

Objection to Section 73 Application PL/2026/04554

Development: Elm Grove

Representation: Objection

Submitted by: Giuseppe Melillo

I wish to formally object to the proposed Section 73 application, specifically in relation to the proposed changes to access arrangements for existing residents of Drynham Lane.

Existing approved arrangement

Under the approved development, residents of Drynham Lane would continue to use the existing northern access until the permanent new access through the Elm Grove development became available.

The southern route now proposed as the temporary everyday access is not currently used as the normal access to Drynham Lane. It has effectively been retained as a contingency route, for example where the northern access is temporarily unavailable because of a fallen tree or similar emergency.

Proposed change

The Section 73 application fundamentally changes that arrangement. Instead, residents would be diverted onto a temporary access arrangement which could potentially remain in place for approximately **four to five years** while the development is constructed.

This would turn what is currently effectively an emergency/contingency route into the sole everyday access for the existing properties.

The proposed route is a single-lane road with no formal passing places. It would become the normal route for residents, visitors, deliveries, tradespeople, refuse collection and other vehicles.

Highway safety and suitability of the lane

My principal objection is one of **highway safety**, rather than simply inconvenience.

The lane is effectively single-track and has no formal passing places. Two vehicles meeting therefore have no straightforward means of passing one another. Creating passing places could itself require works to existing hedges and drainage ditches.

There is no separate footway. The available width is such that a vehicle and pedestrian cannot comfortably pass while both continue moving; in places one effectively has to stop and give way.

Deliveries and larger vehicles

There is no suitable facility for a lorry which travels down the lane to turn around. A vehicle unable to manoeuvre at its destination could therefore be forced to reverse a considerable distance along the narrow single-track lane.

Alternatively, drivers may conclude that they cannot safely access the properties and refuse to make the delivery. The Council should establish the largest vehicle which can reasonably use the route, where it can turn, and how two-way movements would be managed.

Emergency access and resilience

The proposal would leave Drynham Lane with only one means of vehicular access and egress.

At present, the southern route provides resilience when the normal northern route is obstructed. Under the proposal that contingency disappears because the southern route itself becomes the sole access.

If it were blocked by a fallen tree, collision, broken-down vehicle, flooding, construction activity or other obstruction, there appears to be no alternative route for residents or emergency vehicles.

The Council should satisfy itself that fire appliances and ambulances can physically use the route and that acceptable emergency access remains available if the sole route becomes obstructed.

Retail-estate roundabout

The proposed arrangement would require regular movements between Drynham Lane and the existing retail-estate roundabout. I have significant concerns about the visibility and geometry of this access.

When exiting Drynham Lane onto the roundabout, visibility of traffic approaching from the right is severely restricted. Vehicles approaching from this direction can be moving quickly and are not clearly visible to a driver waiting to enter. A driver therefore has to move forward and commit to the manoeuvre with limited opportunity to observe approaching traffic.

The reverse movement also presents a concern. When leaving the roundabout to enter Drynham Lane, a driver has to slow significantly on the roundabout to make what is an unusual and unexpected exit. Traffic approaching from Bradley Road needs sufficient time to recognise that the vehicle ahead is slowing to make this movement and react accordingly.

These movements may be acceptable for very occasional contingency use, but that does not establish that the junction is suitable as the sole everyday access for potentially four to five years or longer.

The Council should assess the route as a complete access system, including actual visibility when exiting Drynham Lane, vehicle speeds and movements at the roundabout, the unusual entry movement into Drynham Lane, the single-track lane, pedestrians, delivery and service vehicles, turning arrangements and emergency access.

I would also ask that a highways officer visits the location and observes these movements on site before the proposed access arrangement is considered acceptable.

No guaranteed end to the "temporary" arrangement

What is described as temporary could remain the everyday access for **four or five years**.

If its duration depends on the development reaching a particular phase rather than a fixed enforceable date, there is no certainty how long residents could be required to use it.

Development can be delayed, re-phased or suspended. If activity ceased or the site was mothballed, residents could potentially be left reliant upon the temporary access for an indefinite period.

Necessity of the change

The approved arrangement already provides a solution: residents continue to use their existing northern access until the permanent route through the development is available.

The application therefore appears to replace an established functioning access, with a contingency route available if required, with a single potentially less safe route and no equivalent alternative.

Requested outcome

I object to the proposed change and ask Wiltshire Council to retain the previously approved access arrangements until the permanent connection through the development is available.

If the Council is nevertheless minded to approve the temporary arrangement, I ask that it first requires:

- a detailed highway-safety assessment of the entire proposed route;
- assessment of opposing traffic on a single-track lane with no formal passing places;
- assessment of pedestrian safety given the absence of a footway;
- vehicle tracking for delivery lorries, refuse vehicles and emergency-service vehicles, including turning;
- confirmation of how large vehicles can leave without reversing a significant distance;

- assessment of emergency-access resilience with only one vehicular route;
- a highways officer site visit to assess actual visibility and vehicle movements at the roundabout;
- consideration of whether passing places are required and impacts on hedges and drainage ditches;
- a clearly defined and enforceable maximum duration; and
- a contingency arrangement if construction is delayed, suspended or does not reach the anticipated stage.

The safety and reasonable access of existing residents should not be compromised by changes to the construction or phasing arrangements of the new development.

Giuseppe Melillo