

On pavement to avoid bus

Making narrow pavements narrower

THORP ARCH GROUP
TAG

Gridlock at the COMPLEX again

Protected outdoor sport greenspace

THORP ARCH GROUP - TAG
OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 17/07970/OT
Contact Peter Locke, Chairman, tagactiongroup@gmail.com

OBJECTION

Section 3

Accessibility.

TAG objection to planning application 17/07970/OT

Outline planning application for residential development with community facility. Land Off Walton Road Walton Wetherby.

Introduction:

TAG is the acronym for Thorp Arch Group. TAG has a mandate from over 135 people to oppose this development on Planning Grounds. The Thorp Arch Parish Council also held a well attended open meeting for residents to discuss the application on 18 January. Opposition to the application was unanimous.

3.1 Accessibility:

3.1.1 The planning application (Transport Assessment, table 5.3 and elsewhere) presents a fairly accurate account of the locality, travel times and distances, and public transport provision.

3.1.2 It is worthy of note that, on their list of facilities and distances, (TA table 5.2), of the twelve Amenities listed within 2000 metres:

3.1.3 Four: Wealstun prison, LUFC ground, TABS ground, Walton cricket ground, are not accessible to the public (closed, or members only). Two are pubs. Two are churches. The library is NOT a lending library, and only accessible for reference purposes.

3.1.4 The only publicly accessible locations are a playground, and the Thorp Arch Trading Estate.

3.1.5 The LEH school is included as 'within walking distance of 2000m', but at 1650m distance this is outwith the LCC criteria of 1 mile.

3.1.6 Note that there are no:

- shops - even to supply 'everyday needs'
- medical or dental facilities
- pharmacies
- banks or post offices
- hairdressers or other beauty establishments

3.1.7 It follows that the claim that the site has good walking access to facilities is laughable.

3.2 Bus service:

3.2.1 The only relatively frequent bus service is the 70/71. Both the application, and the Metro consultation, assume that this service will continue to travel along Walton road, passing Wealstun prison. If the TATE application is approved then this will not be true. That application has the service being re-routed through TATE.

3.2.2 Note also that Metro seem to think they can just discount the Core Strategy criteria for frequency of service to MUAs. They can't. It is part of the examined and approved Core Strategy. The travel times are so great (over an hour to Leeds centre at peak hours) that the service is completely impractical for regular commuting use. This is the antithesis of the Core Strategy desire to limit travel distances, and to support the City centre.

3.2.3 The journey times and costs to either Leeds or Harrogate are prohibitive for daily use, with rush-hour journeys to Leeds centre taking well over an hour.

3.3 Train Service:

3.3.1 There is no access to stations with trains to Leeds within 20kms. The nearest station serving Leeds is at Garforth. It is not practically accessible by public transport. It can be reached by car, but it only has a small car park. Therefore the ability to leave a car and take the train is a lottery.

3.4 Walking:

3.4.1 The guidelines for a walkable neighbourhood require access to 'everyday' facilities to be within 800m. Leeds guidelines for rural areas stretch this to 1000m. Nowhere is there guidance that everyday shops can be well over 2000m away. Guidance is that only the occasional journey on foot may be practical up to 2000m.

3.4.2 In the case of this site, the nearest everyday shopping accessible on foot is in Boston Spa, which table 5.2 shows to be 2450 metres at the nearest point. In addition the walk is not easy. It involves several crossings of the road, as the pavements are often on one side of the road, but not always the same side. The route down to and up from the Thorp Arch Bridge is steep. Parts of the route are unlit. The pavements are below standard width. Walking to the shops and other facilities is not

a practical proposition.

3.5 Cycling:

3.5.1 The Transport Assessment (TA) in paragraph 5.3.3 notes that the site is well located for the off road national cycle network route 665, which links to route 67. This is true. What it doesn't mention is that route 665 is unlit, windy in places, and passes through wooded areas. In winter it is often very icy and is not gritted. So although it is a very good recreational asset, it is completely impractical for year-round commuting or shopping uses.

3.5.2 The table 5.3 in the TA shows theoretical times by bike to various local centres. What it doesn't show is that the local road network is not cycle friendly. We have already commented in the Highways section about the difficulty of cycling on Bridge Road. Although experienced leisure road cyclists do use these roads, the concept of allowing children to use them for school trips, particularly in winter when it would be dark, would be reckless in the extreme. The same applies to adult commuters, or for everyday local access to facilities.