



Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CHN115
Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage
SG1 2ST

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: 24/01883/RM
HCC ref: NH/22204/2024
HCC received: 6 September 2024
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

Land Between Royston Road And, Cambridge Road, Barkway, Hertfordshire,

Application type

Reserved Matters

Proposal

Reserved Matters : Application for the approval of reserved matters comprising: details of the siting, design and external appearance of the development, and the landscaping of the site in respect of the approved outline planning permission ref: 18/01502/OP for the development of 140 dwellings and a new shop on the land between Royston Road and Cambridge Road, Barkway

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 for the following reasons:

The Highway Authority under the current submission cannot support the application due to the application has failed to demonstrate a satisfactory policy and design-led approach to the internal access road layout and access arrangement contrary to Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) policies 5 and 6 and also contrary to the principles of sustainable development contained in the NPPF, therefore the proposals represent a risk to highway safety for all road users.

Brief Description of Proposed Development in support by the applicant:

The application seeks permission for reserved matters in respect of the siting, design and external appearance of the development, and the landscaping of the site.

Access is already secured through the approved two new junction arrangements onto Royston Road and Cambridge Road.

Access & Movement Plan

This plan illustrates the 'Parameters' which are shown as being the Village Street (primary route) through the site between the new junctions onto Royston and Cambridge Roads, as well as the equestrian crossing point. The new access junctions onto Royston and Cambridge Roads were approved (not reserved) under the outline planning permission and are considered fixed on that basis.

Site Access & Off-site Highway Improvement Plans (x6)

The site access proposals have been replicated on the proposed layout plan as fixed elements from the outline planning permission. The off-site aspects will be taken forward under Section 278 approvals and do not fall within the scope of the reserved matters application. The proposals do however take these off-site footpath improvements into account in order to inform an appropriate strategy for active travel connections within the site.

Parking

With respect to parking, the document indicates that it is 'to be provided in accordance with the North Hertfordshire District Council standards / HCC Vehicle Parking Standards with details to be agreed through the Reserved Matters process'. It refers to the Illustrative Masterplan having assumed a range of parking solutions 'including: on plot parking to the side and rear of homes, on-street parking, and, to deliver a continuous street frontage or swales, rear parking in small, planted, secure parking courts or rear gardens'. The proposed layout seeks to achieve a balance between safety and convenience alongside minimising the visual impact of parking on the public realm. The parking solutions for properties along the Village Street are either to the side or rear of dwellings in small parking courts or driveways, while away from the Village Street and the more public areas of the site there is some limited use of parking to the front of dwellings, with appropriate landscaping proposed to soften the visual impact.

Highway comments:

Whilst the site access proposals have been replicated on the proposed layout plan as fixed elements from the approved outline planning permission ref: 18/01502/OP however, the applicant has not submitted any detailed information to substantiate that the site's internal road layout complies with 'Roads in Hertfordshire - Highway Design Guide' design.

The proposed car parking provision and layout is the responsibility of the LPA to determine the level and suitability of the car parking proposals, however, it is essential that it is operated in efficient and safe manner to minimise the impact on the local highway network which is the responsibility of the HCC HA.

No information has been provided to show vehicle to vehicle inter-visibility from the internal junctions, tactile paving at junctions, speed limit of 20mph and 10mph on shared surfaces and how this will be achieved, and verifying the gradient of the internal access roads shall not exceed 1:20 as measured from the existing carriageway, to avoid grounding of vehicles using the access to the new development from Cambridge Road and Royston Road.

The submitted plans show that the applicant is proposing traffic calming consisting of raised tables along the internal access roads, it is assumed to achieve target speed limit of 20 mph and 10mph for the shared surfaces (cul-de-sacs for motorised traffic serving less than 25 dwellings), nevertheless the applicant will be required to demonstrate/ substantiate in detail how the proposed traffic calming and road layout/design is in accordance with the relevant guidance.

Furthermore, MfS states: The gradient of pedestrian routes should ideally be no more than 5%, although topography or other circumstances may make this difficult to achieve. However, as a general rule, 8% should generally be considered as a maximum, which is the limit for most wheelchair users as advised in inclusive mobility.

To provide good access for disabled people, designs that satisfy their requirements also meet the needs of many other people such as those who are travelling with small children or are carrying luggage or heavy shopping, people with temporary mobility problems (e.g. a leg in plaster etc.) and older/fragile people, all benefit from an accessible environment.

Shared surfaces can also cause problems for some disabled people. People with cognitive difficulties may find the environment difficult to interpret. In addition, the absence of a conventional kerb poses problems for blind or partially-sighted people, who often rely on this feature to find their way around. It is therefore important that shared surface schemes include an alternative means for visually-impaired people to navigate by.

To create a successful shared surface street, the shared surface area is designed with the intent of it being used for activities such as playing and socialising whilst ensuring motorists reduce their speeds to 10mph. Shared surface streets are not an acceptable alternative to inadequate footways where space/provision is not available to do so.

This is a new build development therefore higher standard of build and design are expected and required. The applicant is required to provide all the above provisions shown with the required dimensions and gradients all clearly annotated on any deposited plans which will form the basis of any approved plan.

Recommendation:

The Highway Authority under the current submission cannot support the application due to the application has failed to demonstrate a satisfactory policy and design-led approach to the internal access road layout and access arrangement contrary to Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) policies 5 and 6 and also contrary to the principles of sustainable development contained in the NPPF, therefore the proposals represent a risk to highway safety for all road users.

Signed

Senober Khan

27 September 2024