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Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

North Hertfordshire Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3JF

District ref: 25/01766/OP
HCC ref: NH/25803/2025
HCC received: 1 September 2025
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Samuel Tearle

Location

Land On The South Side Of, Cowards Lane, Codicote, Hertfordshire,

Application type

Outline

Proposal

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Outline Application : Outline application with means of access for residential development of up to 30 dwellings (including affordable housing); following demolition of all existing structures; associated landscaping, drainage, car parking; infrastructure and all ancillary and enabling works (all matters reserved except means of access)

Recommendation

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused until additional details are provided as set out in the vehicle access subsection below.

COMMENTS

The Highway Authority previously issued a response dated 14th August 2025 which found a number of insufficient details had been submitted.

The applicant has since submitted a Transport Addendum (report ref: 2025/8549/TA05) dated August 2025 in response to HCC Highways comments.

Traffic Impact

Junction Capacity

Comments previously provided by HCC Highways requested that further information is submitted to review the PM peak results and outputs of the junction capacity assessment results of the Cowards Lane/B656 priority. Figure 1 of the Transport Addendum provides the AM and PM peak summary for the junction, which demonstrates that the inclusion of the proposed development on the baseline flows at the junction would not materially affect the operation of the junction.

HCC Highways acknowledge that the parameters used for planning application reference 17/01464/1 for up to 83 residential dwellings has been used; however, it was previously requested that the outputs of the junction results are provided for review to understand what data has been included in the junction capacity assessment as the planning application 17/01464/1 utilised traffic survey data from 2017, factored up to 2023, and included a cumulative assessment scenario.

However, HCC note that the TRICS assessment has determined that during the busiest peak hour, the proposed development would generate a maximum of 18 two-way trips, which would not be detrimental to the operation of the local highway network subject to the delivery of off-site works that enable pedestrians of all ages and abilities to access key local facilities (as detailed in the Planning Obligations subsection below).

Distribution and Impact of the Development Traffic

The submitted Transport Statement predicts that development traffic will be split 50/50 between journeys from/to the east using Cowards Lane and from/to the west via St Albans Road. HCC Highways requested evidence as to how or why the predicted 50/50 split of development traffic has been forecast.

The Transport Addendum outlines several key destinations in the surrounding area and the prediction of their direction of travel either east or west from the site access at Figure 2 of the Addendum. RGP conclude that the traffic generated by the development is considered relatively minor and would not materially impact on the operation of local junctions.

Design Considerations

Pedestrian Access

As outlined in the submitted Transport Statement (Document Ref: 2025/8549/TA01, dated July 2025), the proposals include the introduction of a 2.0m wide footway along the western side of the proposed access, which will continue along the southern side of Coward's Lane towards St Albans Road and the proposed footway will provide dropped kerbs and tactile paving to link the site to the existing footway on St Albans Road.

In the previous consultee response, HCC Highways noted that the drawing appeared to be plotted on OS mapping and it was unclear whether the proposal could be fully delivered within the Applicants land or on the adopted highway. The newly submitted Transport Addendum confirms that the proposal is plotted on topographical survey mapping rather than OS mapping, which provides the necessary detail to ensure that the proposal can be delivered. The 2m footway is fundamental to make the application acceptable.

Vehicle Access

The previous response from HCC Highways requested that a swept path analysis exercise is undertaken to demonstrate that two larger cars at the site access can pass one another as it was unclear from the information submitted as to whether the radii of the proposed site access is suitable. It was also requested that a swept path analysis of a vehicle accessing the dwelling along the site access (known as Marlin) should be provided to ensure that the proposed crossover is

appropriate and meets with Dropped Kerb Guidance contained in the Place & Movement Planning and Design Guide (adopted March 2024).

The swept path analysis plan included in the Transport Addendum (Drawing No. CLC-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-004 Rev P01, dated 19/08/25) outlines two estate cars passing one another at the proposed site access and also demonstrates that this size of vehicle can manoeuvre to Marlin with the proposed vehicle crossover in-situ.

The Proposed Access Arrangement drawing submitted with the Transport Addendum (Drawing No. CLC-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-001 Rev P08, dated 28/08/25) shows that the line of adopted highway incorporates a large area of land to the left of Cowards Lane (north of the proposed site access) based on topographical base survey mapping. In light of the topo survey and confirmation provided that the introduction of the footway can be provided within the adopted highway, the Highway Authority requests that the width of the carriageway is reviewed and widened for the section between St Albans Road and the proposed site access. Widening the carriageway will ensure two vehicles can pass simultaneously once kerbs are introduced and reduce the risk of collisions.

The widening of the carriageway along this section of Cowards Lane will be delivered via a S278 Agreement and the Applicant must ensure that affected residents are consulted during the process.

Travel Plan Statement

The original submission included a Travel Plan Statement (Document ref: 2025/8549/TP01 Rev B dated July 2025) and utilised a baseline mode split taken from the accompanying Transport Statement (at 4.1.1) expected when the site is operational, as follows:

- Vehicles – 77%.
- Public Transport – 3%.
- Walk – 18%.
- Cycling – 2%.

The Transport Addendum confirms that the split was derived from TRICS database using multi-modal surveys.

HCC Highways would reiterate that a solid commitment is required to promote the Travel Plan during construction of the development/marketing of the site to influence residents travel behaviour before they move to the site. It is vital that residents are aware of this as early as possible before moving to site to achieve a mode shift in travel behaviours.

Planning Obligations

If the application is granted planning permission it will be subject to HCC S106 transport contributions. Under Strand 2 of the HCC Highways Planning Obligations Schedule, contributions are sought for the delivery of active travel infrastructure to mitigate adverse pressures to the future operation and safety of the local highway, footway, cycleway and public transport networks. The mitigation will focus on enhancing and encouraging active travel and public transport use by improving facilities, walking and cycling environments, and improving the safety of trips.

Under Strand 2 of the schedule, contributions of £6,826 per dwelling are required, which equates to a total of £204,780 (Subject to indexation SPONS to January 2019).

The Highway Authority will use the contribution to install a new pedestrian crossing on St Albans Road, between Tithe Close and Baker's Lane, in line with HCC Local Transport Plan Policy 1. This is fundamental to make the application acceptable and allow pedestrians to route safely to the primary school.

In addition, contributions may be distributed to schemes identified in the HCC's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and its supporting documents, South-Central Hertfordshire Growth and Transport Plan, alongside possible bus stop/service enhancements.

Conclusion

The Highway Authority requests that the Applicant investigates and liaises with the Authority regarding widening of Cowards Lane from the proposed site access to St Albans Road within the adopted highway, alongside the installation of the proposed 2m footway.

Provision to widen the carriageway alongside the footway works, and S106 request is in line with Policy 5 of HCC's Local Transport Plan to ensure access arrangements are safe and suitable for all people and once confirmation has been received, the Highway Authority will be in a position to recommend approval of the proposal.

Signed

Samuel Tearle

10 September 2025