Dear Mike,

Warrington MSA, M62 Junction 11

We write in response to your consultation response on the above planning application dated 26 September 2019 and our subsequent discussions.

We note that the vast majority of technical inputs to the submitted Transport Assessment (TA) and Staff Travel Plan (TP) are accepted by the Local Highway Authority (LHA). The purpose of this letter is therefore to provide clarification on the various matters identified in your consultation response. For ease of reference we use the same sub-headings below as appear in your consultation response.

Traffic Modelling

LINSIG Model

i-Transport supplied the LINSIG model used to assess the operation of M62 J11 to the LHA on 2 October 2019. As we have not had any further queries from you, we take the LINSIG model to be agreed.

We discussed the approach to modelling the anticipated effects of implementing MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation) at the meeting held on 1 October 2019. The approach we have applied in the LINSIG modelling is predicated on the research set out in TRL’s ‘Application Guide 44: MOVA Traffic Control Manual’, which notes at Paragraph 2.1.3 that the introduction of MOVA can be expected to provide an average delay improvement of c.13% and the JCT Consultancy study, ‘Modelling MOVA Control’, which shows that around large towns the saturation efficiency factor achieved by MOVA can be expected to be 1.029.

In that context, the saturation flows for each lane have been manually adjusted by a factor of 1.029. The model has then been re-run and the outputs have been checked to ensure that the junction delay achieved does not exceed the anticipated c.13% improvement. This approach has been discussed previously with TRL and we would note that Highways England (HE) and its consultants, Atkins, have accepted the LINSIG model in full. We therefore consider the approach to be robust for the purposes of assessing the Proposed Development.
Traffic Growth

You have requested further clarification regarding the approach taken in the submitted TA to the application of background traffic growth to the agreed study area.

Committed development traffic is considered in detail in sub-section 8.4 of the submitted TA. Table 8.12 demonstrates that traffic levels through M62 J11 in the assessed peak hours will increase by between c.17.4% - c.28.9% respectively following the addition of committed developments. These increases represent material traffic growth and have been added to 2018 baseline flows to assess the operation of M62 J11 and the A574 Birchwood Way / Daten Avenue / Moss Gate signal-controlled junction at the anticipated Year of Opening (2022). i-Transport maintains its position (articulated at Paragraph 8.4.12 of the TA) that this approach represents a worst-case for the traffic impact assessment given the historic build rate on Birchwood Business Park in particular.

Notwithstanding the above position, the DfT’s Traffic Counts website (http://www.dft.gov.uk/traffic-counts) has been reviewed to establish the extent to which there has been demonstrable traffic growth on WBC’s network over the past decade. The DfT data are summarised below and are appended to this letter (estimated counts have been excluded).

Table 1: A574 Birchwood Way (DfT Counter Ref: 8215 - A574 Birchwood Way)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AADF – All Vehicles</th>
<th>Change In Flow (against 2008 level)</th>
<th>%age change (against 2008 level)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>25,651</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>25,307</td>
<td>-344</td>
<td>-1.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>23,937</td>
<td>-1,714</td>
<td>-6.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>23,014</td>
<td>-2,637</td>
<td>-10.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>24,118</td>
<td>-1,533</td>
<td>-5.98%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.dft.gov.uk/traffic-counts

The DfT counts demonstrate that, overall, traffic levels on A574 Birchwood Way have reduced by c.6% between 2008 and 2017 (the most recently available surveyed dataset). It is acknowledged that the DfT data suggest that some growth has occurred in the period between 2012 and 2017; however, that growth (c.4.8%) equates to only c.1% per annum.

In this context, i-Transport’s position with regard to background traffic growth remains as set out in Paragraphs 8.4.11 - 8.4.14 of the TA – i.e. that it is not necessary to add additional background traffic to the 2022 Future Base traffic flows. We note that your consultation response describes the approach taken as being ‘a very robust assessment’ and would also note that Highways England have not queried the approach.

Development Generated Traffic Flows

We note your query regarding the presence of negative flows on some of the local road network movements presented on the traffic flow diagrams in Appendix 8.M of the submitted TA.

This matter was discussed at the meeting held on 1 October 2019 and we understand that you are content on the point. For completeness, the traffic flow diagrams presented in Appendix 8.M of the TA present turn-in flows to the proposed MSA in both vehicles/hour and PCU/hour. The introduction of an MSA will result in the reassignment of traffic flows at the junction, including the reassignment of some trips currently using A574 Birchwood Way. The negative flows are those already on the network which will reassign to the MSA. You will
note that the negative flows then balance with the positives and only relate to MSA visitors; all staff trips are assumed to be new to the network.

