

Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CHO242
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8DE

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

Director of Planning
Welywn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwun Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL6 6AE

District ref.	6/2021/2857/MAJ
HCC ref.	WH/10075/2021
HCC received:	6 December 2021
Area manager:	James Dale
Case officer:	Sarah Hearn

Location
Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL71BD

Application Type
Full Application

Application Details

Change of use from former gasholder site and car dealership (Sui Generis) to industrial processes (E(g)(iii), general industrial (B2) and storage or distribution (B8) and erection of three new commercial units with associated access, servicing, landscaping and boundary treatments.

Decision

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions:

- 1) Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the vehicular accesses shall be completed and thereafter retained as shown on drawing numbers 003(1) B and 004(1) B in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority. Prior to use appropriate arrangements shall be made for surface water to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the

highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

2) Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the vehicular and pedestrian access to, and egress from, the adjoining public highway shall be limited to the two accesses shown on drawing number 1734-JSA-WY-XX-DR-A-01201 P9. Any other accesses or egresses shall be permanently closed, and the footway and kerb shall be reinstated in accordance with a detailed scheme to be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety and amenity in accordance with Policies 5 and 7 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

3) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, an updated scheme for (short and long stay) the parking of cycles including details of the design, level and siting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is first brought into use and thereafter retained for this purpose.

Reason: To ensure the provision of cycle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies 1, 5 and 8 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

Informatives:

1) Works within the highway (section 278): The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the

Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

3) Obstruction of highway: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

4) Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Comment

Site and Accessibility

The site is located off Tewin Road, an unclassified road which links to Bridge Road East to the south and Mundells (A1000) to the north. The vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the site are limited to 30pmh.

The site currently consists of a car servicing operator and was previously a gasworks site. The site is proposed to be redeveloped to provide three industrial units of flexible B2, B8 and E(g)(iii) uses, totalling 6,394sqm (Gross Internal Area).

The site is located c. 850m from Welwyn Garden City Train station and well serviced by numerous bus routes. The proposed site location is therefore deemed relatively accessible. The site benefits from pedestrian links to the town centre and other local facilities. Hertfordshire County Councils Local Transport Plan (LTP) 4 policy 5, is to 'ensure the location and design of proposals reflect the LTP Transport User Hierarchy and encourage movement by sustainable transport modes', and the proposals should reflect this within the site design.

Vehicular Access

The site currently benefits from three vehicular accesses from Tewin Road. The Transport Assessment (TA) advises that it is proposed to retain two of the three vehicular accesses (one to the north of the site to provide access to unit 1 and one to the south to provide access to units 2 and 3) and close the existing minor access at the northern edge of the existing car dealership and convert this access into a footway/verge.

The two proposed vehicular accesses are proposed to be upgraded and widened. The principle of retaining two vehicular accesses into the site is acceptable given the size and nature of the site. It is however noted that Drawing 1734-JSA-WY-XX-DR-A-01201 P9 shows that an existing street tree will be removed to enable the widening of the southern vehicular access. This tree is shown to be relocated further north along the site frontage. As the trees along the site frontage are highway trees, there are specific strategies which must be followed. The applicant is advised to make contact with the HCC Tree Officers regarding the removal and relocation of the street tree.

The submitted drawings show both vehicular accesses to measure c. 8.0m with an 8.0m kerb radii and c. 24.0 bellmouth. Swept path analysis drawings have been submitted illustrating that delivery and servicing vehicles can safely access the site. An assessment of how the widening the accesses will impact on the pedestrian environment has also been undertaken. Tactile pavings and dropped kerbs are proposed either side of each access and as previously highlighted in the pre-application advice, a c. 24.0m wide bellmouth is very wide. It is however noted that the pedestrian crossing points will be only c.10m in width. Whilst still relatively wide, the need for large vehicles to enter the site is accepted and a 10m crossing point for pedestrians is accepted.

Regarding visibility, it must be ensured that visibility of 2.4m x 43m is achievable in both directions from the proposed vehicular accesses. The two access plans include visibility splays and it is noted that there are existing street trees within the splays.

