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Dear Keith,

**EAST WHARF, WATCHET
REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

Introduction

Waterman Boreham are currently representing Urban Splash with regard to proposals to implement a mixed use, residential and community development on East Wharf, Watchet.

In the interest of ensured pedestrian safety in and around the proposed development site, the effect to pedestrians is examined here.

Existing Accident Records

To investigate whether there is an existing trend of unacceptable danger to pedestrians near the site that could be exacerbated by the presence of the proposed development; it is necessary to examine the record of accident data on the highway network around the site.

The level of personal injury accidents at the junction of Brendon Road (B3191) / Swain Street have been examined for a 3 year period from October 2003 to September 2006.

Three Personal Injury Accidents (PIA's) have been recorded in the vicinity of the Brendon Road / Swain Street junction, during the 3 year survey period. Two of these were classified as "slight" and one was "serious".

The one serious injury was sustained by a child passenger on a bus travelling along Brendon Road when it braked suddenly to avoid a collision with a vehicle that had pulled out in front of it.

The first “slight” accident was caused when a “drunken pedestrian staggered into the road” and collided with a vehicle.

The second slight accident was caused when the setting winter sun blinded an unprepared driver who hit a stationary trailer.

Two of the three accidents in Watchet occurred during the month of August.

To summarise the PIA data for Watchet; only 3 accidents involving personal injury have occurred in the three year survey period. Of these, one was classified “serious”. There is no apparent pattern to these accidents and it is concluded that these are random accidents that are not indicative of an operational problem with the highway network in this location.

Two of the three accidents (including the serious one) occurred in the month of August, which is during the peak holiday season in Watchet and the highway network is subject to additional demand, largely by visitors who may be unfamiliar with the local infrastructure.

None of the reported accidents are consistent with the type and pattern to be expected from the presence of inadequate pedestrian facilities. This is largely due to there being very little pedestrian traffic over the railway bridge on Swain Street into the town. All of the car parks and bus stops are further into the town and people are deposited without need to walk across the bridge to access the Quay, shops or any other facility or attractor.

Existing Pedestrian Facilities

Heading from the bus stop towards the proposed development site the footway on the left starts at a suitable 2.0m width, but narrows to 1.3m nearer the site. However, the existing parking facility on Harbour Road on the other side has footway designed to allow people returning on foot to their car to safely do so. This extends all the way to the proposed development site.

The railway line can be safely crossed via a signalised pedestrian crossing at its southern end and a pedestrian bridge in the vicinity of the railway station. This negates the need for pedestrians to cross over the road bridge if they are walking from outside the harbour and quay area.

Proposed Development

The proposed development will be relatively self contained insofar as the trips it attracts will park on site or adjacent it. A few may arrive adjacent the site on the bus. Once on site, toilets and other facilities are present, attracting no additional material pedestrian movements on the highway network.

Safe pedestrian routes to other areas of Watchet are provided from the site via the pedestrianised quayside. This will be the most logical desire line for pedestrians, and will not require any deviation. There is also a cut through the car park to the town.

Urban Splash are proposing improvements adjacent to the existing road bridge crossing the railway line, to result in improved vehicular alignment across the bridge. In combination with appropriate white lining, this would improve the segregation and use of available space on the existing bridge deck to the benefit and safety of all users, including pedestrians.

Notwithstanding the above, it is unlikely that the proposed development of East Wharf would attract significant numbers of pedestrian movements across the railway line. There is, therefore, no material impact on pedestrian accessibility of the town centre and no explicit mitigation is proposed, other than the white lining described above.

The level to which pedestrian demand across the railway line in the vicinity of the site boundary is likely to be impacted by the proposals is very slight. On that basis it is considered inappropriate to require improvement of the crossing facilities available at the location.

Conclusion

There is no record of an existing problem with pedestrian safety in Watchet, the accident data confirms this.

The proposed development is not one that would attract significant pedestrian trips, and it is not likely to generate much pedestrian activity once people have travelled to the site via other modes – other than along the appropriate routes.

Should concerns be raised about pedestrians at the railway bridge, possible mitigation measures could be implemented.

The development will provide an enhancement to the railway bridge, such that all modes of transport will benefit from improved alignment and segregation.

Yours sincerely

CARL TONKS
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

cc Mr J Howard Urban Splash