

Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk,
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 2RA

Phone: 0300 123 6780
Email: Kathryn.Walsh@lancashire.gov.uk
Your ref: 3/2024/0802
Our ref: 3/2024/0802/HDC/KW
Date: 19 November 2024

Location: Central Garage Warwick Street Longridge PR3 3EB
Proposal: Proposed industrial unit 59.5m sq behind existing industrial unit of 169m sq.
Grid Ref: 360216 437487

Dear Maya Cullen

With regard to your consultation letter dated 13 November 2024, I have the following comments to make based on all the information provided by the applicant to date.

Summary

The Local Highway Authority advice is that the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the Local Planning Authority is advised to consider refusal on transport/highway grounds for the reasons outlined in this report.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Introduction

The Local Highway Authority advises the following reason for refusal:

1. The proposal, if permitted, would likely lead to inappropriate servicing for two commercial units. This would be to the detriment of highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This is contrary to Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) are in receipt of an application for the proposed industrial unit 59.5msq behind the existing industrial unit of 169msq at Central Garage, Warwick Street, Longridge.

Currently, an existing industrial unit is used by APS Signs and Print operates within the site. The application is for an additional commercial unit behind the existing unit. The LHA are aware of a similar planning application for the site application reference 3/2023/0573, which was withdrawn.

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Site Access

The LHA are aware that the site is located off Warwick Street, an unclassified road subject to a 20mph speed limit.

The LHA has reviewed the proposed site plan drawing number 1538/02 Revision A, and is aware that the site will utilise an amended access which also serves the existing commercial unit. The removal of the gates and a section of wall will increase the width of the access to 6.7m wide. Whilst the plans do not show a second access the applicant has advised they also make use of a vehicular access shutter door which is situated on Warwick Street.

The evidence presented to the LHA, in the form of swept path analysis and video footage, indicates that a medium-sized vehicle cannot turn within the site and instead must reverse into the accesses. While the business has been operating this way for a considerable time, the LHA's view is that any development creating new floor space should include appropriate servicing areas. This requirement aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework 2023, which emphasises that developments should provide safe and suitable access for all users and minimise conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

The LHA acknowledges that Warwick Street has a diverse mix of long-standing residential and commercial properties and that the existing traffic and parking demands along Warwick Street are less than satisfactory and are causing obstruction and highway safety concerns.

Planning and highway legislation is constantly evolving to address new challenges and priorities. Last year's significant revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) addressed housing targets and environmental considerations, reflecting ongoing efforts to balance development needs with environmental sustainability and community well-being. With this in mind, while the LHA acknowledges the applicant's comments concerning previous applications in the area, each application must be considered on its own merits. This involves taking into account current legislation and guidance, as well as the existing conditions on our network.

Whilst existing businesses have been serviced from Warwick Street for many years, it would be remiss of the Local Highway Authority to further exacerbate those conditions by supporting the development of a new commercial unit that would be contrary to paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2023)

Highway safety

As has been previously mentioned, there is a longstanding parking problem on Warwick Street. The Local Highway Authority acknowledges that inconsiderate and obstructive parking is a common occurrence and recognises the challenges faced by residents and businesses. Understanding the importance of ensuring safe and unobstructed roads and junctions, it would be remiss of the LHA to support a new commercial unit with no appropriate internal servicing, as this would not benefit the wider community or improve highway safety concerns.



This stance aligns with Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), which highlights the need for developments to provide safe and suitable access for all users and minimise conflict.

There are some junction protections on Warwick Street which are monitored by traffic enforcement officers. However, the advisory markings are not enforceable. While the applicant suggests that more enforcement action is required by Lancashire County Council, this would not address the majority of the obstructive and inconsiderate parking, as there are no traffic regulation orders in place at these locations.

Should problems continue to persist we encourage highway users to share their observations and suggestions with our customer service team so they can be directed to the most appropriate officer. This can be done by the Love Clean Streets app or by calling 0300 123 6780.

Parking

As has previously been addressed the LHA has reviewed the amended drawing number 240901/01 and noted the site has a total of 5 off-street parking spaces, which is acceptable for the size and use class of both the existing unit and proposed unit.

Servicing and Deliveries

As previously detailed in our response of 7 November 2024, the applicant has stated that deliveries take place in large vans, as represented in the Swept Path Analysis drawing 240901/01. The evidence within the drawings and further details provided by the applicant to date show that turning within the site is not possible for large vans and does not occur.

The LHA are of the opinion that reversing a medium goods vehicle from the live carriageway is not a manoeuvre we would deem safe, particularly in a town centre location with significant on-street parking. This would be to the detriment of highway safety, with vehicles parking on-street not only providing an obstruction to the reversing movement and potentially creating conflict points, but also parked vehicles obstructing the access's visibility splays. This obstruction means that conflicts could occur should other vehicles be using Warwick Street at the same time as the movement. As a result of these potential conflicts, allowing new commercial development to take place within an area that already has known highway safety concerns would be detrimental to highway safety and contrary to Paragraph 114 and Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), which emphasise the need for developments to provide safe and suitable access for all users and to ensure that new development does not harm the safety of the existing road network.

The LHA notes that the applicant disagrees with the assertion that the proposed unit will be used as an extension of their existing business. However, the LHA is of the opinion that this was communicated by the applicant during a phone call on 25 October 2024 at 12:42 pm. Regardless, this does not alter the fact that the LHA would be unable to support any new commercial floor space operating from the site. Given the current commercial activities already causing highway safety concerns on Warwick Street, it would be remiss of the Local Highway Authority to exacerbate these issues, in line with the principles outlined in Paragraphs 114 and 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023)



Whilst the applicant has stated that no servicing occurs in the area where the proposed development would take place, the LHA believes that this space could provide adequate servicing for the existing site. Given the safety concerns associated with servicing from the carriageway, the LHA is of the opinion that this area should be kept clear to allow for safe servicing operations.

The LHA again advise that they are unable to support the development as this would likely result in additional servicing from Warwick Street to serve the site. This not only conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework which requires new development to provide access for servicing vehicles but there is limited space for this to occur on Warwick Street. Any creation of new commercial floor space is likely to add to the already challenging conditions that are present on Warwick Street as a result of on street parking and servicing for existing businesses.

Conclusion

Therefore the LHA objects to the application due to there being no practical servicing facilities provided for the two units internally at the site. The LHA are concerned that should the application be permitted, it would be to the detriment of highway safety and in turn contrary to paragraphs 114 and 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Informative

This report sets out why the Highway Authority advises the Local Planning Authority should be refused planning permission. However, should the Local Planning Authority be minded to grant planning permission, please notify the Highway Authority so that advice can be provided on appropriate conditions and contributions to minimise the impact of the development.

Yours sincerely

Kate Walsh

Assistant Engineer
Highway Development Control
Highways and Transport
Lancashire County Council
T: 01772 533235
W: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk>

