

HIGHWAYS REPORT

Proposed Outline Application for 30 Residential Dwellings

Land at Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 3RA

Prepared by	T. McArdle BSc, Hons MRICS
Organisation	PSK Rural Limited
Date	September 2026
Application	Outline planning application - all matters reserved



PSK RURAL

The Old Dairy, Hyde Farm, Marlow Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 6PQ
www.pskrural.co.uk | 01628 777666

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Site	Land at Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 3RA
Author	T. McArdle BSc, Hons MRICS
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Purpose and Scope

This Highways Report accompanies an outline application for up to 30 residential dwellings. Its principal purpose is to consider the suitability of reusing the existing bell-mouth access from Holwell Road, the available visibility, the local collision record, and the broad suitability of the indicative internal street arrangement. As the application is in outline with all matters reserved, detailed geometric design, tracking, drainage interfaces, street lighting, adoption details and final parking arrangements will be resolved at reserved matters and/or highway technical approval stage.

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1. Executive Summary

The proposal is for an outline residential development of up to 30 dwellings on land at the northern edge of the village of Pirton. Vehicular access is proposed via the permitted bell-mouth junction to Holwell Road.

The submitted visibility drawing records an X-distance of 2.4 m and minimum Y-distances of approximately 204 m to the north and 235 m to the south.

The access benefits from a notably open alignment with long inter-visibility in both directions. The southern visibility distance exceeds the 215 m desirable minimum stopping sight distance associated with a 100 km/h (approximately 60 mph) design speed in DMRB CD 109. The northern distance of 204 m is 11 m below that highly conservative benchmark, but exceeds by a substantial margin the 160 m desirable minimum stopping sight distance associated with an 85 km/h design speed (approximately 53 mph), which is the closest DMRB design-speed band to a practical 50 mph assessment.

Manual for Streets requires the use of observed 85th percentile wet-weather speeds on existing streets and expressly advises that, where speeds exceed 60 km/h, DMRB stopping sight distances may be more appropriate. No speed survey has been undertaken for this application. It is therefore not appropriate to state a measured 85th percentile speed. Nevertheless, the local speed-limit context is material: the access lies circa 35 m north of a 40 mph zone, with the 20 mph village environment beyond. Vehicles approaching from the south have only a short distance to accelerate after leaving the 40 mph limit, while vehicles travelling southbound are approaching the lower-speed village environment. On this basis, a sustained 60 mph operating speed at the access would be an unduly cautious design assumption, and the available 204-235 m visibility is considered robust for the road context.

The supplied CrashMap extract covers a selected ten-year period and displays three recorded injury collisions within the wider map area. Importantly, none is shown on the Holwell Road section adjacent to the site access or on its immediate northern and southern approaches. This supports the conclusion that there is no evident collision cluster or existing highway-safety problem associated with this access location.

The indicative layout provides a clear internal spine street, footways throughout the internal road network, direct access to the proposed dwellings and a turning head at the end of the principal route. Subject to detailed design at reserved matters stage, the arrangement can accommodate refuse collection and emergency access without requiring large vehicles to reverse excessive distances. Overall, the proposal is capable of providing safe and suitable access and does not indicate an unacceptable highway-safety effect or a severe adverse effect on the highway network.

Key Findings

Matter	Evidence	Assessment
Access	Existing bell-mouth on Holwell Road	Suitable in principle for reuse, subject to detailed design and maintenance of visibility.
Visibility north	2.4 m x min. 204 m	Exceeds 50 mph / 85 km/h DMRB benchmark; close to the conservative 60 mph / 100 km/h benchmark.
Visibility south	2.4 m x min. 235 m	Exceeds the 60 mph / 100 km/h DMRB desirable minimum of 215 m.
Speed context	National Speed Limit at access; 40 mph zone begins about 35 m to the south	Road context makes sustained 60 mph operation at the access unlikely; formal speed survey can verify if requested by the Highway Authority.
Collision record	No plotted collision at or adjacent to the access in supplied ten-year extract	No evident collision cluster attributable to the access location.
Internal layout	Footways on internal streets and terminal turning head	Appropriate principles for a residential layout; final geometry and swept paths to be confirmed at reserved matters stage.

2. Introduction

PSK Rural Limited has prepared this report in support of an outline planning application for up to 30 dwellings on land at Pirton, Hertfordshire. The report considers access and highway-safety matters at a proportionate level, having regard to the outline nature of the application and the information presently available.

