



**CITY OF DURHAM  
PARISH COUNCIL**

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Room 4/86-102  
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13 February 2021

Dear Mr Jones

**DM/21/00154/VOC: Variation of conditions 22 (Framwellgate Peth access strategy) and 24 (Framwellgate Peth junction design) of DM/18/00896/VOC to remove requirement for signalisation and agree junction design, Milburngate House, Milburngate, Durham DH1 5TL**

**DM/21/00155/VOC: Variation of conditions 19 (Framwelgate Peth access strategy) and 18 (Framwellgate Peth junction design) of DM/18/02924/FPA to remove requirement for signalisation and agree junction design, Milburngate House, Milburngate, Durham DH1 5TL**

The City of Durham Parish Council Planning Committee considered the above applications at its Zoom meeting held on 5 February 2021 and resolved to make the following comments and objection.

Both applications involve lifting the requirement for traffic signalisation of the junction providing access into and out of the site with the A690 Framwelgate Peth and for a modified design for the junction.

We have the gravest concerns about the temporary closure of the footpath to enable the junction works to proceed, the removal of the pedestrian refuge, and the inadequate signage for safe alternatives for pedestrians and cyclist encountering the closure. We are grateful that the applicant discussed these concerns with us and has undertaken to consider what improvements may be made in regard to signage.

The Variation applications for lifting the traffic signals are acceptable to the Parish Council; interrupting the flow of vehicular traffic on the A690 at this point for any length of time would have added to the delays that have to be required at the St Leonard's School and Milburngate roundabout traffic lights.

The applications are accompanied by a letter which asserts that a previous Variation seeking the use of the Framwellgate Peth access into the site for non-residential trips was approved. It was not; that part of the application was withdrawn at the Committee meeting. We have received verbal and written assurances that only residents and emergency evacuations will be allowed to use the access, but the set of formally submitted application documents needs to be corrected in order for there to be no misunderstanding in future.

The junction design is more problematic. It recognises that right hand turns into or out of the site would be extremely hazardous and likely to cause collisions with traffic on Framwellgate Peth. Accordingly it seeks to make such turns difficult by shaping inwards traffic to enter only from the north and turning left into the site, and outwards traffic to exit only southwards by turning left. Any driver travelling northwards on Framwellgate Peth would be told by a notice to not attempt to turn right and would be expected to drive up to the County Hall roundabout and proceed southwards to approach the entrance to the site and turn in leftwards. Similarly, a driver exiting the site would be told by a notice to not attempt to turn right to travel northwards and instead to turn left down to the Milburngate roundabout and thence to proceed northwards up Framwellgate Peth.

However, there is nothing in practice to prevent drivers from ignoring the notices. Indeed, there is just such a notice telling drivers travelling southwards on Framwellgate Peth not to turn right into Highgate but this notice is ignored often enough to cause a real hazard for motorists travelling northwards up Framwellgate Peth and finding a vehicle crossing their path. Furthermore, this is already a stretch of road that poses hazards as traffic in two lanes round the roundabout find themselves having to merge into a single lane or collide with the pedestrian refuge (now removed) near Highgate. Traffic statistics do not capture the near misses nor the side collisions between vehicles that local residents witness.

In order to prevent such dangerous manoeuvres, something more effective than a notice is necessary - a physical barrier of some kind, whether this be a narrow pedestrian refuge (with railings) across the mouth of the junction or perhaps bollards as exist elsewhere in the city, for example outside County Hall.

Provision for pedestrians and cyclists to safely pass across the junction is needed; this would include dropped kerbs or better still a raised roadway so as to be at level with the footpath. This latter would have the additional benefit of acting as a traffic-calming speed hump to slow cars that are exiting up the steeply-sloping access road and may be rushing to enter into a gap in traffic on Framwellgate Peth. Road markings to remind motorists of potential pedestrians or cyclists crossing their path should also be required.

The necessary safety features set out above are not included in the current applications and therefore the Parish Council must object and urge the applicant to come forward with a revised scheme and for the County Highway Authority to cooperate fully to install a physical barrier on Framwellgate Peth to prevent right turns at this junction.

We trust that you will agree with our objection but if you conclude that you are minded to approve then the Parish Council wishes that the applications be referred to the County Council's Planning Committee so that we may put our case to Members.

Yours sincerely,

**Adam Shanley**  
**Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council**