

MEMORANDUM

From:	Chief Officer, Environment & Technical	To:	Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory
		FAO:	Simon Greenland
Our Ref:	ET/DC/PP/P/2023/0547 Res(2)	Your Ref:	P/2023/0547
Date:	19/12/2023		

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

TRAWSNEID YSGUBOR I FREU SWYDDFEYDD / CONVERSION OF BARN TO CREATE OFFICES.

BARN AT BUCK ROAD COMMONWOOD HOLT WREXHAM Grid Ref: E 337820.97 N 353486.14

I refer to Blueprint's email dated 30/11/2023 in respect of the above.

Access

The proposed development site is located on Buck Road which is a rural, classified road subject to a 60mph speed limit. However, I would estimate typical vehicle speeds at being around 50mph given the geometry of the road along this section.

Assuming speeds of 50mph, any proposed / existing access would normally be required to provide visibility splays of 2.4 x 160m in both directions measured to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway in accordance with TAN 18.

Visibility from the existing shared access serving the development site is inadequate in both directions. Based on a site visit on 30/10/2023, visibility splays of approximately 2.4 x 70m to the north and 2.4 x 16m to the south measured to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway are currently provided from the access. Visibility is impeded in both directions by the existing hedgerows either side of the access (and potentially 3rd party land beyond).

The access is approximately 10m wide and surfaced with loose bound materials. The access is gated at approximately 3.4m behind the edge of carriageway but these do not appear to be in use.

I would normally recommend an access of this nature is surfaced with hard bound materials for a minimum distance of 10m behind the adjoining highway with no gates erected within a minimum distance of 10m behind the adjoining highway (greater if larger HGVs visit the site).

No private surface water shall be permitted to flow onto the adjoining highway. An Aco drain or similar will be required across the access to intercept any such run-off where the access slopes towards the highway.

Proposed Access Improvements

The previously submitted layout plan (Drg. No. B165/003 Rev C) indicated the re-location of the existing access to a more northerly position in order to maximize visibility from the proposed access. The proposed improved visibility splays indicated on the plan are 2.4 x 69m in the northerly direction and 2.4 x 72m in the southerly direction. However, this is still significantly lower than the required splays based on assumed speeds of 50mph.

The proposed access position would be directly opposite the access serving the Bowland Tractors Business which is far from ideal and would not be supported. **I would normally recommend that such an access is staggered by a minimum distance of 25m to avoid conflicting vehicle movements.** The two existing access points are currently around 25m apart.

The application references the proposed business use as "self storage / caravan store". However, I understand this refers to application ref: P/2023/0548 in respect of the adjoining site.

Traffic Generation

There would appear be to an existing dwelling plus existing business units served off this access.

The applicant / agent has provided further information on existing / proposed vehicle movements at the site as follows:-

FORMER USE OF THE SITE.

The larger building on site and wider site was used as a mechanical engineer who fixed large machinery such as farm implements etc, this use was in place for approximately 18 years.

Due to the nature this use at its height it is thought the movements to and from the site would equate to 40 + movements a day.

Vehicles such as tractors, HGV's and cars/vans with trailers use the access.

USE OF ACCESS.

Residential dwelling which will have used the access during the former use of the site is still using the access point, this usage is unaltered.

Following our clients acquisition of the site elements of the site have continued to be used as an engineering business B1 to the left of the brick barn and would amount to around 5 traffic movements per day.

MOVEMENTS TO AND FROM THE SITE.

There are approximately 35 movements to and from the site which are surplus to the former use of the existing access point.

The Vacant Barn which is proposed as being converted to small offices will generate around 16 movements a day (P/2023/0547) this proposal is not associated with application P/2023/0548.

Due to the nature of the proposal for a storage facility (P/2023/0547) this change of use application would create movements, id imagine this would amount to a maximum of 20 per day as the site Will be accessed on occasion to collect a caravan or items from one of the storage containers proposed at the site.

Vehicles accessing the site are likely to be similar to the former use of the site, with the exception of tractors.

IMPROVMENTS TO THE PROPOSED ACCEESS.

Based on the above information I trust the improvements proposed to the visibility splays by relocating the access are seen as a betterment to the current situation and could be supported by the highway's authority.

It may be that the existing access remains in its current position with a minor increase to traffic movements form the existing uses of the site to ensure there is a staggered approach to the access point opposite as discussed yesterday, or potentially the existing access point is moved slightly to improve visibility from the current access.

I would not normally support any proposed development that is likely to result in an increase in vehicle movements through this sub-standard access. If supported, any proposed development may typically have to be limited to the same or less movements as was previously generated under any past consent / use at the site.

If the suggested previous vehicle movements at the site are correct then it may be considered reasonable to accept the proposed development providing it is limited to the proposed class uses which are unlikely to result in any significant increase in vehicle movements through this sub-standard access.

Providing the proposed offices are restricted to Class B1 use and the proposed storage business Class B8 use is restricted to self-storage / caravan store (with no workshop type facility) then it may be considered acceptable to support such a development in conjunction with some access improvements.

The applicant has offered to improve the access which would benefit the proposed development. If the application is supported I would recommend the following improvements:-

- Existing access to be surfaced with hard bound materials for a minimum distance of 10m behind the adjoining highway with appropriate kerbing.
- No gates erected within 10m of the highway boundary.
- An Aco drain or similar across the access to intercept any private surface water run-off.
- Suitable kerb radii to suit maximum size of vehicle entering site ie/ car plus caravan proposed for adjoining application site. **This should be demonstrated with appropriate swept path details.**
- Setting back of existing hedgerow to maximize visibility in the northerly direction and reinstating splay as grassed verge. It would seem possible to achieve a splay of around 2.4 x 80m measured to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway.

I would recommend the applicant provides a suitably scaled plan indicating the above details.

Parking & Turning Provision

The submitted layout plan (Drg. No. B164/004 Rev C) indicates 3 offices plus meeting room within a building to the south of the proposed storage facility along with 10 parking spaces. LPGN 16 class B1 Use requires a maximum of 1 car space per 30m² gfa. Based on a gross floor area of 250m², LPGN 16 would normally require a maximum of 8 spaces. The proposed parking provision would be considered acceptable.

Active Travel

I would recommend that the applicant liaises with our Strategic Transport Manager – Gwen Thomas on Tel: 01978 729667 (or email: gwen.thomas@wrexham.gov.uk) in respect of any specific requirements for the proposed development (eg/ access layout, road markings, cycle paths, cycle parking) that may be required under the Active Travel Act Guidance. **Any such modifications should be referenced / indicated on a revised layout.**

I would recommend the applicant addresses the issues raised above.

Supplementary Notes

The applicant's attention should be drawn to item nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 of the supplementary notes.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Jones', is written over a horizontal line.

Chief Officer, Environment & Technical