

Substantive response of the Local Highway Authority to a planning consultation received under The Development Management Order.



Response provided under the delegated authority of the Director of Environment & Transport.

APPLICATION DETAILS:

Planning Application Number: 23/00613/FUL

Highway Reference Number: 2023/0613/04/H

Application Address: Hydes Pastures Watling Street Hinckley Leicestershire LE10 3ED

Application Type: Full

Description of Application:

Proposed Bio-CNG vehicle fuelling station comprising fuel dispenser islands, plant compound, landscaping, access, associated highway works and associated development.

GENERAL DETAILS

Planning Case Officer: Satbir Jandu

Applicant: CNG Fuels Ltd

County Councillor: Cllr David Bill MBE

Road Classification: Class A

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

The Local Highway Authority 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. Without this information the Local Highway Authority is unable to provide final highway advice on this application.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Background

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been consulted on a full planning application for a proposed Bio-CNG vehicle fuelling station comprising fuel dispenser islands, plant compound, landscaping, access, associated highway works and associated development. The site is located at Hydes Pastures, Watling Street, Hinckley.

These highway observations are in response to the following documents which have been submitted via Hinckley & Bosworth's Borough Council's planning website.

- Site Location Plan, drawing no. 042-01-CNG-101;
- Existing Site Plan, drawing no. 041-01-CNG-102;
- Proposed Site Access and Right Turn Lane on Watling Street; drawing no. 22-240-001 Rev I; and
- Transport Statement prepared by Odyssey dated May 2023.

The LHA previously provided pre-application advice on 12th December 2022, in response to a Transport Scoping Note which was submitted to the LHA. To summarise the LHA's response, concerns were raised around the provision of a safe and suitable access at the proposed development in addition to the highway impact that could occur. From the details that were provided, the LHA stated that it may seek to resist the development proposal as presented should a formal application be made.

The proposed development is within Leicestershire, however the A5 which the site access would be taken from is part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) therefore managed by National Highways (NH). The development is also located close to the boundary of Warwickshire.

The LHA note that there is a nearby planning application ref 21/01191/HYB approximately 500m east of the site which proposes to lower the level of the A5 carriageway under the existing railway bridge to increase the available space between the carriageway surface and railway bridge in order to reduce the risk of HGV/Buses striking into the bridge.

Site Access

The proposed site would be accessed via a priority junction on the A5 (Watling Street) which is subject to a 50 mph speed limit at the point of the site access, which is shown on photo 4.1 which has been extracted from the TN.

Photograph 4.1: Location of Proposed Access onto the A5 (looking south)



The LHA also understand that there is an existing field access off the A5 which is shown in photo 4.2 which has been extracted from the TN.

Photograph 4.2: Location of Existing Field Access onto the A5



The proposals which are demonstrated on Drawing 22-240-001 include for a ghost island right-turn lane arrangements for eastbound vehicles and would allow through traffic on the A5 to be unimpeded by vehicles which would associated with the development.

Visibility splays of 4.5m by 160m are achievable from the proposed access in either direction. The LHA note that visibility splays have been based on the speed limit (50 mph) and not from recorded 85th percentile speeds obtained from a speed survey. The LHA also note that the proposed access impedes the visibility splay from the BP petrol station to the east which would be unacceptable from a highway safety perspective. This issue has also been highlighted in NH's most recent consultation response dated 19th July 2023.

Drawing 22-240-002 Rev F demonstrates Swept Path Analysis (SPA) which has been undertaken for the site access. The SPA highlights that vehicles travelling into and out of the site could leave to potential conflict with other vehicles.

The LHA note that there has been no Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) and Designer's Response submitted for the proposed access design and this should be submitted for any new access design in accordance with the Design Manual For Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

To summarise, as previously mentioned the LHA and NH have significant concerns that the proposed site access and egress arrangements are considered to be unsafe and unsuitable and would advise for an alternative access arrangement to be put forward for review.

Highway Safety

Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data has been obtained from Leicestershire Police for the most recent five year period (01/12/2017-30/11/2022).

A total of Ten PIC's (8 'slight' and 2 'serious' in severity) were recorded in close proximity of the site either on the A5 or at the Dodwells Roundabout. 2 PIC's (1 'serious' and 1 'slight' occurred due to colliding with the railway bridge over the A5.

The LHA as well as NH query whether the proposed development, should planning permission be granted, can operate prior to the mitigation works to the rail bridge/carriageway height over the A5 which are proposed as part planning application 21/0199/HYB. There is a concern if the development is operational prior to the works, this could cause further bridge strikes given the types of vehicles associated with the proposed development.

Operational Management and Parking

The LHA understand that the site will be operational over a 24 hour period, seven days a week. In its pre-application response, the LHA had concerns that the site would be used as a rest stop for HGV's. The Applicant has stated that the site will not permit HGV's to use the site as a rest stop and would monitor this via CCTV. Also to discourage this, no parking area is proposed and signage indicating this will be installed. Further, no driver facilities including toilets/cafe are proposed. Space is proposed on site to allow vehicles who have wrongly entered to turn around and egress the site.

Trip Generation

The Applicant has highlighted that due to type of proposed development trips have been estimated on a first principles assessment using existing data for an operational CNG fuelling site in Warrington and the methodology is similar to a TRICS assessment.

Arrival data from the CNG Warrington site for a typical week in March 2022 has been used as a baseline. CNG Warrington has similar characteristics to the proposed development including the location near existing logistics/distributions and industrial uses and being located close to the SRN.

In its pre application advice, the LHA commented that the Warrington site was not located on the SRN therefore not comparable. The Applicant's response is that the Warrington site is one of the largest operational CNG sites therefore experiences a high level of demand and therefore the data is considered to be robust. The LHA would disagree with the Applicant and would ask the Applicant to revise the trip generation assessment to reflect a comparable site with its access being located off the SRN.

Junction Capacity Assessments

A junction capacity assessment using PICADY has been undertaken for the proposed site access. The LHA have reviewed and can verify the model. Notwithstanding this, as mentioned earlier in this response the LHA would request for an alternative access design and trip generation which should be subject to a revised capacity assessment.

Traffic Impact

Given the proposed developments location and proximity to the Longshoot and Dodwells junctions, it is considered to be located within the area covered by the A5 modelling protocol agreed by LCC, WCC and National Highways. This protocol would require assessment initially through the strategic model and NH's Dodwells / Longshoot Microsimulation model.

Transport Sustainability

The LHA understand that due to the type of development (HGV refuelling station), the site will not be accessed via public transport therefore the LHA have no further comments in relation to transport sustainability.

Date Received
27 June 2023

Case Officer
Suraj Dave

Reviewer
RD

Date issued
02 August 2023