The report has been informed by the PSK Rural Visibility Splay Plan (Drawing LAP VSP 001 Rev A), the supplied CrashMap extract, the indicative development arrangement and the relevant national and local policy framework. No automatic traffic count or speed survey has been undertaken, and no formal TRICS assessment has been provided. Where operating speed is discussed, the report therefore distinguishes clearly between regulatory speed limit, design-speed benchmarks and the practical road context rather than presenting an unmeasured speed as fact.

2.1 Assessment approach

- Review the geometry and visibility shown on the submitted access drawing.
- Consider the relationship between the available visibility and Manual for Streets / DMRB stopping sight distance principles.
- Review the supplied ten-year collision mapping for evidence of an existing safety pattern.
- Consider whether the indicative internal network is capable of serving residents, pedestrians, refuse vehicles and emergency vehicles.
- Assess the proposal against the August 2026 NPPF, the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan and Hertfordshire County Council highway design guidance.

3. Site, Proposal and Highway Context

3.1 Site and development proposal

The site lies on the northern edge of Pirton and is presently agricultural land. The indicative proposal is for up to 30 residential dwellings served from a principal internal street connected to Holwell Road. The application is outline and the detailed disposition of dwellings, parking, landscaping, street geometry and adoption arrangements will be established through reserved matters.

3.2 Holwell Road

Holwell Road runs broadly north-south along the eastern side of the site and provides the approach into Pirton from the north. At the proposed access the road is subject to the National Speed Limit. Approximately 35 m to the south of the access the route enters a 40 mph zone, after which traffic proceeds toward the lower-speed village street environment and the 20 mph zone within Pirton. This transition in speed environment is directly relevant when considering likely operating speeds at the access.

The road is rural in character, with an open alignment and good forward visibility around the proposed access. The submitted plan also illustrates the existing bell-mouth entrance, which avoids the need to introduce an entirely new point of access onto Holwell Road.

3.3 Existing access

The development would reuse the existing access rather than form a new opening. Reuse of an established bell-mouth has practical highway advantages: the junction location is already legible to road users; the verge opening and access geometry are established; and the proposal can focus on upgrading the access, surfacing, drainage and visibility management as necessary rather than creating a new conflict point.

4. Planning and Highway Policy Context

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework - August 2026

The August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework replaced the December 2024 version and introduced coded national policies. The most relevant policies are TR3, TR4 and TR6.

Policy	Relevance
TR3 - Locating development in sustainable locations	Requires development to support sustainable patterns of movement, mitigate significant transport or highway-safety impacts to an acceptable degree using a vision-led approach, and take opportunities in rural areas to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport where they exist.
TR4 - Street design, access and parking	Requires transport considerations to be integral to design; gives priority to walking, wheeling and cycling; seeks safe, inclusive and attractive streets; requires ease of access for service and emergency vehicles; and directs decision-makers to national design guidance including Manual for Streets.
TR6 - Assessing transport impacts	Requires proportionate transport evidence for development likely to generate significant movement and states that refusal on transport grounds is appropriate where development would have a severe adverse network impact or an unacceptable highway-safety impact, taking account of mitigation and reasonable future scenarios.

4.2 North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

The North Hertfordshire Local Plan was adopted in November 2022 and remains part of the statutory development plan. Policy T1 is the principal development-management policy for transport matters. It supports planning permission where development would not create highway-safety problems or unacceptable network impacts, where necessary sustainable-transport/highway measures are secured, and where appropriate Transport Statements, Transport Assessments or Travel Plans are provided. For major

development it also seeks safe, direct and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes and integration with wider transport networks.

Policy SP6 promotes sustainable transport and accessibility, while Policy T2 addresses parking. The detailed reserved-matters design can ensure that the final housing mix, parking, cycle storage and electric-vehicle charging accord with the standards applicable at that stage.

4.3 Pirton Neighbourhood Plan

The made Pirton Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan. Policy PNP11 requires development to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian access, demonstrate adequate pedestrian links, address transport-infrastructure inadequacies where necessary, consider cumulative traffic effects and ensure that vehicular access and traffic-calming measures are safe and sympathetic to village character. Policy PNP12 seeks to add to, link with and improve the network of cycle routes and footpaths where appropriate and practicable.

