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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: 26/02639/SO
HCC ref: NH/30790/2026
HCC received: 15 October 2026
Area manager: James Dale
Case officer: Oliver Sowerby

Location

Central Approach, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 3DL

Application type

Screening/Scoping Opinion

Proposal

Screening Opinion : EIA screening request

Recommendation

OTHER

EIA Scoping Request

The Local Planning Authority (North Hertfordshire District Council), has consulted the Highway Authority (Hertfordshire County Council, HCC), regarding a request for a screening opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for a proposed development at Garden Square, Letchworth.

The development description is set out as below:

“Regent Street Projects Ltd (the ‘Applicant’) intends to submit a full planning application to North Herts Council (NHC) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the demolition of the existing buildings and delivery of up to 240 dwellings (Use Class C3) and 1,859 sqm of Class E floorspace (predominantly in retail and food and beverage uses) (the ‘Proposed Development’) Land occupying Garden Square Shopping Centre, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3DP (the ‘Site’). On behalf of the Applicant, we write to request an Environmental Impact Assessment (‘EIA’) Screening Opinion from NHC in accordance with Regulation 6(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (‘EIA Regulations’).”

The Highway Authority note the submission of Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report, dated October 2026.

Separate to any EIA, the Highway Authority would expect a Transport Assessment (TA) and Residential Travel Plan (RTP) to accompany the planning application for the site in order to allow the highways and transport impacts of the development to be considered. The Highway Authority note the transport section in the aforementioned document and the preparation of a TA.

It is recommended that a TA is prepared in alignment with pre-application advice that can be provided by HCC and also in compliance with HCC's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) (May 2018). The Highway Authority note that the applicant and their transport consultant has entered into pre-application advice to discuss all highways and transportation matters.

Reference may be made to the following weblink to HCC's Development Management page where information on a variety of highways and transportation matters may be found:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

The Highway Authority seeks that TA's are prepared in accordance with the LTP4 document, which includes the following key policies.

LTP 4 Policy 1 (Transport User Hierarchy) considers that 'To support the creation of built environments that encourage greater and safer use of sustainable transport modes, the county council will in the design of any scheme and development of any transport strategy consider in the following order:

- Opportunities to reduce travel demand and the need to travel;
- Vulnerable road user needs (such as pedestrians and cyclists);
- Passenger transport user needs;
- Powered two wheeler (mopeds and motorbikes) user needs; and
- Other motor vehicle user needs.

LTP 4 Policy 5 (Development Management) states that 'The county council will to work with development promoters and the district and borough councils to:

- a) Ensure the location and design of proposals reflect the LTP Transport User Hierarchy and encourage movement by sustainable transport modes and reduced travel demand;
- b) Ensure access arrangements are safe, suitable for all people, built to an adequate standard and adhere to the county council's Highway Design Standards;
- c) Consider the adoption of access roads and internal road layouts where they comply with the appropriate adoption requirements and will offer demonstrable utility to the wider public. Where internal roads are not adopted the county council will expect suitable private management arrangements to be in place;
- d) Secure developer mitigation measures to limit the impacts of development on the transport network, and resist development where the residual cumulative impact of development is considered to be severe;
- e) Require a travel plan for developments according to the requirements of 'Hertfordshire's Travel Plan Guidance';
- f) Only consider new accesses onto primary and main distributor roads where special circumstances can be demonstrated in favour of the proposals;
- g) Resist development that would either severely affect the rural or residential character of a road or other right of way, or which would severely affect safety on rural roads, local roads and rights of way especially for vulnerable road users; and
- h) Ensure new developments provide facilities for charging plug-in and other Ultra Low Emission vehicles, as well as shared mobility solutions such as car clubs.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/transport-planning/local-transport-plan.aspx>

Given that the applicant should deal with all relevant Highways and Transportation matters via any forthcoming Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, the Highway Authority wishes to make no further comment on the requirement for an EIA. It is noted that the applicant should take into account the relevant HCC policy documents, such as LTP4 and the document, 'Highways Place and Movement Planning and Design Guide'.

Signed

Oliver Sowerby

20 October 2026