

Witney Town Council strongly object to the proposal to introduce new parking prohibitions in Witney at Avenue Two (Parkside Business Park) with new sections of Double Yellow Lines on both sides for the section South of its East/West spur.

The Oxfordshire County Council 'Statement of Reasons' document states "*proposed measures are aimed at ensuring that 1, danger is minimised whilst 2, facilitating the effective and safe passage of traffic and the provision of appropriate on-street parking facilities.*"

Since the proposal is taking away on-street parking, reason 2 is flawed. Witney Town Council reject the premise of the proposed parking restrictions - These proposals are being made primarily to facilitate transit of HGVs at the expense of on-street parking. This proposal doesn't remove danger, it facilitates an extra danger that wasn't present before. Any new appropriate development should plan site access entirely on the East/West spur of Avenue Two.

Witney Town Council oppose all new HGV and commercial vehicle access on this section of the North/South spur. The Southern end of Avenue Two is not a dead-end. It is a busy, well-used active travel route used by families and children, it is the main route used by schoolchildren, pedestrians and cyclists from Ducklington. The Sustrans route that passes through this section of Avenue Two is a National Cycle Network Route (Route 577) and should be protected.

A primary concern for Witney Town Council is the provision of a safe active travel route for our residents. Witney is embarking on an LCWIP (Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Policy) and this proposal undermines this. This section of Avenue Two needs developing as an active travel route, providing safe connections to and across Station Lane, not hampering by the introduction of more HGVs and commercial vehicle (LGV and van) movements.

Further, Avenue Two is the main access to Witney Lake and Country Park - a Witney Town Council amenity for leisure and enjoyment of nature. The Park also provides popular off-road through routes to Cogges and Ducklington. The current parking on this section of the North/South spur is the only parking available for users of the Lake and Country Park, particularly for those of limited mobility who cannot enjoy it by entirely active means of transport. Members are concerned that the plans are not taking in to account that this is a busy thoroughfare for those users. The on-road parking has a wide-ranging community benefit and should not be removed for the advantage of one business.

The plans give an indication of the incredibly tight turning route/movement of HGVs entering and exiting the site, even with the removal of parking. The plans do not illustrate that these vehicle movements include any safety features to protect pedestrians and cyclists, users of the footpath and cycle route would be at unacceptable risk of harm.

The current on-street parking is an overflow from users of other businesses on the Industrial Park. Has the developer carried out an assessment or consultation with the business owners and employers in the neighbouring units who undoubtedly use the current on-street parking that is available? Is there a wider travel and transport plan for neighbouring businesses? Any assessment needs to be inclusive of the potential impact of the proposed Travis Perkins development as well as users of other business units at this site.

The current parking arrangements for Avenue Two provides far greater social value to Witney residents than 2 new HGV accesses to the commercial site and builders' yard. Particularly since the yard could be designed with access from the East/West spur. The social value is primarily for access to the Lake & Country Park but also occasionally for users of the bowls club at the Leys and also for workers at the assorted established businesses on Avenue Two.

Whilst Witney Town Council do not commit to supporting parking in this location in perpetuity, we strongly oppose removal of parking for the sake of introducing HGV access for one business. If a scheme came forward that incorporated improvements for safe access to the Lake & Country Park, as well as better connectivity to promote active travel, then perhaps it might be more acceptable to Witney residents. However, Witney Town Council can't support a proposal for removal of on-street parking for the sole purpose of making the route more suitable for accommodating HGVs, and frequent commercial vehicle movements.

Since the sole motivation for this proposal to introduce new parking prohibitions is to facilitate a planning application, Witney Town Council would like Oxfordshire County Council to consider our serious concerns and to reflect them in their response to the related planning application (West Oxfordshire District Council reference 21/02210/FUL), so that HGV's are not introduced to the route.

Witney Town Council would like the developer to re-consider the layout in order that HGV access is limited to the East/West spur road where there is less likelihood of pedestrian and cyclist conflict.