4.4 Hertfordshire County Council guidance

Hertfordshire County Council adopted its Place and Movement Planning and Design Guide in March 2024, replacing the former Roads in Hertfordshire guide. The detailed design of the internal roads, footways, junction radii, refuse access, emergency access, drainage interfaces and any highway works will be developed in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council and, where adoption is proposed, to the standards required for adoption.

4.5 Manual for Streets and DMRB

Manual for Streets (MfS) is the principal national guidance for residential street design. For existing streets, MfS states that stopping sight distance should be informed by the 85th percentile wet-weather speed. Its derived stopping sight distance table extends to 60 km/h (approximately 37 mph), for which the adjusted stopping sight distance is 59 m. MfS states that where 85th percentile speeds exceed 60 km/h, the longer stopping sight distances in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges may be more appropriate.

For this reason, the visibility analysis below uses MfS to explain the methodology and DMRB CD 109 as a conservative comparator for higher operating speeds. DMRB is formally directed to trunk-road design, so its use here is a benchmark rather than an assertion that Holwell Road is itself a trunk road.

5. Proposed Site Access

Figure 1. Extract from Visibility Splay Plan LAP VSP 001 Rev A showing the existing bell-mouth access and the visibility envelopes.

At detailed design stage the access will be configured to provide an appropriate carriageway width, corner radii, pedestrian continuity, drainage control and surface construction. Vegetation and any other obstruction within the visibility envelopes will be managed so that the required visibility is retained for the lifetime of the development. Surface water from the site will be intercepted and disposed of within the development rather than being allowed to flow onto the public highway.

6.1 Visibility shown on the submitted plan

Drawing LAP VSP 001 Rev A records the following minimum junction visibility from an X-distance of 2.4 m:

Direction	X-distance	Y-distance shown	Comment
North	2.4 m	Min. 204 m	Very long visibility on the northern approach.
South	2.4 m	Min. 235 m	Exceeds the conservative 60 mph / 100 km/h DMRB benchmark.

6.2 Visibility benchmarks

The legal speed limit is not, by itself, the same as the speed that should necessarily be used for visibility design on an existing road. MfS directs designers to observed 85th percentile wet-weather speeds. In the absence of a speed survey, it is prudent to test the available visibility against a range of benchmarks rather than assume a measured operating speed.

Assessment case	Reference speed	Visibility benchmark	North: 204 m	South: 235 m
MfS upper table value	60 km/h (37 mph)	59 m	Pass by 145 m	Pass by 176 m
Practical higher-speed test	85 km/h (~53 mph)	160 m	Pass by 44 m	Pass by 75 m
National Speed Limit conservative test	100 km/h (~62 mph)	215 m	11 m below	Pass by 20 m

6.3 Interpretation in the context of Holwell Road

The southern splay of 235 m is comfortably above the DMRB desirable minimum stopping sight distance of 215 m for a 100 km/h design speed. The northern splay of 204 m is very substantial and exceeds the 160 m desirable minimum for an 85 km/h design speed by 44 m. It falls 11 m below the 215 m comparator that would be applied if a full 100 km/h design speed were assumed regardless of local context.

That 100 km/h test is intentionally conservative. The access is closely associated with a speed-limit transition into Pirton. Traffic approaching from the south leaves the 40 mph restriction only around 35 m before the access, which materially limits the opportunity to accelerate to National Speed Limit speeds before reaching the junction. Southbound traffic approaching from the north is travelling toward the 40 mph and subsequent 20 mph village environment. The road alignment, settlement gateway and change in posted limits therefore provide a rational basis for expecting the 85th percentile speed at the access to be materially below 60 mph,

although this cannot be stated as measured fact without survey data.

A 50 mph practical assessment is therefore reasonable as a sensitivity test. The nearest DMRB design-speed band is 85 km/h (approximately 53 mph), requiring 160 m; both the 204 m and 235 m available splays exceed this by substantial margins. If Hertfordshire County Council requires empirical confirmation, a seven-day automatic traffic count / speed survey can be undertaken and the visibility requirement recalculated from the recorded 85th percentile wet-weather speed in accordance with MfS principles. The current drawing demonstrates that the access has a strong baseline visibility position even before that validation.

7. Collision History

The supplied CrashMap extract is set to a ten-year search period and uses verified collision data available through 2024. The map view reports three recorded injury collisions within the wider displayed area. These incidents are shown within or close to the built-up village area; no collision marker is plotted on the Holwell Road frontage at the proposed access or on the immediate approaches to it.

