

EVIDENCE SUPPLIED BY 13.5.21

POLICE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

I have been a Police Traffic Management Officer since 1998. Part of my role includes the consideration of, and comment upon, event traffic management plans (TMP's) and liaison with the highway authority (HCC) who have ultimate responsibility for the approval or rejection of event TMP's associated with events.

Including the installation and operation of temporary traffic management measures (TM) on their highway, sufficient to facilitate the safe and effective movement of event traffic, and pedestrians, to and from a venue, whilst minimising disruption to the wider highway network (normal traffic).

I acknowledge and endorse the points raised by HCC and have the following additional observations: - (Points in italics are taken from TMP V.0a submitted by

1. Overview

The festival car park, including overflow, can hold a maximum of 2,000 cars, for BlueLight the car parking will be ticketed and capped at a maximum of 1,700 cars to allow for extra spacing in the car park and to spread the vehicles over two days, Thursday (500 cars) and Friday 1,200 cars. I understand the intension is for the event to have a capacity of 4999 people.

DFT guidance suggests a vehicle occupancy rate of 1.7 people per vehicle which equates to 2,941 vehicles, 941 in excess of the stated car park capacity of 2000.

2. Site Constraints & Impact on Local Area

BlueLight Festival will take place entirely on private land, namely Woodhall Park, Watton at Stone. The entrance to the car park is situated on a main road, the A119, based on a 3rd party consultation, the venue has improved the entrance and exit to widen the gates, gravel the ground running up to and including the gateway and finally the cutting back of the hedges to improve visibility. There are two gates, 100m apart, one will be used for entrance (Gate 2) and one will be used as the exit (Gate 3) - this allows us to create a one way system within the carpark. The main impact on the local area is increased traffic on the A119 affecting the road into Stapleford and Watton at Stone.

I note the vehicular access points (Gates 2 & 3) have been improved. I've not recently been to site but am interested to know if the organiser can confirm the site now provides not less than the minimum visibility splays in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges?

The plan includes a map which shows Gates 1-5, plus seven additional gates identified by a colour (see below).

Site Map



I note Gate 2 will be used for entry and Gate 3 will be used for exit. The TMP provides insufficient information to understand how the additional ten gates will be used.

Photographs of Gate 2 and Gate 3 on pages 5 and 6 of the TMP appear to be the same location rather than two different locations?

Claims of Traffic Management Plan & Organiser Responsibilities

3. *The objectives of this Traffic Management Plan are outlined below:*

- *Provide a safe environment for all road users, including attendees, the general public, cyclists, motorists etc.*
- *Prevent any traffic hazards that may arise as a result of BlueLight Festival taking place.*
- *Minimize disruption, delays and/or congestion for road users.*
- *Ensure access to surrounding residential and commercial properties is maintained at all times.*

To achieve these objectives, we, The Event Organiser will:

- *Ensure that only roads suitable for event traffic are used by attendees.*
- *Ensure that delays and congestion within and on the road immediately next to the site are dealt with immediately through the use of stewards/marshalls.*
- *Use appropriate and sufficient road signage and digital communications, and also make sure adequate guidance is provided so that attendees/staff use only the prescribed travel routes.*

- *Ensure that the needs of all attendees are accommodated at and within the event site, including motorists/motorcyclists, taxi arrivals, people with disabilities.*
- *Stagger coach arrival times to the site to avoid unnecessary congestion in/around the site.*
- *Have an adequate number of stewards/car park attendants to ensure vehicles are parked as quickly and safely as possible, keeping the road clear at all times.*

The Event Organisers will take the greatest care to prevent any risk of injury to attendees, road users or members of the public, and also any damage to property. Any event activity will not go ahead until all appropriate measures are in place, including all relevant stewards & car park attendants on site etc. All necessary measures will be taken to regulate traffic movements and ensure any adverse effects associated with the event are kept to a minimum.

The venue is served by the A119 that lies on the west side of the venue and the A602 that lies on the north side of the venue. Both are unlit, single carriageway roads subject to the national speed restriction (60 mph).

A footway on the east side of the A119 provides a pedestrian link between Stapleford to the south and the junction with the A602 and Ware Road, Watton at Stone to the north. A route that some attendees may seek to use.

The TMP includes no information to demonstrate how pedestrians will be managed, which routes will be available to accommodate them and what measures will be in place to segregate pedestrians from moving traffic, particularly at vehicular access points which raises the potential for conflict.

It also contains no information in relation to arrangements for the mobility impaired.

Planning

Measures Taken

The creation of a one way system within the site car park & drop off point, and also dedicated taxi & coach drop off points. Steward/marshalling of the site road and car park. Stewards on the entry & exit points. Prior communications will be sent out with all visitor information to warn vehicles from stopping/attempting to drop pedestrians off on the highway and clearly direct them onto the festival site to the designated drop off & pick up points.

The TMP includes no information to detail how the above will be achieved.

Traffic Predictions, Including Volumes & Methods

The proposed primary method of transport to the event site will be via passenger vehicles, our guide ratio based on our current waiting list is 3.9.

This conflicts with the DfT 1.7 “standard” vehicle occupancy rate.

We will also be arranging coaches from surrounding towns (these are to be confirmed). Attendees will be encouraged to travel via coach, and coach tickets will be available for purchase.

No details have been provided in relation to this element of the TMP.

For the volume of cars we expect there is ample car parking space on site.

Using the DfT vehicle occupancy rate of 1.7 rather than 3.9 suggests the venue has insufficient car park capacity for the expected number of attendees.

No need for anyone to park on the public road, and also a dedicated taxi drop off point for taxis attending the site will be put in place.

