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Constraints overcome with optimised access

Considering the delivery and servicing needs of sensitive sites in and around London is a regular challenge for Motion.

As cities expand, providing adequate provision for delivery and servicing activity for new developments from the outset can help to minimise disruption and the environmental impact, such as increased congestion and noise pollution.

In one such scheme in Hillingdon, Motion supported property development company, Mackenzie Homes Limited, with transport and travel planning advice and construction traffic management. Planning consent has been granted for the redevelopment of an industrial site to erect a part 10-storey and part 11-storey mixed-use building. The development at 3 Viveash Close will provide 127 flats and double-height residents lounge, with public realm improvements and landscaping works.

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Sustainable, intergenerational living wins approval at appeal

Biddulph (Buckinghamshire) Limited will finally realise its dream of redeveloping a former golf course to the south east of Little Chalfont, near Amersham. Despite a series of setbacks due to the creation of a new unitary authority, delays to the Local Plan, the first COVID lockdown and initial refusal, the developer is now moving forward with plans to build much-needed new homes in what will be one of the most sustainable mixed-use developments in Buckinghamshire.

Future residents of Little Chalfont Park will benefit from access to more than 15 hectares of open space, as well as a range of sustainable and active travel options including rail. Biddulph Director, David Cox, explains, *“When developing plans for the site, we tried to mirror the existing community profile to provide all its needs - now and in the future. The result will be very desirable housing in a highly attractive location, providing local choices for the elderly, and family homes with access to playgrounds and open spaces for the younger generations to enjoy.”*

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Sustainable, intergenerational living wins approval at appeal

Image © JTP/Atelier78

The development of 215 market homes and 15 self-build plots will connect Little Chalfont village centre with the wider countryside and AONB. 152 affordable homes will provide housing for essential workers in one of the most expensive parts of the country. One hundred retirement flats will enable local people to downsize while remaining in the area. The scheme will also deliver a 60-bed care home, and land and funding for a primary school, nursery and community hub. The site is less than 10 minutes' walk from the local railway station.

Transport and infrastructure upgrades

Biddulph acquired the site in 2008 and began promoting it through the Local Plan almost a decade ago. However, the cancellation of the Examination in Public due to COVID-19 and the transition from a two-tier to a unitary authority, meant that the Local Plan was never adopted. Still keen to press ahead with its vision for the area, Biddulph submitted an application to build on the site. The scheme was initially refused, with 11 reasons given by the planning authority.

Motion Managing Director, Phil Bell, reports, "Our evidence led to a Statement

of Common Ground which resolved outstanding areas of disagreement on highway and transport matters. Following a public inquiry, the inspector was satisfied that the scheme offered genuine active travel options to access local services, and that the proposed development accorded with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development."

Cycle lanes will feature prominently in the new scheme and plans were also approved for traffic calming and improved junctions around the train station. A bus stop will be relocated as part of the package of traffic and travel measures.

Throughout the twists and turns of Little Chalfont Park's fortunes, Biddulph has benefitted from the combination of sound judgement and pragmatic advice for which Motion is renowned. According to David Cox, "Motion has been a constant source of guidance and support as part of our core team. It is that clarity of advice and steadfastness that kept us going through the entire process. The company has been heavily invested in our future and through persistence and patience we ended up with the outcome we had been working towards for several years."

Laura Fitzgerald

Working together; a common narrative

A well-respected figure in the Thames Valley property development sector, Director Laura Fitzgerald has successfully steered transport and highways negotiations on behalf of public and private clients. *Insight* caught up with her to discuss current and future challenges.

What are the key changes on the horizon in transport planning?

LF: Chiefly, the shifting political landscape at local and national level. Active Travel England also means we have a new set of criteria to consider for major schemes, to help make walking and cycling the default travel mode for short trips.

What challenges do you foresee with implementing the new guidance from Active Travel England?

LF: Walking and cycling has always been a priority for Motion. However, the issue will be delivering the necessary infrastructure, such as footways or cycle lanes, into a site when the surrounding land is not owned by the developer.

And the opportunities?

LF: The guidance sets out an ambitious framework yet within the constraints of each land parcel, we are dealing with the art of the possible. As transport planners, our role is to help develop pragmatic solutions to make the most of what each site can offer, within the context of the new guidance.

What message do you have for clients in property development?

LF: Preparations need to begin as early as possible – I cannot emphasise this enough.

Even greater effort will be required in communicating with the various stakeholders, especially during public consultations when a site's assessment against the new criteria may come under additional scrutiny. The whole design team also needs to be working together towards the same objectives, with a common narrative.



Court case triggers need for water neutrality statement



Horsham District Council has updated its water neutrality advice following a recent high court decision in Somerset concerning a proposed development affected by nutrient neutrality.