Accordingly, the evidence does not indicate an existing cluster or recurring collision pattern at the proposed access location. This is consistent with the physical characteristics of the site frontage, where the alignment is open and visibility is extensive. The collision data should be read as contextual evidence rather than proof that risk is zero, but it is clearly supportive of the suitability of the access location

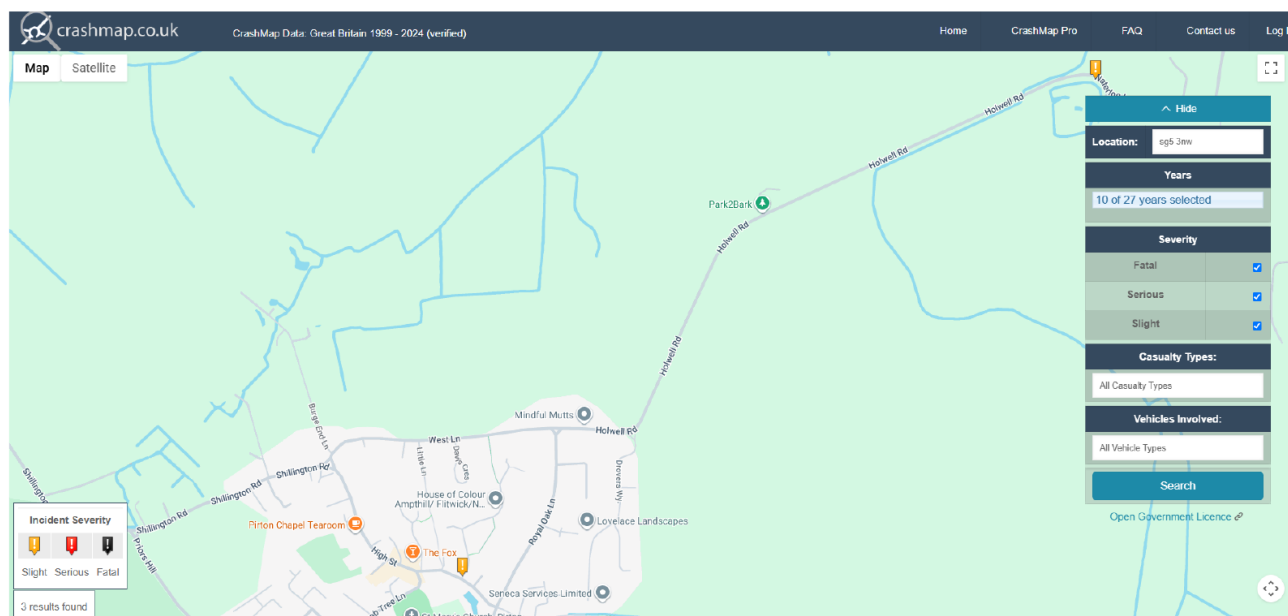


Figure 2. Supplied CrashMap extract. Three incidents are identified within the wider map view; none is shown at the proposed Holwell Road access or on the immediately adjoining section of Holwell Road.

8. Internal Streets, Pedestrian Provision and Servicing

8.1 Internal movement network

The indicative layout adopts a simple and legible internal movement structure. A principal arterial street extends through the residential area with individual residential accesses taken from the internal network rather than directly from Holwell Road. This consolidates vehicle movements at a single junction and avoids multiple new frontage accesses onto the higher-speed road.

All internal roadways are proposed with pavements/footways. This is an important feature of the scheme because it separates pedestrian movement from the vehicle running surface and allows residents, visitors and children to move through the development on a continuous pedestrian network. At reserved matters stage the footways, crossings, gradients, tactile paving and links to external pedestrian routes can be designed in detail in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council guidance and inclusive-design requirements.

8.2 Turning head and service access

A turning head is shown at the terminal end of the arterial road. Its purpose is to allow refuse collection vehicles, delivery vehicles and emergency appliances to turn within the site and leave in forward gear. This avoids long-distance reversing and is consistent with the safety and operational principles in NPPF policy TR4. The final turning-head geometry will be subject to swept-path analysis using the vehicle specification required by the waste collection authority and the fire and rescue service.

8.3 Parking and individual dwelling access

The detailed quantity and form of parking is reserved. It can therefore be designed alongside the final housing mix to meet North Hertfordshire and Pirton standards, with appropriate visitor parking, electric-vehicle charging and secure cycle storage. Driveway gradients and pedestrian visibility at individual accesses can likewise be controlled at detailed design stage.