I have consulted Manual for Streets (paragraph 10.7.2) which advises that 'the impact of other obstacles, such as street trees and street lighting columns, should be assessed in terms of their impact on the overall envelope of visibility.' After assessing the street trees along the site frontage, I am satisfied that they will not fully obscure a whole vehicle or pedestrian and therefore the required visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m can be achieved from both accesses. These visibility splays must be retained at all times and this will be secured by way of condition should this application gain permission.

The applicant is advised that the closure of the existing access and the widening and upgrading of the proposed site accesses will be undertaken via S278 works and a separate agreement must be entered into.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Access

The closure of the third vehicular access is noted and the submitted plans show this access to be replaced with a pedestrian access and this is welcomed and will provide

safe pedestrian access into the centre of the site. Pedestrian access into the site is also shown on the southern sides of both of the vehicular accesses. After assessing these proposed footways, I am satisfied that these pedestrian accesses are appropriate and will provide safe and suitable pedestrian access into the site.

No reference to cycle access has been included in the TA. This is a notable omission and given that cycle parking is proposed in the site, it is anticipated that employees of the site would cycle. It is my understanding the cyclists would share the access with vehicular traffic given the size and nature of the site however this must be clarified and fully justified.

Trip Generation

To determine the trip generation associated with the site, TRICS assessment have been undertaken for both the existing site use (Car Show Room) and the proposed site uses (Industrial).

It is noted that the site was formally used as a gasholder site. However, this previous use has not been included into the trip generation assessment as advised by paragraph 5.3 which states that 'there may also have been a few vehicle trips associated with the gasholder site, for robustness, these have been ignored.' This approach is welcomed.

Therefore, with regards to the existing use of the site, only an assessment of the car dealership has been undertaken. The car showroom TRICS assessment included within the TA indicates that the site currently has relatively low traffic movements, with only eight two-way vehicle movements in the AM peak and two two-way vehicles in the PM peak. The total vehicle movements are shown to be c. 58 and these predicated vehicle movements are accepted considering the size of the site (152sqm).

With regards to the submitted TRICS assessment for the development proposals, I have assessed the site selection and associated parameters and I am satisfied with the assessment undertaken. The TRICS assessment anticipates that the proposed development will generate 54 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak hour and 49 two-way vehicle trips in the PM peak hour.

Table 1 below shows that the proposed new development will likely result in an additional 540 two-way daily vehicles (with 46 additional two-way movements in the AM peak and 47 additional two-way movements in the PM peak). It is noted that there is an error in the table regarding the PM peak.

Period	Net Trip Generation		
	In	Out	Total
08:00 – 09:00	+30	+16	+46
17:00 – 18:00	+16	+31	+48
07:00 – 19:00	+270	+269	+540

Table 1: Predicted increase in vehicle trips as a result of the proposed development

Given the anticipated increase in vehicle movements associated with the development, I have assessed the existing traffic flows along Tewin Road. The HCC 2018 data shows that the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flow along Tewin Road is c. 6,000 vehicles. Tewin Road is classified as a multi-function road on the HCC Place and Movement Strategy. This road therefore provides a link for those within Welwyn Garden City to travel throughout the town. Given the large amount of traffic currently travelling along Tewin Road and the fact that the proposed development will only result in an increase in only c. 46 two way trips in the AM peak, c.47 two way trips in the PM peak and c. 540 two way trips throughout the day, I am satisfied that the proposed development will not result in a material increase in trips on Tewin Road. The principle of the change in use of the site is therefore accepted.

Parking

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council are the Parking Authority for the borough and regulations must be followed when laying out the parking scheme. The guidance sets maximum car parking standards and requires B1(b)(c) developments to provide one space per 35m², B2 developments to provide one space per 50m² and B8 developments to provide one space per 75m². It is noted that the application is proposing flexible permission and a total of 71 car parking spaces, split between three parking areas, are proposed. I trust that Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council will assess this proposed quantum of car parking.

However, from a highways perspective, I note that Tewin Road benefits from double yellow lines in the vicinity of the site. There are therefore limited locations which could accommodate displaced on-street parking and the proposed car parking associated with the development is unlikely to materially impact the operation of the highway.