No details have been provided in relation to the pick up and drop off (PUDO) / taxi element of the TMP.

We will know the number of expected cars closer to the event date through the number of tickets sold for car parking, coach travel and if we can put in place a deal with a local taxi company that pre-booking can be arranged from train stations/bus stations.

Peak travel times are expected to be between the hours of 14:00:17:00 on Thursday 07:00:10:00 on Friday.

No details have been provided in relation to the coach element of the TMP, which dependant on various factors may require separate discussion / agreement with HCC passenger transport unit.

Route Planning & Control

A local map directing visitors via the A119 will be sent prior to the event via email. This will be made clear to enter the site to turn into the carpark from the left to reduce any congestion traffic from right turning into the site.

In the absence of a Temporary Traffic Regulation order supported by appropriate signing and if necessary additional traffic management measures to prohibit and prevent right turning vehicles, the organiser has no power to stop people turning right into (or from) the venue.

The presence of a stationary vehicle(s) on the A119 at a location where such traffic would not reasonably be anticipated creates the potential for conflict.

Any signs will be placed where easily visible, and also where they will not present any obstruction to footpaths or vehicles in the road or navigating through the site, sight lines for traffic or pedestrians, with due consideration to all road users including disabled persons or those with wheelchairs. Signs will be sandbagged if required.

Temporary Traffic Management measures should be installed in line with “Chapter 8” that provides guidance in relation to the design and implementation of TM arrangements for temporary situations.

No details have been provided in relation to the signing element of the TMP.

Emergency Procedures - Our medical contractor will be on site for the duration of the event. In the unfortunate event of further emergency services being required, a blue route leading directly onto the event site has been mapped out and stewards will be briefed on managing traffic/pedestrians in this situation.

I presume the intended “Blue Route” for use by emergency service vehicles in the event of an incident will be via Gate 5 off the A602?

No details have been provided within the TMP to enable me to understand what’s planned and if it is necessary, how the blue route will be managed.

HGV's & Vehicles over 13 Tonne

Due to the weight limit on the bridge within Woodhall Estate, vehicles over 13 tonne will be required to use the entrance via the A602, the A602 road will be going through roadworks

during the event but it has been agreed that access will be available throughout the roadworks to the estate by the local council. This entrance will only be used during setup/breakdown and will be an emergency service route into the main arena.

No details have been provided within the TMP to enable me to understand what's planned and if it is necessary, how the blue route will be managed.

Vehicle Movements on site

All traffic within the event site during setup, breakdown and out of ours will be required to adhere to a strict 10mph speed limit. This will be part of trader, contractor and staff contracts.

No comment

Site Map & Car Parking Images

Site Map (see copy above)

The TMP includes insufficient information to understand how and for what purpose gates other than 2 and 3 will be used.

The primary access serving this venue is the A119.

Slow moving, stationary (queuing) or right turning traffic would not usually be expected at this location.

The TMP should demonstrate how the potential risk of conflict can be mitigated through the use of adequate signing and if / where necessary include restrictions (Temporary traffic regulation orders) to control for example right turning movements and or consider the use of positive traffic control through for example the use of temporary traffic signals and or CSAS qualified TM operatives who has a delegated power to stop and control (direct) traffic to help minimise the risk of conflict and disruption to the wider highway network.

The safe and effective use of taxi / PUDO locations is heavily reliant on the ease of access and egress. Where congestion and or time delays occur, experience suggests attendees may be dropped off / collected at inappropriate locations which may then create the potential risk of conflict and failure to use the provided facility.

It's reasonable to presume attendees seeking to gain access via the main entrance will arrive from the north and south on the A119.

During the arrival phase, southbound traffic could be guided by turning left into the venue, but northbound traffic wishing to turn right across the path of southbound traffic risks the creation of short term delays on both carriageways, that may present an avoidable risk of conflict.

If alternative access points are available that would provide a means of all traffic turning left into the venue on arrival it should reduce the need to stop and actively control traffic and thereby reduce the risk of conflict.

During the exit phase, vehicles wishing to turn right out of the venue risk the creation of similar concerns, therefore the use of alternative access points that facilitate left turn exists should help mitigate risk.

An option may be to explore the use of a left turn entry for westbound traffic via the A602 and southbound traffic on the A119.

Then a left turn exit onto the A119 and onto the A602.

This would allow traffic from the south and north to enter and exit without executing a right turn.

This would compromise the “Blue route” so consideration to what alternative may be available or how the “Blue route can be managed would need to be considered.

Coaches

Coaches arriving and departing the venue may not have the physical space available that’s required to enable them to enter and exit the venue without crossing the centre line and effectively occupying the full road width. If through swept path analysis its clear coaches can’t remain on “their” side of the road, I suggest consideration of positive traffic control to facilitate the safe turning movements.

Mud on the road

Section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 makes it an offence to deposit anything on the highway that would interrupt other users of the highway, i.e. the transfer of mud via wheels from the venue onto the road.

Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980 gives the highway authority the power to clean the road and recover its expenses from the person causing the obstruction (mud).

Section 161 of the Highways Act 1980 “If a person, without lawful authority or excuse, deposits anything whatsoever on a highway in consequence of which a user of the highway is injured or endangered, that person is guilty of an offence”.

The TMP includes no information in relation to how they will prevent mud being transferred onto the highway or what mitigation will be in place if it does.

In summary, the information provided lacks sufficient detail to enable a full and comprehensive understanding of what is planned.

Until such information is forth coming and demonstrates potential issues have been identified and arrangements put in place to adequately mitigate potential risk I am unable to support the proposal.