8.4 Design speed within the development

The internal streets will be designed as residential places rather than as traffic-dominated distributor roads. Appropriate carriageway geometry, building alignment, landscaping and changes in street character can be used to achieve low vehicle speeds by design. This accords with Manual for Streets and with the NPPF emphasis on safe, inclusive and attractive streets that minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and

vehicles.

9. Traffic Effects and Network Capacity

A scheme of 30 dwellings is a relatively modest residential development in highway network terms. It will introduce additional vehicle movements at the existing access, particularly during weekday commuter periods, but the scale of movement is not of a magnitude that would normally be expected to create a material capacity constraint on a rural link such as Holwell Road in the absence of an existing congestion issue.

No formal TRICS trip-rate analysis or junction-capacity model accompanies the information provided for this report, and numerical trip rates have therefore not been invented. If the Highway Authority considers a quantified assessment necessary, a proportionate Transport Statement can include TRICS-based trip generation and, if warranted, junction assessment. The physical access evidence presently available - long visibility, an existing bell-mouth, a lack of collision clustering and a modest development quantum - provides no indication that a severe residual network impact would arise.

In NPPF terms, the relevant threshold for refusal is a severe adverse effect on the transport network or an unacceptable highway-safety effect. Nothing in the submitted access information indicates that either threshold would be approached. Where proportionate mitigation is requested, it can be secured through planning condition, section 106 obligation and/or section 278 highway agreement as appropriate.

10. Construction-Phase Considerations

Construction traffic will be temporary but should be managed so that the access remains safe and the operation of Holwell Road is not unduly affected. A Construction Traffic Management Plan can be secured by condition and can include contractor parking, delivery routing, delivery hours, wheel cleaning, temporary signage, storage of materials, measures to prevent mud and debris on the carriageway, and arrangements for maintaining pedestrian safety.

The existing bell-mouth provides an appropriate basis for construction access, subject to any temporary strengthening or widening required. Visibility envelopes will be kept clear throughout construction, and the final residential access will be completed before occupation in accordance with the approved detailed design.

11. Conclusions and Recommendations

- The development can be served from the existing/permitted bell-mouth access onto Holwell Road, avoiding

the creation of an additional access point on the road.

- The submitted visibility drawing demonstrates 2.4 m x 204 m to the north and 2.4 m x 235 m to the south. These are very substantial visibility distances.
- The 235 m southern splay exceeds the DMRB 215 m desirable minimum comparator for a 100 km/h design speed. The 204 m northern splay exceeds the 160 m DMRB comparator for 85 km/h (approximately 53 mph) by 44 m and is only 11 m below the highly conservative 100 km/h benchmark.
- Manual for Streets indicates that visibility on existing roads should be related to measured 85th percentile wet-weather speeds. No speed survey has been undertaken, so the report does not assert a measured speed. The proximity of the 40 mph zone, the subsequent 20 mph village environment and the short acceleration distance from the south support the use of a lower practical speed sensitivity than the full National Speed Limit.
- The supplied ten-year CrashMap extract shows no recorded collision at the site access or on the immediately adjoining Holwell Road approaches, and no local collision cluster is evident.
- The indicative internal layout provides footways on internal roadways, individual access to dwellings from the internal network and a terminal turning head capable, subject to detailed swept-path design, of serving refuse and emergency vehicles.
- The detailed highway design can be secured at reserved matters and technical approval stages, including footway dimensions, parking, cycle storage, EV charging, drainage interfaces, tracking and any necessary off-site highway works.
- On the evidence presently available, the proposal is capable of achieving safe and suitable access for all users and there is no basis to conclude that it would result in an unacceptable highway-safety impact or a severe adverse impact on the road network.

