

The Hurlstone Partnership APP8/1

APPEALS BY HANSON UK - CRAIG YR HESG QUARRY, BERW ROAD,
PONTYPRIDD, CF37 3BG

Proof of Evidence on Highway Matters of
Jeremy P. Hurlstone BSc (Hons), CMILT, MCIHT

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Transportation Planning, Highway Design and Environmental Assessment

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1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 My name is Jeremy Peter Hurlstone; I hold a BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering Management, am a Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation and a Chartered Member of The Institute of Logistics and Transport. I have over 34 years of experience in the transportation industry, and I have been involved in many projects for varying development types.
- 1.2 I have presented evidence at numerous Public Inquiries and Hearings during my career for various developments.
- 1.3 I undertook the highway assessments reported in the ES and Supplementary ES for the proposed Western Extension application, and also that for the S73 application.
- 1.4 Neither planning permission was refused on highway grounds following consideration of the application documents by the Council, including the third party objections.
- 1.5 As part of my assessment, I have visited the site, reviewed visibility at the access, the local road network, empirical traffic survey data, together with relevant design guidance and policy.
- 1.6 Having completed the review I have found that based on relevant design guidance, the proposed developments for both the Western Extension and extension of time to work permitted reserves were acceptable in terms of highway impact.
- 1.7 Accordingly, I concluded planning permission should not be refused on highways grounds; a conclusion shared by both Officers and the Committee when reaching their respective recommendations and determinations.
- 1.8 I was instructed to review the third party objections, which in general terms relate to concerns regarding a perception of increased traffic flows and associated impacts on safety, amenity and damage along the road network, and to prepare a Proof of Evidence to assist the Inspector in reviewing the concerns raised, with reference to where the relevant information addressing those concerns may be found within the application documents.
- 1.9 Having considered the evidence presented, I trust the Inspector's conclusion will concur with my own and that of the Council, insofar as planning permission should not be prevented or refused on highways grounds. Accordingly, I respectfully invite the Inspector to allow this Appeal.

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2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 My name is Jeremy Peter Hurlstone; I am the Managing Director of The Hurlstone Partnership Limited, which provides specialist highway advice to developers and Local Authorities. I hold a BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering Management. I am a Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (MCIHT) and a Chartered Member of The Institute of Logistics and Transport (CMILT).
- 2.2 I have over 34 years of experience in the transportation industry, during which time I have been involved in many projects for varying development types.
- 2.3 I worked for the multi-disciplinary consultancy Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick for approximately 11 years before moving to The Denis Wilson Partnership, a more specialised transportation company, for a further 4 years, where I was employed as a Principal Transportation Planner. I continue to undertake work with HaskoningDHV (which incorporates what was DWP) in addition to servicing the expanding client base of The Hurlstone Partnership.
- 2.4 I have prepared and given evidence at numerous Public Inquiries and Hearings during my career for various types and scale of development.
- 2.5 I undertook the highway assessment for the planning applications at Craig Yr Hesg Quarry, as reported in Chapter 13 of the 2015 Environmental Statement (CD1.2), Chapter 5 of the Supplementary Environmental Statement of 2021 (as requested by the Inspector to update the 2015 document) relating to the proposed Western Extension (CD2.9), and also Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement of 2021 relating to the S73 Application (CD3.1).
- 2.6 Neither of the two planning applications which are the subject of these appeals were refused planning permission on transport grounds, as the Highway Authority raised no objection to the proposals, subject to contributions towards maintenance of the network. However, as statutory powers already exist for securing maintenance contributions, where appropriate, the requirement for a planning condition and/or obligation was not pursued, and the Officer recommendation was for the granting of permission.
- 2.7 I have been instructed by the Appellant to prepare evidence in response to the third party highways objections, which are set out in the 06 February 2020 Officer Report (CD4.1) as a series of 29 bullet points under the sub-heading "*Highways/Access*", and concerns raised when discussing highways matters within the transcript of the Committee Meeting relating to the application for the Western Extension (CD10.11).
- 2.8 Broadly similar concerns were raised, albeit in a different format, in the 26 August 2021 Officer Report related to the S73 application (CD4.4) under the heading "*Highway issues*", although there were also highway/access related matters raised in the preceding headings "*The quarry access road*", "*The haul road*" and "*Jet wash sprays access road*", which were also discussed at the Committee Meeting, as the transcript (CD10.12) confirms.

