolition of existing dwelling house. Erection of 14no. apartments with associated access, parking, cycle and bin stores as well as garden amenities.

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Toni Walmsley Macey	<b>Consultation Date</b>	20 December 2017	<b>Response Date</b>	8 January 2018
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**Informative Note to the CHA:**

The CHA has undertaken a site visit in order to make a full assessment (December 18 2017) and noted that the existing access arrangement is restricted by both the vertical and horizontal geometry of A25 Westerham Road and the gradient of the access road. Previous applications were made on the site in 1988 and 1989 respectively, both of which were recommended for refusal by the CHA for reasons of road safety and intensification. While the previous recommendations are now 20 years old, and guidance has moved on, the intent of the recommendations is still valid. The CHA notes the numerous comments made on the TDC website with regards to road safety, visibility, speed of traffic, volume of traffic and accidents. As such the CHA has made comments below with regards to these aspects.

Visibility:

Visibility along the A25 is restricted due to the vertical and horizontal nature of both the A25, junction of Snatts Hill and the access road to 2 Westerham Road. Visibility from the proposed development is improved, somewhat, by the removal of part of the retaining wall and introduction of a footway into the site. As such visibility from the site is improved and falls within the public highway in both the trailing and leading directions, respectively. Visibility splays of 53m and 55m (trailing and leading directions, respectively) meet the requirements as outlined with the recommended guidance of Manual for Streets, where speeds indicated by the traffic survey fall below 40mph for the 85th percentile (34.7mph eastbound and 35.7mph westbound). However, it is not simply visibility from the site that needs to be taken into account - it is that of the forward visibility for users already on the A25, approaching in both directions, and visibility of those users emerging from Snatts Hill which must be considered. Vehicles approaching the Snatts Hill/A25 junction from the west have restricted visibility of the emerging vehicles at both Snatts Hill and the site access for Micawbers (2 Westerham Road) due to the vertical alignment of the A25 Westerham Road and retaining wall associated with the development. Vehicles are also obscured by those users in the turning lane. In the opposite direction, when approaching from the east, vehicles emerging from the site access are restricted by the horizontal alignment of the A25; any vehicle moving at speed (40mph, typically outside the peak hours) already on the A25 may not have sufficient time to react to a vehicle emerging/entering the site. From Snatts Hill, visibility of the site access may be obscured by vehicles waiting in the turning lane. Any intensification of

vehicle movement at this site is likely to have road safety implications on the junction in terms of visibility for users already on the public highway.

#### Road Safety:

The CHA has consulted the Road Safety Team and Local Highways team in order to gain their expert technical opinions of the proposed development at the site. The RSA has commented the following, which has been taken into consideration by the CHA when making a recommendation:

*The volume of eastbound A25 traffic, wishing to enter the development site, are most likely to use the existing central right turn lane (which is for westbound traffic entering Snatts Hill to approach Oxted Centre). Right turning traffic entering the proposed development site would attempt this manoeuvre from the existing right turn lane, thereby obstructing this manoeuvre for A25 users turning into Snatts Hill, resulting in confusion as to who has priority over this section of the road, as well as increasing the potential for conflict. Traffic on the A25 east/westbound running lane may therefore attempt a turn from a standing start resulting in the obstruction of the free flow of traffic on the A25. Whilst the right turn manoeuvre into the proposed development site is likely to occur from the opposing right turn lane already with the occupation of the current property, the volume of traffic currently entering the site is likely to be low compared to the predicted volume following the proposed development. Additionally, due to the gradient of the development access, entry speeds would be low which affects the time to clear the westbound A25 carriageway.*

The CHA noted from a site visit that there is little room in this section of the A25 to incorporate a separate turning lane for the site in order to alleviate the above issue; as such it is unlikely that this issue can be overcome.

#### Speed & Volume of Traffic

The CHA noted that the initial traffic flow survey included within the Transport Statement was undertaken in August 2017, outside of school term time, which has an impact upon the speed and volume of traffic which would normally be considered during an assessment. The CHA requested the applicant redo the traffic flow survey during normal term times, where the flow of traffic is likely to be higher but speeds are likely to be lower. The applicant has since indicated that the speed survey during school holidays was robust evidence to indicate higher speeds, as there is less traffic on the network and that as the applicant did not make use of traffic flow (volume) data within their Transport Statement - the need to redo the survey was not justified. The CHA partially agrees with the applicant; the use of speed survey data is robust during the out of school term time to provide information for the visibility splay required, as any lower speeds would indicate that reduced visibility could be justified. In this complicated junction arrangement and with a large number of pedestrian movements in the area, a longer visibility splay is preferred. However, given the number of movements on the A25, in terms of volume and turning at the site, the CHA would have expected traffic flow data to be included in order to support the adequacy of the access arrangement for turning movements. A turning count within the junction would have indicated the number of vehicles during the peak hour which are flowing directly through the junction or turning at Snatts Hill/A25 Westerham Road and would have provided an indication of what impact the intensification of the proposed development would have had on this area. While the single residence on site is likely to cause infrequent obstruction, the intensification of the site to 14 apartments would make this occurrence more likely and thereby increase the risk of road safety issues, confusion and collision in the area. The CHA therefore considers that the intensification at the site and turning movements associated with intensification, given the volume of traffic currently on the public highway within the immediate vicinity, would be a road safety risk.

#### Accidents

The CHA notes the number of comments made by local residents with regards to accidents or 'near misses' in the area. While the Personal Injury Accident record only records those accidents associated with injury to individuals, and not property, 'near misses' are not taken into consideration by the CHA. The PIA record notes that there have been a total of 8 accidents (7 slight, 1 serious) within the immediate vicinity of the access arrangement over the past five years. Of those, five have been directly at the junction of Snatts Hill/A25 Westerham Road - two involved

alcohol and the remaining 3 involved shunt accidents associated with turning. The turning movements accident rate suggests that the junction layout as existing has road safety implications which may be exacerbated by the addition of more turning movements arising as a result of the proposed development.

#### Junction Improvements

The CHA has noted that at present there are no schemes identified within Surrey County Council to improve the junction of A25 Westerham Road and Snatts Hill.

As such, the CHA recommends that the proposed development is recommended for refusal on the following ground:

The proposed development has been considered by THE COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY who has assessed the application on safety, capacity and policy grounds and recommends the proposal be refused on the grounds that:

- 1) The proposed development, if permitted, will generate an increase in numbers of additional turning movements in close proximity to an existing junction of the Strategic Road Network, A25 Westerham Road and Snatts Hill, further interfering with the free flow of traffic and prejudicing the existing condition of highway safety contrary to the objectives of the NPPF (2012), policy CSP12 of the Core Strategy DPDS (2008), policy DP7 of the TLP Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014) and objectives within the Surrey Local Transport Plan (LTP 3)
- 2) The proposed access arrangement is inadequate in respect of gradient, junction stagger and separation to accommodate the increase in vehicular trips that would be generated by the proposed development contrary to the objectives of the NPPF (2012), policy CSP12 of the Core Strategy DPDS (2008), policy DP7 of the TLP Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014) and objectives within the Surrey Local Transport Plan (LTP 3).

Date: 08/01/18.