Recommended planning-stage position

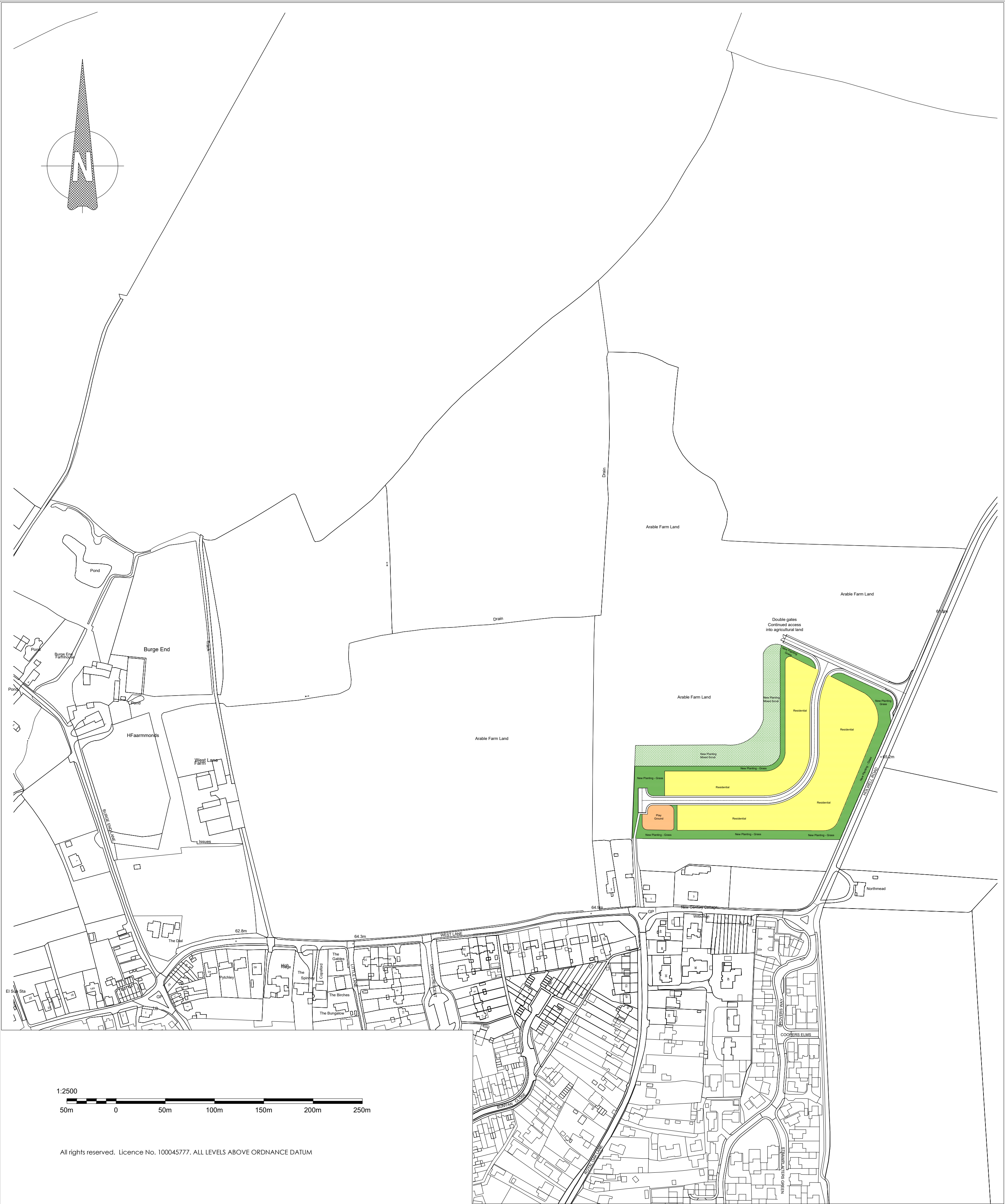
The access and broad internal movement principles are suitable to support the outline application. If requested by Hertfordshire County Council, a speed survey can be provided; however, the available visibility already exceeds the higher-speed 85 km/h DMRB benchmark in both directions and exceeds the 100 km/h benchmark to the south. Detailed access geometry and internal highway matters are appropriately capable of being resolved through reserved matters and conditions.

References

1. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2026), National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026 - policies TR3, TR4 and TR6.
2. Department for Transport / Communities and Local Government (2007), Manual for Streets - sections 7.5 and 7.6.
3. National Highways (2020, current online standard accessed September 2026), DMRB CD 109 Highway Link Design - Table 2.10 design-speed related stopping sight distances.
4. North Hertfordshire District Council (2022), North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 - Policies SP6, T1 and T2.
5. Pirton Parish Council / North Hertfordshire District Council (2018), Pirton Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031 - Policies PNP11 and PNP12.
6. Hertfordshire County Council (2024), Place and Movement Planning and Design Guide for Hertfordshire.
7. PSK Rural Limited (2026), Visibility Splay Plan, Drawing LAP VSP 001 Rev A.
8. CrashMap supplied extract, selected ten-year search period, verified data through 2024.

