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Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

North Hertfordshire Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3JF

District ref: 25/01514/FP
HCC ref: NH/25598/2025
HCC received: 4 February 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

Whitehorse Service Station, Clothall Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6PD

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Full Planning Permission : Erection of shop, forecourt canopy, car and jet wash, car and cycle parking, EV vehicle charging points, hard and soft landscaping, and bin stores following demolition of existing buildings

Recommendation

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused for the following reasons:

Given that the key matters identified and mentioned above by the HA remain unresolved, the proposal, in its current form, does not provide safe and suitable access for all users nor demonstrate compliance with national policy or local design requirements. The objection will remain in place until satisfactory revised plans and supporting assessments are submitted that fully address the points outlined above.

Highways comments:

The Highway Authority (HA) has reviewed the submission of updated design information. While the amendments are noted, particularly the removal of Parking Bay 11, clarification of car wash exit markings, and proposed crossover upgrades, the HA considers that the revisions do not yet satisfactorily address the core safety and policy-based concerns previously raised.

Key matters remain unresolved, including:

- No revised swept path analysis has been provided to demonstrate safe and efficient circulation when all bays and pumps are occupied. In particular, if Bays 11 and 12 and the pump bays are in use, vehicles entering or already parked elsewhere will be unable to exit in a single movement. This creates a foreseeable risk of drivers attempting to reverse toward or onto the A507.
- Pedestrian safety concerns remain at the car wash exit and site accesses. Although the applicant proposes a left-turn arrow, there is nothing physically preventing drivers from travelling straight ahead close to the kerb and into the fuelling area. A curved kerbed build-out would ensure vehicles exiting the car wash must turn left and leave the site; those wishing to refuel can re-enter via the main access.
- Access geometry continues to require refinement to shorten pedestrian crossing distances at the accesses, safe turning paths, including for tankers. The applicant has not provided the necessary evidence or design revisions.
- A Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit covering the site accesses and forecourt interface remains outstanding.
- The HA acknowledges that the cycle parking has been relocated to the north-east corner of the site, where it is separated from the main vehicle circulation routes and forecourt activity and is covered, however the length of the cycle should be fully covered not partially as shown on the plan.
- The applicant proposes a clear east-west in-out circulation route to prevent vehicles exiting the car wash from re-entering the forecourt. The HA acknowledges this will reduce internal conflicts, remove driver ambiguity, and improve pedestrian safety through predictable vehicle movements.

In line with the NPPF (Dec 2024/2025) requirement to provide safe and suitable access for all users and Hertfordshire's Place & Movement design expectations, the current layout continues to present foreseeable road safety risks and does not yet meet the standard necessary to remove the HA's objection.

Recommendation:

Given that the key matters identified and mentioned above by the HA remain unresolved, the proposal, in its current form, does not provide safe and suitable access for all users nor demonstrate compliance with national policy or local design requirements. The objection will remain in place until satisfactory revised plans and supporting assessments are submitted that fully address the points outlined above.

Signed

Senober Khan

8 March 2026