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- 2.9 In general terms, traffic and highway concerns raised by third parties were similar between the two applications. These may be broadly summarised as pertaining to a perception of increased traffic flows and associated impacts on safety, amenity and damage along the road network.
- 2.10 As the evidence will demonstrate, the proposals will not increase HGV activity associated with Crag yr Hesg Quarry beyond those previously accepted and recently accommodated on the road network in any given period. Whilst the proposals would prolong the period of activity at the Quarry, given the HGV activity has not resulted in significant adverse safety impacts on routes which retain sufficient capacity to accommodate the continuation of the activities, there is no logical reason to believe or conclude that the proposals would be unacceptable in terms of highway matters.
- 2.11 The baseline traffic information considered within the update for the western extension application and the proposed S73 variation of condition application was the same. As a result, the information contained within my Proof of Evidence may be considered relevant to both appeals.
- 2.12 Through the information contained within the Environmental Statement documents together with that contained within this Proof of Evidence, I will demonstrate that the Council was correct to conclude that the highway impacts of both applications were acceptable, and therefore planning permission should not be, and was not, refused on those grounds.
- 2.13 The Environmental Statements submitted provide the technical highway evidence which I rely upon, and they should be read as if part of my Proof. Due to the update to the 2015 ES, Chapter 5 of the 2021 Supplementary ES (CD2.9) is more useful than the original document (CD1.2). The key points within Chapter 5 of CD2.9 may be found at:
- Page 62 column 2 Section 5.4 paragraphs 3 and 4
Page 66 column 2 paragraphs 2 and 3
Page 67 column 2 paragraphs 1 and 6
Page 68 column 1 Section 5.5.3 paragraphs 4 and 6
Page 69 column 2 Section 5.7.2 (continues to page 70)
Page 70 column 1 Section 5.7.3 paragraph 3
Page 70 column 2 Section 5.10 (continues to page 71)
Page 71 column 2 Section 5.11
- As much of the information within the S73 2021 ES Chapter 12 (CD3.1) is derived from and based on the same information as the 2021 Supplementary ES (CD2.9) above, the findings when assessing the continuation of activities over a shorter period are unsurprisingly similar. Key differences are noted within CD3.1 at:
- Page 155 column 1 Section 12.6.2 paragraphs 2 and 6
- 2.14 The following sections of my Proof consider highway matters raised and discussed at the Committee meetings, as confirmed by the transcripts forming Core Documents CD10.11 and CD10.12..

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- 3 09 JULY 2020 COMMITTEE (CD10.11)
- 3.1 The transcript of the 09 July Committee Meeting confirms Councillor Fychan raised concerns regarding the age of the traffic data used in the ES dating to 2012 and 2013 at page 3 lines 21-25 (continuing to lines 1 and 2 on page 4). However, the application for the Western Extension was registered in 2015, with the assessment work undertaken in 2014/2015. As a result, when the assessment was undertaken, the survey data was relatively current.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding this, new survey data was obtained in 2020. This was referenced for comparison purposes in the Supplementary Environmental Statement of April 2021 (CD2.9), which also provided updated information for activity at the Quarry. The new datasets revealed traffic activity at a lower level than had been assessed in 2014, for both the Quarry and along Berw Road.
- 3.3 Councillor Powell's comments recorded on page 5 lines 25-26 (and continuing through page 6 and into lines 1-5 on page 7) suggest the number of lorries would increase (page 6 lines 2-3). However, all of the ES documents confirm that output is to remain at the current level of around 400,000 tonnes per annum. Therefore, beyond the normal daily variations in activity that routinely occur, the Quarry traffic is to remain the same.
- 3.4 The closure of White Bridge following Storm Dennis is referenced by Councillor Pickering from page 8 line 4 through to line 18 on page 9, together with the associated impact of Quarry HGV traffic. It is apparent that White Bridge was used as an alternative route for vehicles accessing the A470, in order to avoid the traffic signals to the south at the Berw Road / Bridge Street junction.
- 3.5 The 2021 Supplementary ES (CD2.9) recognised the closure of White Bridge and highlighted its potential impact on the lower traffic flows observed during the 2020 traffic surveys (see bottom of page 63 1st column – 2nd column and penultimate paragraph of 1st column on page 66). It would be expected that lower traffic flows would result in less congestion and delay than would have previously been encountered by road users.
- 3.6 Whilst considering this matter, the impact of the White Bridge closure and age of the traffic data is revisited at page 31 by Councillor Powderhill from line 11 then through to line 4 of page 32, which, having considered the concerns raised, concludes refusal on transport grounds is not recommended.
- 3.7 Returning back through the transcript to page 12, from line 22 through to line 2 of page 13, Mr. Bailey introduces the Officer Report and confirms a further 60 e-mails objecting to the planning application had been received, but they did not raise new issues.
- 3.8 From Page 17, line 19 through to line 1 of page 21, Mr. Towns considers the potential for damage to the highway arising from the Quarry, and correctly reports that the Quarry traffic is a small proportion of the overall flow, and that statutory powers exist to secure funding for repairs if appropriate.