Appendix A - Visibility Splay Plan

PSK Rural Limited Drawing LAP VSP 001 Rev A, August 2026. The drawing records X = 2.4 m, Y = minimum 204 m north and Y = minimum 235 m south.



Revisions	Drawings Notes
	1. this is not a survey drawing - all dimensions to be checked on site.
	2. do not scale off this drawing
	3. the copyright of this drawing is the property of Pike Smith and Kemp Rural
	4. all discrepancies to be reported to the architect
	5. please ensure that this drawing is read together and cross referenced with all other relevant architectural drawings, schedules and specifications.
	6. please ensure that this drawing is read in conjunction with all other consultants/specialist contractors relevant drawings, schedules and specifications.

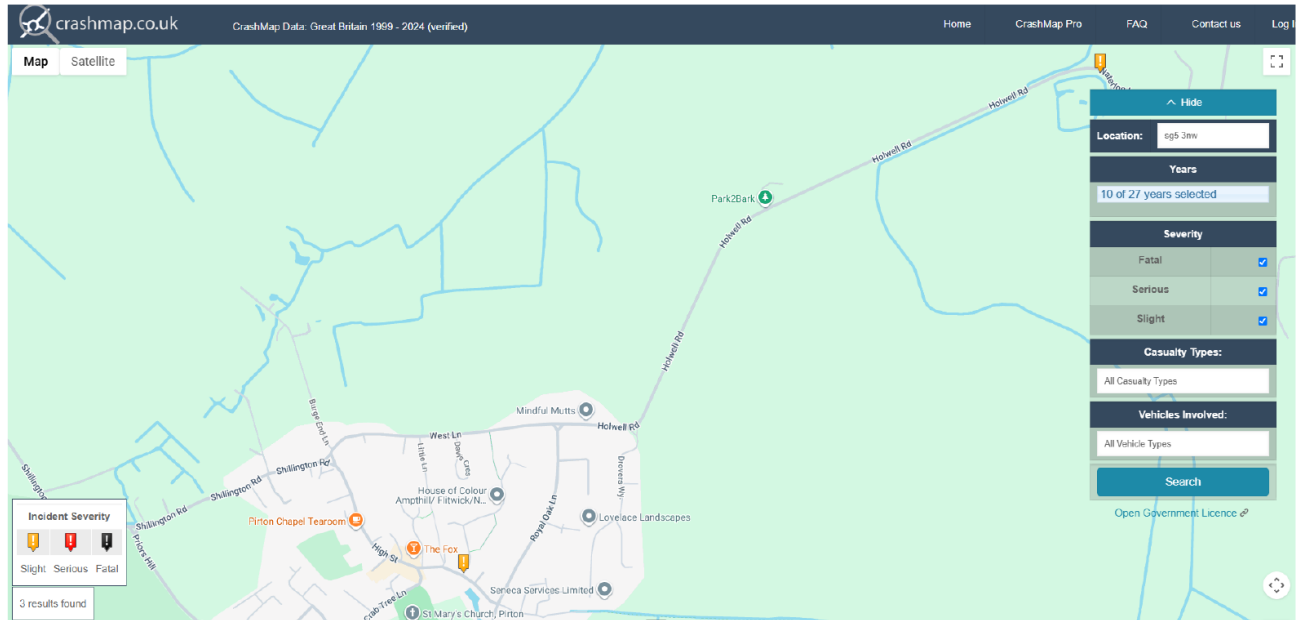


PSK Rural Limited
The Old Dairy, Hyde Farm, Marlow Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 6PQ
www.pskrural.co.uk
01628 777666

Project	Land at Pilton Hitchin SG5 3RA
Title	Indicative Site Layout Plan - Proposed Residential Development
Fig No.	LAP SITE 001
Rev	A
Drawn	TMC
Checked	JPH
Date	08/2026
Scale	1:2500 (A2)
Status	Planning

Appendix B - CrashMap Extract

The supplied CrashMap image is reproduced below. The selected search period is ten years, with the displayed dataset verified through 2024. Three incidents are shown within the wider map extent, with none plotted at the site access or on the immediately adjoining section of Holwell Road.



Appendix Figure B1. Supplied CrashMap search result.