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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: 26/01012/FP
HCC ref: NH/29012/2026
HCC received: 29 April 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

623 Blackhorse Road, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 1HB

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Change of use from Sui Generis Timber Merchant to flexible Class B2/B8/E(g)(iii) Industrial and alterations to existing parking arrangements

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 does not wish to restrict the grant of permission.

Highway comments:

The applicant has submitted a Planning Statement (PS) in support of their application and associated plans which the Highway Authority (HA) has reviewed and has the following comments to make:

The application site is located on Blackhorse Road within an established employment area, with existing lawful vehicular access arrangements that are to be retained. The proposal comprises a change of use from a Sui Generis timber merchant to flexible Class B2/B8/E(g)(iii) industrial uses, alongside reconfiguration of parking and servicing areas.

Parking provision

The proposed car parking provision is a matter for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to determine. However, it is essential that any parking and access arrangements operate in a safe, suitable and

efficient manner so as to minimise the impact on the local highway network, which is the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority (LHA).

Access and highway safety

The development proposes no alteration to the existing access points onto Blackhorse Road. The continued use of the two existing vehicular crossovers is acceptable, subject to them remaining in good condition and fit for purpose.

The internal layout demonstrates that vehicles, including light goods vehicles and HGVs, can enter, manoeuvre, and exit the site in a forward gear, which is consistent with HCC's Place and Movement Planning and Design Guidance.

The retention of a single HGV loading area to the rear is considered appropriate given the scale and nature of the site.

Based on the submitted information, the proposal would not result in a material intensification of use compared with the historic timber yard operation. Therefore, the LHA considers that the development is unlikely to have a severe residual cumulative impact on the highway network in accordance with Paragraph 115 of the NPPF (2024).

Trip generation and impact

The applicant has indicated that the proposal would not materially increase traffic generation relative to the previous use.

Given the flexible nature of the proposed uses (B2/B8/E(g)(iii)), trip rates may vary depending on the end occupier; however, the scale of floorspace and retained servicing arrangement suggest that impacts would remain comparable to the lawful fallback position.

The site benefits from reasonable accessibility to sustainable transport modes, including proximity to bus stops and Letchworth Garden City railway station, which supports opportunities for non-car travel.

On this basis, the LHA considers that the development would not adversely affect the operation or safety of the local highway network.

Parking layout

The reconfiguration of the site formalises previously informal parking arrangements and removes open storage, which is supported in highway terms.

While the level of car parking provision has reduced from the existing informal level, the introduction of a structured layout is likely to improve usability and safety within the site.

The provision of 9 cycle parking spaces is welcomed and exceeds minimum policy expectations, supporting sustainable travel.

The LHA notes that parking standards are ultimately a policy matter for the LPA, but from a highway perspective, the layout should ensure:

- No overspill parking onto Blackhorse Road;
- Adequate turning space is retained at all times;
- Parking does not obstruct servicing or access routes.

Servicing and construction considerations

Adequate space appears to be retained for servicing and delivery vehicles, including HGV access to the loading bay.

It is expected that any future occupier will manage deliveries in a manner that avoids conflict with peak highway periods and maintains free flow on the adjacent highway.

Recommendation:

The HA raises no objection, as the proposal would not adversely impact highway safety or the road network, and the access, layout, and servicing arrangements are acceptable, in accordance with Policies T1 and T2, the NPPF (2024), and HCC guidance.

Signed

Senober Khan

18 May 2026