



Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CHN115
Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage
SG1 2ST

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: 2 July 2025
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

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

Application type

Full Application

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:

There is insufficient information supplied with this application to enable the Highway Authority to reach a recommendation. In the absence of the necessary information, the Highway Authority recommends refusal due to doubt over possible implications for highway safety and convenience. Please see reasons for refusal below:

The Highway Authority has requested additional information regarding vehicle tracking in relation to the use of fuel pumps, parking spaces, and the car wash area.
For standard passenger vehicles, including SUVs, a typical length of 5.03 meters should be used for tracking purposes.

Additionally, tracking is required for a 7.5-ton Light Goods Vehicle (LGV) when exiting the pumps located on the southeast side of the site, particularly when the vehicle is facing parking bays 10 to 13. The assumed length for the LGV should be at least 7.9 meters.

The proposed development represents an intensification of use compared to the previous operation of the site. The former facility did not include a large retail unit or offer the range of services now being proposed.

Since the site ceased operating as a fuel station, both the nature and volume of traffic in the surrounding area have evolved. While the proposal seeks to retain the existing access points, these should be reassessed in light of current planning and highway policies.

Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Policy 4 highlights the importance of designing built environments that promote the safe and increased use of sustainable transport modes, particularly for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists.

Section 3.3 of the Transport Statement (TS) Access for Pedestrians it states:

As the site is a motorists' facility, no specific facilities are provided for pedestrians. As is standard design practice for service stations, pedestrian access for pedestrians is to be through the forecourt. Simply stating that "as is standard design practice for service stations, pedestrian access is to be through the forecourt" is insufficient. This approach must not imply that pedestrians are left to navigate the site without adequate safety measures. In line with current policy, careful consideration must be given to pedestrian safety. This may include a review of the existing access arrangements, with particular attention to the width and suitability of pedestrians crossing both accesses

Drawing Ref. (102) illustrates vehicle movements exiting the car wash. If a vehicle were to turn left upon exiting the site, it is unclear what level of visibility is available for pedestrians crossing at that location.

The drawing appears to show vegetation and pylon signage in close proximity to the exit, which may obstruct sight lines and compromise pedestrian safety. To properly assess this, a visibility splay should be provided, clearly demonstrating the available sight lines for both drivers and pedestrians at this potential point of conflict.

Finally, the applicant should provide visibility splays for both accesses and evidence which access is in or out. This would mitigate any vehicles turning into the access nearest the car wash. For the reasons stated above the Highway Authority are unable to extend the grant of planning permission at this time

Signed

Paul Marshall

16 July 2025