“Developments in the Horsham district with any conditions that require the consent of the authority, including pre-occupation conditions to discharge, must now demonstrate water neutrality,” explains Director, Neil Jaques.

If you have any questions about how the new changes could affect your application or if you would value a preliminary consultation about water neutrality, call Neil on 01483 531300.

Motion in the community

As part of its commitment to a more sustainable future, Motion recently organised an inaugural Green Week to educate employees about reducing their impact on the environment.

To help tackle the climate crisis head on, the company has also teamed up with Ecologi and has already funded the planting of several hundred native tree species across the UK.

Employee volunteers have been playing their part by planting trees and bushes in Buckler’s Forest, Crowthorne to support carbon storage, and helping to clean up an area of woodland next to the Wey and Arun Canal.



Collaboration smooths passage through planning

Tackling technical issues as early as possible can strengthen development proposals and maximise a scheme’s chances of a more straightforward journey through the planning process. In a recent application in Surrey, Motion was able to bring drainage, flood-risk and transport expertise to Earlswood Homes’ team of consultants, helping the housebuilder to gain approval for its largest scheme to date.



Illustration courtesy of Omega Architects

Despite an application being initially turned down at the local level, Earlswood Homes was eventually granted permission at appeal to build 40 new dwellings at Haroldslea Drive in Horley. The winning proposals will deliver a sensitively designed scheme of family homes, which is sympathetic to the surrounding area and in a highly accessible location.

Billy Clements, Earlswood Homes’ Development Director, takes up the story. *“We knew that transport and flooding issues would be sensitive locally and that we needed to put forward a robust case, so Motion was brought in to join our team of consultants. We had some understanding of their collaborative approach and knew their experience of working with the County Council would be vital.”* Billy adds, *“This input proved to be invaluable as the process turned out to be smooth and uneventful in respect of transport, highways and flooding.”*

Reducing flood risk

Motion Director, Neil Jaques, recalls some of the infrastructure challenges. *“As a small part of the site fell within Flood Zone 2, the planning application needed to address the sequential test, even though most of the development is located within Flood Zone 1.”* The sequential test assessment concluded that there were no reasonable available sites in areas with a lower risk of flooding that would be appropriate for the development.

A strategy was put forward to reduce the risk of flooding and to improve the current, poorly maintained drainage network. Partial infiltration was proposed as a means of surface-water discharge, with infiltration occurring at shallow depths throughout the site.

Good connections

Billy Clements is keen to emphasise the site’s proximity to amenities and job opportunities. *“It’s a highly sustainable location. Future residents will enjoy easy access to Horley town centre and railway station, primary and secondary schools, and major employment hubs such as Gatwick airport.”*

Motion Director, Andrew Whittingham, says, *“A particular aspect of our work was to ensure that the site was suitably connected to the surrounding network of pedestrian, cycle and public transport links, including upgrading adjacent Public Rights of Way (PROW).”*



© Berkeley Homes

Travel Plan goes the extra mile

Advice to influence active and sustainable travel adoption by residents of a new development in Winchester is being provided by Motion. The company was commissioned by Berkeley Homes Southern Limited to produce the Travel Plan for the approved Knights Quarter development. Situated half a mile from the city centre on the site of the former headquarters for the Hampshire Constabulary, the 244-unit scheme consists of apartments and townhouses.

In addition to a Travel Information Pack, supplied to each household as part of the purchase and move-in process, the local authority requested supplementary route maps to help residents navigate the area using

non-car modes. Motion researched and designed detailed walking and cycling route maps to a nearby secondary school, park, Winchester's historic quarter, the city centre and railway station.

Time not distance

User-friendly isochrone maps were produced and combined with the mapping of local amenities to illustrate the travel time to the facilities on foot or by cycle. Motion Senior Travel Planner, Anna Mahoney, explains, "Isochrone maps identify areas that can be reached within specified time bands using different travel modes. The software considers variables such as the geography of an area and available connections to produce maps showing colour-graded bands of isochrones." Anna adds, "This is much more accurate than distance-radius maps that only show straight line distances, and do not reflect the route a walker, wheeler or cyclist would use."

Residents will be able to obtain hand-held copies of the route maps and public transport timetables from the concierge desk. A monitoring and review programme, involving the collection and reporting of travel survey data from site occupants, will be managed by Motion and delivered in collaboration with the site management agent. The data will be used to track progress towards achievement of the Travel Plan targets.



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Constraints overcome with optimised access

The proposals are critically important to unlocking the full potential of the wider masterplan for the area and will provide a pedestrian link to the former Nestlé factory site in the east to the new Crossrail station and Hayes town centre.

