



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2025

by **C Mayes CMLI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/W/25/3372695

Land off Great North Road, Micklefield, Leeds LS25 4EH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr J and Mr R Hickman against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/06539/FU.
 - The development proposed is detailed application for 2no. dwellings to be delivered in 3 phases, comprising: phase 1 road infrastructure; phase 2 erection of 1 dwelling; and, phase 3 erection of 1 dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. It is noted that the plans referred to in the Council's decision notice were not those considered during the determination of the application. In the interests of clarity and certainty, I have determined this appeal on the basis of the following plans: 2320/100, 2320/101, 2320/110 Rev B, 2320/111 Rev B, 2320/112 Rev A, 2320/113 Rev A, 2320/114, 2320/115, 2320/116 Rev B, and 0001 Rev B. I am satisfied that these are the plans which were assessed by the Council in reaching its decision, and I have considered the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on highway safety and users of a public right of way.

Reasons

4. The site lies within a predominantly residential area and is accessed via a private road which also serves as a Definitive Public Right of Way (Micklefield Footpath 3). The principle of residential development on this brownfield site is not in dispute, and the Council's officer report confirms that the design, appearance, and residential amenity of the proposed dwellings are acceptable.
5. The private road meets Great North Road, which is a secondary distributor road with a 30 mph speed limit in place. As such, the Leeds City Council Transport Supplementary Planning Document, February 2023 (SPD), requires a minimum width of 5.5 metres for the first 10 metres of such an access to enable safe two-way passing of vehicles. The proposal provides this width for only approximately 3 metres before narrowing to between 4.3 and 4.6 metres, with a kink in the alignment at around 25 metres from the junction. This constrained geometry would likely result in vehicles having to wait on or reverse towards Great North Road in

the event of a vehicle travelling in the other direction toward Great North Road, causing obstruction and risk to other road users.

6. Visibility at the junction with Great North Road is also substandard. In the absence of speed survey data, the default requirement of 2.4 metre by 90 metre visibility splays applies, and even if 2.4 metre by 43 metre splays were justified, the achievable splays within land under the appellant's control or adopted highway are considerably less in both directions. No deliverable splay improvements are shown, and these shortcomings in geometry and visibility weigh heavily against the proposal.
7. The access road is used by pedestrians, including children travelling to the nearby primary school. As a result, pedestrians and vehicular movements would share the same route. The appellant contends that the proposed residential use would likely result in a reduction in overall vehicle movements compared to the established use of the site, which, I am told, previously operated under an Operator's Licence for 4 HGVs and has been used for contractor parking and outside storage. While the precise level and lawfulness of historic trip rates has not been substantiated, it is reasonable to accept that the proposed development would result in fewer vehicle movements.
8. However, the planning context is materially different. The previous uses, although potentially generating higher traffic volumes, would have been associated with commercial drivers who may be more accustomed to negotiating such access arrangements. In contrast, the proposed dwellings would introduce residential traffic, including visitors, service vehicles and delivery vehicles, and would formalise the use of the access in a way that increases the potential for conflict with pedestrians. Importantly, the vulnerable users of the route would not only include existing pedestrians, such as children walking to and from the nearby primary school, but also the future occupants and visitors of the proposed dwellings themselves. The absence of any dedicated pedestrian provision, combined with the substandard access geometry and visibility, means that the risk to highway safety remains significant notwithstanding the likely reduction in vehicle numbers.
9. Furthermore, servicing and turning manoeuvres at the junction are problematic, with tracking showing that a refuse vehicle would need to cross the centre line of Great North Road to turn into the site, and exit manoeuvres are not evidenced. This presents a foreseeable conflict at a sensitive location opposite the school access, particularly at peak times. The unresolved conflict with an existing telegraph pole adds further doubt, and although the on-site turning head appears to function, junction manoeuvres remain unsafe or unproven.
10. I have considered the appellant's highways evidence, which highlights the site's sustainable location, low predicted traffic generation, and absence of recent recorded accidents, and argues that the proposed arrangements would represent an improvement over previous uses. While I acknowledge these points and the modest benefits of small brownfield housing sites, the proposal does not meet the adopted SPD standards for access width and visibility, nor does it provide dedicated pedestrian provision or resolve other outstanding safety concerns. As such, these shortcomings collectively result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety to which I attach substantial weight.

11. The appellant has placed considerable emphasis on the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes, particularly through the development of small and medium-sized sites, as supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). It is argued that, as the site is brownfield land, sustainably located, and was allocated for housing development, albeit now built out, substantial weight should be given to the delivery of two additional dwellings.
12. However, the Council is able to demonstrate a housing land supply in excess of five years, and as such, the contribution of this proposal to overall supply is modest. While the Framework encourages the use of suitable brownfield land and supports sustainable development, it also makes clear that sustainable development is a balance of economic, social, and environmental objectives. Although the scheme would deliver some economic and environmental benefits, these must be weighed against the harm identified to highway safety. In this case, I have found harm arising from substandard access geometry, inadequate visibility, and conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, including vulnerable users, which carries substantial weight. Accordingly, the benefits advanced by the appellant do not outweigh the identified harm.
13. Taking the above into account, I conclude that the proposal would cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety for all users. The scheme is therefore contrary to Policy T2 of the Leeds Local Plan Core Strategy, 2019, and Policy GP5 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan, 2006, and guidance provided in the SPD, which seek, among other things, to ensure development maximises highway safety.

Other Matters

14. In addition, I have had regard to matters including equality and accessibility, contaminated land, drainage, flood risk, noise, and telecommunications infrastructure. None of these issues would give rise to significant harm or would be incapable of being addressed by condition were the appeal to be allowed. Accordingly, these considerations do not outweigh the unacceptable impact on highway safety identified above.

Conclusion

15. The proposal conflicts with the development plan, when it is read as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Mayes

INSPECTOR