With regards to the proposed 71 car parking spaces, I have assessed the proposed dimensions and am satisfied that the parking spaces are shown to be c. 2.4m x 5.0 and will therefore safely accommodate vehicle parking. Furthermore, the seven disabled spaces are appropriately designed, with additional 1.2m hatching to ensure sufficient access for wheelchair users. The proposed layout is deemed acceptable and all the proposed spaces are independently accessible with at least 6.0m of manoeuvring space.

It is also noted that Drawing 1734-JSA-WY-XX-DR-A-01201 P10 shows the pedestrian paths within the site to vary in width, between c. 1.85m and c. 2.0m. This design is deemed in accordance with the standards set out in Manual for Streets and will ensure pedestrians can safely avoid manoeuvring vehicles.

Hertfordshire County Council issued a climate emergency in 2019 and the HCC Local Transport Plan Policy 5 requires all new developments to provide EV infrastructure. A total of 15 of the 71 car parking spaces are shown to benefit from active EV charging facilities. The applicant is advised that a proportion of the car parking spaces should also be designed with passive electric charging facilities to ensure the development is

future proofed.

Cycle Parking

Cycle parking provision is also proposed within the site. Similarly to the car parking, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council will assess the quantum of cycle parking provided and B1 and B2 developments are required to provide one short stay space per 500sqm and one long stay space per 10 full time staff, B8 developments are required to provide one long stay space per 10 full time staff. Paragraph 4.23 of the TA shows the estimation of the number of employees associated with the new development and whilst I trust in the LPA to assess these estimations, it is noted that these represent a range of estimations which differ to the employment figures included in the Application Form.

A total of 36 cycle parking spaces are proposed. These spaces are designed as 18 Sheffield stands and concern is raised that not all of the proposed stands provide sufficient space for safe cycle parking. It must be ensured that there is at least 1.0m between each Sheffield stand. Furthermore, only 24 of the 36 cycle parking spaces are located within shelter. All of the cycle parking should be covered and secure and all the proposed cycle parking facilities should therefore be accommodated within shelters.

I note that paragraph 4.24 of the TA states 'within this provision, 3 spaces for larger bikes are proposed, which equates to 8% of the total number of bike spaces.' Whilst this is welcomed and would ensure the development complies with LTN 1/20, these spaces cannot be identified on the plans. The plans must therefore be updated to clearly show this.

Servicing

Servicing for all three units is proposed within the site, with vehicles accessing the development site through the two accesses from Tewin Road.

Each unit is shown to benefit from its own servicing area in relatively close proximity to the building entrances and Unit 1 is shown to benefit from three loading bays and Units 2 and 3 are shown to have one loading bay each.

The applicant has undertaken a TRICS assessment to predict the amount of delivery and servicing trips associated with the new industrial site. This shows that the site would generate a total of 36 two-way vehicle trips, with the peak hour for deliveries being between 09:00 and 10:00 when five two-way delivery and servicing trips are anticipated. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed five loading bays would provide sufficient space for the anticipated vehicle movements.

Swept path analysis drawings have also been submitted with the TA showing that HGVs can safely enter the site and park within the dedicated loading/unloading servicing areas. The TA advises that each occupier will be expected to manage their own deliveries, and this will be essential for the success of the site.

Refuse and Recycling

Two refuse and recycling stores have been shown within the site (one for unit 1 and a shared store for units 2 and 3). Both of the proposed stores are shown to be located in relatively close proximity to the highway which is welcomed. It is noted that the TA advises that refuse collection will be undertaken within the site. Given the submitted swept path analysis drawings, I am satisfied that a refuse vehicle can safely manoeuvre within the site and on-street servicing is not required.

Travel Plan

A Draft Travel Plan has been submitted with this application. This Draft Travel Plan has been assessed by the Sustainable Transport Team and detailed comments have been forwarded onto the case officer separately. The applicant is advised that the Full Travel Plan will be required to be in place from first occupation until five years post full occupation. A £1,200 per annum index-linked RPI March 2014 Evaluation and Support Fee should be secured by section 106 agreement in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan Guidance.

S106 Contributions

With the exception of the aforementioned Travel Plan, the Highway Authority do not wish to seek any further mitigation under S106.

Signed

Sarah Hearn

February 2022