The development will be car free apart from seven disabled parking spaces and a new loading area created for deliveries and servicing, including refuse collection. Motion Regional Director, David Lewis, explains, "We worked closely with the architect to ensure that accessible parking spaces for disabled residents, a large cycle parking allocation and deliveries and servicing could all be accommodated in a constrained ground floor space."

According to Uzair Jahangir, Development Manager at Mackenzie Homes, "We were dealing with a very tight area for commercial access and parking. Motion conducted swept path analysis for delivery and refuse vehicles, fire trucks and cars. The support was essential to provide safe and efficient access for deliveries and servicing to the site."

Supporting active travel

An Active Travel Zone assessment on the walking and cycling infrastructure in the vicinity of the site and the scheme will contribute to public realm improvements along Viveash Close. Motion demonstrated that the new development is in a sustainable location, providing opportunities for active travel with convenient access to amenities such as banks, supermarkets, schools, pharmacies, a post office and enhanced public transport links.

Sustainability impact:

- ▶ Facilitating walking and cycling to reduce car use to tackle congestion and emissions
- ▶ Encouraging car-free lifestyles and enabling residents to live active, healthier lives
- ▶ Minimising noise and air pollution



Innovative scheme delivers future-facing workplace

Planning permission has been granted for a best-in-class, nine-storey office building in Shoreditch to deliver 150,000 square feet of high-quality workspace. The East London mixed-use scheme for developer Blue Coast Capital is designed with flexibility in mind, to allow the building to evolve and adapt as working patterns in the city change over time.

Motion helped secure approval for The Huntingdon Estate with transport planning expertise and a Demolition Logistics Plan. An upgraded signalised pedestrian crossing will link the site to Shoreditch railway station. Motion Director, John Russell, explains, "We worked closely with Tower Hamlets and TFL to ensure that the crossing design facilitated safe pedestrian movement and fully integrated with the Bishopsgate Goodsyard redevelopment project."

Sustainability impact:

- ▶ Improved connections with Shoreditch railway station
- ▶ Development of a Grade A, BREEAM "Outstanding", EPC A building



Triple commercial capacity unlocked

Planning consent has been received for the demolition of existing offices and construction of a new logistics unit at the Westworld Site, West Gate, Hanger Lane, London. Motion supported Blue Coast Capital, overcoming the potential variations in travel demand in a highly sensitive location.

The site is in a strategic industrial location (SIL) adjacent to the A40 Hanger Lane gyratory and the headquarters of fashion retailer River Island. According to John Stacey, Managing Director, UK Real Estate at Blue Coast Capital, "The application involved careful negotiation with TFL and the local authority. Motion's input was invaluable."

Flexible floorspace

The new overall building footprint remains the same, but the scheme has been designed to accommodate an additional one to three floors of warehousing space. John Stacey comments, "We set out to ensure that a future occupier could install mezzanine floors at their discretion. Motion played an integral role in unlocking this highly sensitive aspect of the planning permission."

Principal Transport Planner, Calum McGoff, explains, "The floor area of the building can triple, therefore travel demand and parking could vary. A balanced proposal had to be produced that was acceptable to all parties for every possible configuration."

Sustainability impact:

- ▶ Effective use of land in constrained urban location
- ▶ Development of a Grade A, BREEAM "Outstanding", EPC A building



FOCUS Active Travel England - the story so far



All planning applications exceeding 150 residential units, 7,500 square metres of floorspace or five hectares of site land now need to comply with guidance issued by the new statutory consultee, Active Travel England (ATE). Director Andrew Whittingham takes stock and reflects on the impact.

ATE's objective is for more than half of all trips in England's towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030. New guidance requires that all routes to local facilities are fully assessed and that new infrastructure is compliant with Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20. Applications which are considered significant in size, location or impact on infrastructure delivery plans, will be assessed by ATE using a toolkit of 31 qualitative and quantitative criteria.

Policy compliance

Transport assessments will need to demonstrate rigorous analysis of policy compliance. Speed and flow surveys are now required, in theory, on all links to local amenities. Details such as the distance or quality of access to a bus route could result in a fail. Travel plans must include multimodal targets and demonstrate infrastructure use assessment against LTN 1/20, with clear remedial measures as necessary.



LTN 1/20 will need to be reviewed and applied at all stages of the advice and appraisal process. Masterplans and reserve matters applications should follow LTN 1/20 and existing applications should also demonstrate adoption of the principles.

We recommend that all applications currently under preparation are reviewed to determine the level of new information which may be required to ensure a positive response from ATE.



Phil was trying hard to remain positive about the latest idea to reduce the company's carbon emissions

motion

Ask Motion – If you would value a preliminary discussion about the traffic, travel, infrastructure, drainage or flood-risk issues associated with your development project, why not give us a call on 01483 531300?

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