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Your ref: 3/2025/0346
Our ref: 3/2025/0346/HDC/KW
Date: 17 June 2025

Location: Dowsons Dairies Ltd Hawkshaw Farm Longsight Road Clayton le Dale
BB2 7JA
Proposal: Change of use of agricultural land to create an additional 95 car parking
spaces.
Grid Ref: 365633 432313

Dear Kathryn Hughes

With regard to your consultation letter dated 28 May 2025, I have the following comments to make based on all the information provided by the applicant to date.

Summary

Lancashire County Council acting as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) does not consider that the application as submitted fully assesses the highway impact of the proposed development and further information is required as set out in this response.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Introduction

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) are in receipt of an application for the proposed change of use of agricultural land to create an additional 95 car parking spaces at Dowsons Dairies Ltd Hawkshaw Farm Longsight Road Clayton le Dale.

Site Access

The LHA are aware that the proposal will be accessed via an existing access off Longsight Road. The LHA are aware that the existing access serves the farm, a range of agricultural buildings, Mrs Dawsons ice cream parlour, several business units operating from Hawkshaw Business Park, a farm visitor centre, Scare Kingdom and other seasonal events held within the site.

The internal access to the proposed car park is approximately 8m wide and as such can provide two way movement into and from the proposed parking area reduce congestion within the car park and the internal access road.

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Internal Layout

The proposal is aiming to improve the parking facilities by creating 95 additional spaces on agricultural land adjacent to the existing car parking facilities. The proposed area has been used previously to provide overflow parking during events at the park, however this is only an option during dry weather because of the nature of the ground conditions.

Whilst the existing car park can cater for 229 parking spaces as approved under planning application 3/2018/0575 these spaces have been found to be too small for their intended use due to the customer base who visit the park.

The majority of themed events at the park are targeted at families with young children, with many visitors using pushchairs. As such, there is a need for wider parking spaces within the site, which can provide better access for vehicle doors to open wider and for parents using push chairs. The site has found that customers are choosing to provide a wider space between vehicles, which in turn is reducing parking provisions within the site. The existing car park does not have formalised parking bays and as such there is no clear direction for drivers to park within a standard bay. As stated within the design and access statement the existing car park is only providing parking for around 135 cars when parked in such a way as to allow parents to get children in and out of vehicles.

The aim of the proposal is to enhance the parking provisions, creating spaces which match the customer base and the needs of families, especially those with prams and young children. As such the proposal suggests expanding the parking area with wider spaces which have dedicated 1.2m gaps between vehicles.

The LHA therefore see there is a need for parent and children bays or standard parking bays that have additional spacing which is suggested as part of the proposal. The LHA would recommend that the parent and child parking spaces provide a width of 3.2 metres for added convenience, or as suggested within the plans, a minimum zone of 1.2 metres adjacent to the bays will provide additional door opening space.

Given the concerns regarding inconsistent parking gaps from visitors at the site to cater for a larger door opening space, the proposed parking facilities would benefit from formalised marked bays in order to achieve the maximum possible parking provisions for the site and reduce the risk of vehicles parking in an uncoordinated manner as previously seen. Whilst the surfacing is unlikely to support the use of long term road markings, other measures such as block edging on the corners of each space can be used to mark out the spaces. Upgrading the existing parking area with such edging would also help provide more efficient provisions.

However the LHA would like to highlight that the parking provisions which are adjacent to the existing car park are unlikely to be usable due to the width of carriageway fronting the spaces, it is not clear from the plan if the existing parking area is to be joined into the proposed car park or if the two will remain separate with fencing as such currently it would appear that there is a 2m gap between the far north east parking space and what appears to be a fence on drawing number A3876-PL25. The LHA would expect at least a 6m space adjacent to the parking areas to ensure vehicles have enough room to manoeuvre into and out of the spaces freely which would make the spaces practical. Clarification should be provided on if this can be achieved.

The design and access statement mentions that the applicant also wishes to improve traffic flow within the car park and is proposing to have a one way system in place, in order to ensure this is the most appropriate way to address congestion within the site, an amended plan should be provided showing the one way system route as well as signage which should be placed around the car park to ensure compliance.

The LHA note that two of the rows of parking spaces has a 1m gap running horizontally through the rows of parking spaces, as well as vertical rows which are a minimum of 2m in width, these gaps run through the proposed car park and through the existing car park leading to the site entrance. This provides direct pedestrian passage through the site, and would benefit from being a formalised pedestrian route to ensure it remains clear. Pedestrian facilities should be 2m wide in line with inclusive mobility guidance. A safe pedestrian route should be provided along the most direct route from the car park to the main entrance, which will improve pedestrian safety.

Public Right of Way

The application has also included their plans to divert a number of Public Rights of Way. The inclusion of a diversion A-X has raised concerns due to the proposal for the extension of the car park. The proposal to divert the Public Right of Way appears to conflict with proposed parking areas and as such the direct route is likely to be obstructed by parked vehicles.

The grant of planning permission does not entitle a developer to obstruct a right of way and any proposed stopping-up or diversion of a right of way should be the subject of an Order under the appropriate Act. The applicant should be advised to contact Lancashire County Council's Public Rights of Way section by email on PROW@lancashire.gov.uk, quoting the location, district and planning application number, to discuss their proposal before any development works begin.

It is the responsibility of the landowner to ensure that the necessary procedures are followed for the legal diversion of the Public Right of Way if this should be necessary. The granting of planning permission does not constitute the diversion of a Definitive Right of Way.

The development must not commence until the necessary procedures are in place, either allowing the development to take place without affecting the right of way as recorded on the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way and subsequent diversion orders and side roads orders, or if it is necessary to divert the above listed Public Rights of Way, then the necessary Orders must be confirmed prior to construction to avoid enforcement action should the above Public Footpath become affected.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Lancashire County Council, acting as the Local Highway Authority, requires further assessment of the highway impact associated with the proposed development. While the plan seeks to enhance parking provisions and improve traffic flow, further clarification is required regarding the parking layout and pedestrian routes.

To ensure the development aligns with best practices and planning requirements, the applicant should provide additional clarification and revised proposals addressing these issues. Specifically, details on how the first line of parking spaces adjacent to the existing car park will be accessed, the suitability of a one-way system, formalised pedestrian routes, and clarity on how the car parking provisions will be formalised to ensure parking compliance.

Yours sincerely

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