We discussed the Council’s view of the likely proportion of staff trips expected to travel to/from the Proposed Development by car at our meeting and agreed that even if this were to be higher than assumed in the submitted TA and TP the difference would not have a material bearing on the traffic assessment. For example, if the initial car borne modal split for staff journeys is 80% as suggested by the Council, rather than 50% suggested by the Applicant, the uplift in staff car trips from A574 Birchwood Way to the Proposed Development in the worst case AM peak hour (07:30 – 08:30) would be fewer than 5 trips. In this context it was agreed between the parties that further modelling is not required.

**M62 J11 Layout**

It is acknowledged by the Applicant that the visibility splays shown on submitted Drawing No. ITM12377-SK-024 Rev C require the clearance of existing vegetation. That matter is being considered by the Applicant’s Arboriculturalist and a separate response on this point will be forthcoming shortly.

We also note your comment about visibility splays to proposed signal heads potentially crossing land within the roundabout at M62 J11 which may not be adopted highway. The plans provided by WBC on its online system ([https://mapping.warrington.gov.uk/wml/mobile/map.aspx](https://mapping.warrington.gov.uk/wml/mobile/map.aspx)) indicate that the necessary land is adopted highway. At our meeting on 1 October 2019 you undertook to clarify the position from the Council’s detailed records and we should be grateful if you could do so at your earliest practicable opportunity please.

Noting that Highways England’s formal response on the planning application does not raise any issues with the proposed signal-controlled arrangement as submitted, consideration has then been given to the points raised in your consultation response relating to: (a) provision for right turners from A574 Birchwood Way to M62 East; (b) pedestrian and cycle connections across M62 J11; and (c) footway/cycleway connection to Silver Lane north-west of M62J11.

i-Transport Drawing No. ITM12377-SK-024 Rev E, enclosed, shows a potential amended layout for discussion. It shows, at a feasibility level of detail: a revised carriageway alignment on the eastern bridge deck to provide a 3m wide shared footway/cycleway on the inside of the roundabout; toucan crossings to facilitate cycle movements across the junction, in accordance with the width requirements set out in Local Transport Note 1/12 ‘Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists’; and amended road markings. Subject to your consideration of these potential design changes detailed consideration may need to be given to the structural integrity of the eastern bridge deck to accommodate the changes. The footway/cycleway connection to Silver Lane north-west of M62 J11 is shown on the Drawing.

**Travel Plan**

We received comments on the submitted Staff Travel Plan from the Council’s Smarter Travel Choices team on 21 October 2019.

Based on the costs supplied by the Council’s Smarter Travel Choices Manager the Applicant is willing to accept the Council’s proposal that it performs the role of the Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) for a period of five years, subject to an appropriately worded obligation being enshrined in the S106 Agreement.

Similarly, the Applicant is willing for the Council, in its role as the TPC, to investigate the feasibility and costs of contracting with a local private hire taxi/minicab operator with the Council in lieu of providing a staff minibus services, again subject to an appropriately worded obligation being enshrined in the S106 Agreement.
With regard to potential enhancements to the off-site Public Rights of Way Network and pedestrian/cycle connections is was noted at the meeting held on 1 October that the Council is preparing costed options for discussion with the Applicant. As set out in the submitted planning application, the Applicant is prepared to make a contribution towards such improvements subject to meeting the tests set out in Paragraph 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (2010). We should be grateful if you could now advise further on the Council’s position and supply the relevant costed options for consideration.

**Additional Issues**

You have requested clarification of the facilities likely to be provided at the proposed on-site hotel, in the context of the differing parking requirements for hotels set out in Circular 02/2013 and the Council’s adopted parking standards.

The purpose of the proposed hotel is to meet the needs of the travelling public (i.e. a motorway services lodge). Such hotels do not provide high levels of service or additional facilities; they provide the motoring public with a clean and comfortable place to stay overnight without needing to divert from their route.

The planning application is in outline with all matters except means of access reserved for future determination; as such parking is a reserved matter. The TA nevertheless details that the level of hotel car parking required by Circular 02/2013 can be provided. In this context the illustrative masterplan submitted with the application is considered to be fit-for-purpose and we note that HE has not raised any objection to the proposed hotel.

We hope that the information set out in this letter is helpful and trust that you will be able to review in advance of our next meeting on 29 October 2019.

Yours sincerely

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CC: Ms M Hughes – WBC Planning Department (by email)
Ms L McAlister – WBC Smarter Travel Choices Manager (by email)
Mr D Enuson – Extra MSA Group (by email)
Mr S Courcier – Spawforths (by email)
Mr S Eggleston – i-Transport LLP (by email)

Enc: i-Transport Drawing No. ITM12377-SK-024 Rev E