

Planning Application APP/24/00096 at Garage Compound, Whitsbury Road, Havant

Dear Planning Department,

Thank you for your recent correspondence dated 20th August 2024, and for the detailed responses to the queries raised. After reviewing the information provided, I have the following concerns and comments:

1. **Parking:** The applicant mentions that the parking provision is "likely" to be adequate. However, given the current parking challenges on Whitsbury Road and the surrounding area, it is concerning that this remains uncertain. The loss of existing parking spaces and the garages further exacerbates this issue. I urge the council to reconsider the adequacy of the parking provision, especially considering the potential for increased vehicular activity due to visitors, staff, and service deliveries. A more concrete assessment and possible increase in parking spaces should be considered to prevent future congestion and accessibility problems. Parking permits for residence in the surrounding area may be one solution.
2. **Public Right of Way:** Several residents have commented about losing the garage area as a pedestrian cut-through. While it has been noted that the distance around is not significantly longer, this does not address the issue of established historic use. I'm sure that there will be sufficient user evidence of continuous use over a twenty-year period to justify a public footpath from Whitsbury Road across the garage area leading to Nursling Crescent. I would appreciate guidance on which council department I should approach to initiate an application for a public footpath to preserve this access for the local community.
3. **Boundary Wall Stability:** Many of the surrounding properties have a border with the garage compound, and this boundary is defined by a brick wall. It is unclear who holds responsibility for maintaining this brick wall. Over the years, the garages may have come to support this boundary wall. The removal of the garages could result in the collapse of the boundary wall, and in some cases, the gardens of the adjacent properties may subside. Who will be responsible for any necessary repairs should this occur?
4. **Additional Concerns:**
 - **Emergency Access:** While the fire officer has not raised objections, I remain concerned about the practicalities of emergency access during peak traffic times, given the narrow entrance and potential for parked vehicles along Whitsbury Road. An updated, detailed emergency access plan that considers real-world scenarios would be reassuring.
 - **Construction Impact:** The applicant has acknowledged the need for a Construction Method Statement, yet there is a lack of clarity on how construction noise, dust, and general disruption will be managed, particularly in such a densely populated area. A more comprehensive plan should be outlined and shared with local residents before any approval is granted.
 - **Access to SSE Sub-station:** The assurance of 24/7 access to the SSE sub-station is noted, but there should be continuous monitoring to ensure that this access is not impeded during construction and operation phases.

In conclusion, while some of the applicant's responses provide clarity, significant concerns remain unresolved. These issues, particularly around parking and public right of way, are critical to the well-being of the community and should be addressed more comprehensively before the application proceeds further.

I look forward to your response and any guidance you can provide on the next steps regarding the public footpath application.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

[Redacted text]