

Mr Tristan de Meester
Hazelmere,
Pimlico Road,
Clitheroe
BB7 2AG

Phone: 01772 533235
Email: kathryn.walsh@lancashire.gov.uk
Ref No: Pre-app Land Adjacent to Old
Vicarage Farm
Officer: Kate Walsh
Date: 15 January 2026

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

Location

Land Adjacent to Old Vicarage Farm

Grid Ref: Easting: 369812 Northing: 443534

Description of proposals

Pre-application for the creation of a new field gate access onto Old Vicarage Lane, Bashall Eaves.

Highway Advice

Introduction

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) acknowledges receipt of the pre-application submission seeking advice on the creation of a new field access onto Old Vicarage Lane, Bashall Eaves. The proposal has been reviewed with regard to highway safety, operational suitability, and compliance with current design standards.

Site Access

The LHA understands that the existing access serving the land is to be retained solely for residential use as part of a barn conversion and wider redevelopment of the Old Vicarage Farm site. Consequently, a new dedicated agricultural access is required to serve the parcel of land located between Coulthurst Farm and Old Vicarage Farm.

Old Vicarage Lane is an unclassified rural road subject to the national speed limit at the point of the proposed access. The carriageway is predominantly single-track in width. Two options for the access arrangements have been put forward, which are shown on drawing number 6880-P02.

Option 1 proposes a gate positioned immediately adjacent to the carriageway edge. This arrangement does not comply with current LHA standards, as it fails to provide sufficient space for a vehicle to pull clear of the highway before operating the gate. This presents an unacceptable risk of obstruction and conflict with other road users. Additionally, no hardstanding is proposed, which increases the likelihood of debris being deposited on the carriageway, creating a potential skidding hazard. For these reasons, Option 1 is not acceptable to the LHA.

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Option 2 proposes the gate setback 7 metres from the carriageway edge, with the first 7 metres surfaced in a hardstanding material to minimise the transfer of mud onto the highway. While this represents an improvement, LHA standards for agricultural accesses require a minimum gate setback of 10 metres, with a corresponding 10 metre hardstanding. The LHA would therefore expect the formal planning submission to reflect the full 10 metre requirement.

The proposed access width of 4.8 metres has been reviewed alongside the swept path analysis provided on drawing 6880-P04. The analysis demonstrates that the access can accommodate the largest agricultural vehicle anticipated to use it. The LHA is satisfied that the proposed width is appropriate.

A visibility splay assessment has been submitted (drawing 6880-P03). For a national speed limit road, the LHA requires minimum visibility splays of 2.4m x 214m, in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). It is noted, however, that a 30mph speed limit commences approximately 50 metres to the south of the proposed access.

When reviewing the visibility splays provided, drawing 6880 P03, it is noted that visibility to the right of the access is shown to be achieved to approximately 69 meters due to the natural curvature in the road. Visibility to the left is shown to be 215m, however, the visibility splay does appear to cross into third-party land at approximately 62m, through a field situated on the opposite side of the road, which isn't included within the blue edge. As such the LHA is of the opinion that the drawing shows that visibility can be achieved at 62m to the left.

The LHA has visited the site as part of the review of the proposal and found that, although the road features a national speed limit at the access point, vehicle movements are significantly lower due to the limited width of the road and the presence of bends along its length, which serve as natural speed calming features. There is also a speed reduction from 60mph to 30mph in close proximity to the access. Vehicles travelling north, entering into the national speed limit section, have sight of an approaching bend, encouraging drivers to remain at a lower speed. The majority of the carriageway is also single track, so drivers will be anticipating possible conflict, further encouraging lower speeds along its length.

As such, the LHA is of the view that vehicle speeds along Old Vicarage Lane are lower than the posted speed limit, which is supported by on-site observations. The achievable visibility splays of approximately 62m to the left and 69 meters to the right are therefore acceptable in this case.

Alternatively, the applicant can provide an observed traffic speed study, which indicates the 85th percentile traffic speeds, which may allow for a reduced visibility splay. The traffic study would need to be carried out by an approved specialist showing the 85th percentile wet road traffic speeds in both directions, the numbers of vehicles and the types of vehicles passing the access.

The visibility splay should be wholly within the land which the applicant controls and/or the adopted highway and nothing shall be erected, retained, planted and / or allowed to grow

at or above a height of 0.9 metres above the nearside carriageway level which would obstruct the visibility splay of the proposed access.

Conclusion

Based on the information submitted and the LHA's on-site assessment, the principle of creating a new agricultural access at this location is considered acceptable, subject to amendments at the formal planning stage. Option 2 provides a broadly suitable foundation for an access design; however, the gate setback and hardstanding must be increased to the LHA's required 10 metres.

The visibility achievable on site, while below the standard for a national speed limit road, is considered appropriate given the constrained rural environment, observed vehicle speeds, and proximity of the 30mph limit. Should the applicant wish to justify a reduced visibility requirement, an 85th percentile speed survey would need to be undertaken to support this.

Overall, the LHA is satisfied that a safe and compliant access can be achieved at this location, subject to the incorporation of the design amendments outlined above and the provision of visibility splays detailed above being fully contained within land under the applicant's control or the adopted highway.

Informative

The Council's advice is current on the date it is given. Whilst every attempt will be made to identify reasonably foreseeable future influences the Council cannot guarantee that its advice will take these into account. This may extend to matters such as changes in planning policy or planning precedent. The advice in any event will expire 12 months after the date on which it is given.

Yours sincerely

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

