

Design and Access Statement

Retrospective Change of Use of Existing Parking Area to Hand Car wash (Sui Generis)

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a retrospective planning application for the retention of a hand car wash use at 392 Sipson Road (“the Site”). The application seeks to regularise the existing use and confirm the operational controls and mitigation measures that ensure the activity does **not** result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity, highway safety, drainage/pollution control or visual amenity.

The statement adopts the approach taken by the London Borough of Hillingdon in assessing a similar **retrospective** hand car wash at **611 Sipson Road (LBH Ref: 43922/APP/2017/661)**, which was approved subject to conditions controlling hours, noise mitigation, lighting and drainage.

2. Site Description and Surroundings

The Site comprises an area of hardstanding used for vehicle parking/manoeuvring, accessed from Sipson Road. The retained car wash use is located within the existing hardstanding.

The use is vehicle-related in character and is intended to remain contained within the Site, with internal circulation/queuing managed so as not to create on-street waiting or safety issues.

3. The Development (As Existing to be retained)

3.1 Nature of the Retrospective Proposal

Planning permission is sought to **retain** the hand car wash use currently operating at the Site. The application is not seeking uncontrolled intensification; rather, the applicant offers clear controls (hours, method of operation, capacity, drainage and noise) so the Local Planning Authority can regulate the use going forward.

3.2 Operational Method Statement (Low-Impact Hand Wash)

The hand car wash operates with a staged process consistent with the approach accepted by Hillingdon for 611 Sipson Road:

- **Stage 1:** hand wash using buckets/basins, water and detergent with sponge/cloth;
- **Stage 2:** low pressure water spray rinse;
- **Stage 3:** hand dry and polish with cloths.

This method is materially quieter and more controlled than high-pressure/automated operations and can be supervised by staff at all times.

3.3 Capacity Control – Maximum Vehicles at Any One Time

To prevent over-intensification, the operation will be managed such that a maximum of **three (3) vehicles** are processed within the wash stages at any one time (moving sequentially through the stages above). Vehicles can enter, circulate and exit within the Site in an orderly



manner under staff supervision. The internal arrangement is designed to ensure that operational activity and any short waiting/queuing remain contained within the Site, thereby avoiding obstruction of the public highway.

3.4 Hours of Operation

To protect residential amenity, the applicant offers the same hours imposed by condition in the approved 611 Sipson Road decision:

- Monday to Saturday: 07:00 – 18:00
- Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays: 10:00 – 17:00

3.4 Layout, Access and Queuing

The wash/valet area is set well back from Sipson Road. The internal access and forecourt provide an on-site waiting/queuing length equivalent to approximately **10 cars** between the site entrance and the wash bay area. This allows vehicles to arrive and wait **within the Site**, preventing on-street queuing and ensuring Sipson Road remains unobstructed.

4. Planning Policy Context (Summary)

4.1 The application must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The key policy themes for a retrospective car wash proposal are:

- principle of development / land use compatibility;
- Green Belt/openness (where applicable);
- residential amenity (noise/disturbance/hours);
- highways/access/queuing;
- drainage/pollution control and trade effluent;
- lighting impacts; and
- whether impacts can be controlled by conditions.

4.2 Hillingdon's committee report for **611 Sipson Road lists the relevant policy** themes used in determining that retrospective car wash case, including Green Belt, amenity and highways considerations, and supports the use of conditions to control impacts

5. Planning Assessment

5.1 Principle of Development

A car wash is generally treated as **sui generis** and is assessed on its impacts. The Site is already hardstanding/vehicle-related in character. The key question is whether the use can operate without unacceptable impacts. The proposed operational controls (method, capacity, hours, noise/drainage/lighting measures) provide a clear basis for the Council to regulate the use, as **was done for the approved 611 Sipson Road scheme**.



5.2 Green Belt / Openness (Where Applicable)

Where the Site is within (or affected by) Green Belt policy, the key issue is impact on openness and visual amenity. Hillingdon accepted that a hand car wash located within an existing expansive car park/hardstanding could be acceptable in Green Belt terms where the scale/siting/form of the activity and associated structures would not cause unacceptable harm to openness, and where the operation is well contained.