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3.9 On lines 7 to 14, Councillor Grehan queries whether the HGVs may be causing adverse impacts due to vibration. From line 18 on page 32 through to line 9 on page 33, Mr Zeinali confirms the vibration from vehicles should not cause structural damage, but would cause wear and tear on the highway, which may be addressed through statutory powers.

3.10 On page 35 of the transcript, Councillor Williams raises matters of highway safety and damage from line 12 to 17; querying whether a highway reason for refusal could be added.

3.11 Mr Baily confirms on lines 19 – 20 of page 36 that it would be difficult to come up with a substantive reason for refusal on highways grounds. When considering the reasons for refusal, Councillor Hughes recognises that “...the transportation issues can be mitigated against” on lines 16 and 17 of page 37.

4 26 AUGUST COMMITTEE – S73 APPLICATION (CD10.12)

4.1 At the 26 August Committee meeting, Ms. Griffiths addressed members and raised traffic matters at page 9 lines 2 – 8, albeit more in respect of air quality impacts, whilst also referencing the congestion that may occur when vehicles cannot pass. However, as explained in the various Environmental Statements, the traffic flows on Berw Road are below the design capacity of routes on which higher levels of delay are likely to be experienced, due to restrictions to through-movement¹.

4.2 Councillor Pritchard revisits Ms. Griffiths’ concerns at page 12 between lines 8 – 11 inclusive and sought refusal of the application on the grounds of adverse local impact.

4.3 Councillor Powell raises concerns regarding the Quarry traffic from page 20 line 17 through to page 21 line 10, making reference to the damage to highways caused by HGV traffic, in addition to other impacts such as noise and dust.

4.4 Mr Bailey also raises similar concerns regarding dust and debris at page 26 lines 13 – 16, citing an increase in impacts being experienced. However, as previously indicated the output from the Quarry is not predicted to increase, and the HGV traffic has effectively reduced due to the increased payloads on vehicles, as explained in the Environmental Statements².

4.5 Mr Bailey also raises concerns regarding pedestrian safety and damage to the road surface at lines 2 to 4 of page 28. Page 153 of the S73 Environmental Statement (CD3.1) identifies 17 personal injury accidents on the local road network within the study area, but found none involved HGV traffic, which suggests it is not HGVs that should be the concern regarding highway safety.

¹ CD1.2 2015 ES Pages 248 – 249; CD2.9 2021 Supplementary ES Page 67; and CD 3.1 2021 ES Page 152 - 153

² CD2.9 2021 Supplementary ES Page 69 and CD3.1 2021 ES Page 154

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- 4.6 Similar findings were established in the 2015 Environmental Statement (CD1.2) at page 249, which covered an earlier 5 year period.
- 4.7 In combination, it is apparent that there had been no recorded personal injury accidents involving HGVs for the period between 01 April 2008 and the end of 2019; a period of some 12 years.
- 4.8 Whilst preparing this evidence, I have re-visited the collision data, which has been updated to the end of 2021, and can confirm that there have been no recorded personal injury accidents involving HGVs within the additional 2 year period. This gives an overall assessment over 14 years, which is almost three times the preferred five year period for highway safety review.
- 4.9 This empirical evidence demonstrates that the highway safety implications of the HGV activity associated with the Quarry are not significant, as the road network and its users can clearly accommodate the cumulative flows.
- 4.10 Mr. Bailey returns to highways issues at page 32 lines 2 – 15, confirming the Highway Authority raised no objection; the maintenance contribution is appropriately dealt with through existing statutory powers; and the proposal does not seek to permit additional reserves to be worked beyond those for which planning permission has already been granted.
- 4.11 In practical highway terms, the corresponding traffic activity associated with the S73 application has already been approved. The impact of the application would allow the same vehicle movements that have previously been accepted to occur over a longer period of time. The application would not increase the number of vehicle movements to / from the Quarry, or their respective impact on the structure of the highway, beyond what the extant permission envisaged.