The retained use at 390 Sipson Road is similarly confined to existing hardstanding and can be controlled to remain modest and contained, thereby limiting any effect on openness/visual amenity.

5.3 Residential Amenity (Noise, Disturbance and Hours)

The principal amenity matters are noise from equipment/activity, general disturbance and hours of operation. Hillingdon's Environmental Protection considerations for 611 Sipson Road accepted the nature of the operation (low-pressure sprays, hand washing/drying) subject to conditions restricting hours and requiring a noise mitigation scheme.

To safeguard amenity, the applicant offers the same operating hours secured by condition at 611 Sipson Road:

- **08:00–18:00 Monday to Saturday**
- **10:00–17:00 Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays**

The applicant is also content for a condition requiring a scheme for the control of noise transmission/plant & machinery noise (where relevant) and ongoing compliance, mirroring the approved approach.

Operational management measures will include: **no amplified music**, no prolonged engine revving, and engines off during washing. These are the same types of controls referenced within the 611 Sipson Road committee material.

5.4 Highways and Safety

Highway considerations relate to access, circulation and queuing. Hillingdon's highways assessment for 611 Sipson Road identified key acceptability factors: adequate access/visibility, ability for queues to form within the site, and sufficient space for water to be contained within the site, resulting in no significant highway concerns.

The retained use at 392 Sipson Road will operate on the same principle: **internal containment of activity and queuing**, with no reliance on on-street waiting.

5.5 Drainage, Pollution Prevention and Trade Effluent

Drainage is a critical consideration for car wash proposals. In the approved 611 Sipson Road case, the Flood/Water Management comments noted that the applicant's statement that there was "no trade effluent" was incorrect, and that appropriate permissions must be sought; consequently, a drainage condition was recommended and imposed.



For 392 Sipson Road, the applicant therefore commits to:

- submitting (or agreeing by condition) a **scheme for foul and surface water disposal**, demonstrating appropriate separation/management and containment; and
- obtaining any required **trade effluent consents/permissions** where discharge to sewer is proposed.

The applicant is content for the same style of drainage condition imposed at 611 Sipson Road (submission within 3 months; implement and retain thereafter).

5.6 Lighting

To prevent nuisance, any floodlighting/external lighting (if installed) will be controlled. The applicant is content for a condition requiring all such lighting to be switched off outside operating hours, matching the approved condition at 611 Sipson Road.

6. Proposed Conditions (Offered to Regularize and Control the Use)

To assist the Council in controlling the retained use and ensuring ongoing acceptability, the applicant is content for the following conditions (or similar) to be imposed:

1. **Approved Plans / Layout Retention:** Retention of the use in accordance with **Accordance with approved plans/layout** and retention of the operational area.
2. **Hours of operation:** 07:00–18:00 Mon–Sat; 10:00–17:00 Sun/Public/Bank Holidays.
3. **Noise mitigation scheme** for control of noise transmission/plant & machinery (where relevant), to be submitted and implemented within agreed timescales and retained thereafter.
4. **Lighting controls:** any external lighting switched off outside permitted hours.
5. **Drainage strategy:** foul/surface water disposal scheme including pollution prevention and confirmation of trade effluent consent where required.
6. **Capacity control:** maximum **three (3)** cars processed within wash stages at any one time.
7. **Operational management:** no amplified music; no prolonged engine revving; engines off during washing; all activity contained within the operational area.

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

This is a **retrospective** application to regularise the retention of a hand car wash use within an existing area of hardstanding/vehicle-related land. The proposal is controlled through a low-impact operational method (hand wash, low-pressure rinse, hand dry), capacity controls, and clear commitments to drainage/pollution control.

Any potential impacts relating to amenity, drainage, lighting and noise can be appropriately managed and controlled via the information submitted and planning conditions, reflecting the Council's approach in the approved **611 Sipson Road** case.



For these reasons, the retention of the use is considered acceptable in planning terms and planning permission should be granted.







Figure 1: Access to the site



Figure 2 Entrance



Figure 3 Washing Section



Figure 4: Drying Section