



HERTFORDSHIRE

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Prevention First

Alex Howard
North Herts Council
Planning Department
Council Offices
Gernon Road
LETCWORTH
SG6 3JF

Date 8th August 2024

Our Ref: CPD 12112024

Your Ref: 24/01496/FP

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Re: 3 to 5 Newells, Letchworth

Dear Alex,

Thank you for inviting me to comment on the proposal to develop the above site, I have studied the documents on the Council's planning portal and have the following comments to make.

- I have substantive concerns regarding the information within both the Design and Access

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Statement and the Planning Statement. As you know, both national and local planning policy states that applications and decisions must consider issues around crime, disorder, and the fear of crime. In this case there is only a fleeting reference to crime and no evidence as to how this will be addressed. I have studied the crime figures for an area fifty metres around the whole of the road over the period of July 2023 to June 2024. During this time there were sixty-four crimes committed. Thirty were assaults, twelve were anti-social behavior, there were seven burglaries, five vehicle related crimes, three criminal damages and two drug related incidents. Unfortunately, the applicant has not demonstrated how they intend to address these. To mitigate this situation, I would recommend that the applicant engages with Hertfordshire Constabulary's Crime Prevention Design Service. The reason for this is to seek full accreditation to the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design (SBD). As this is being developed on behalf of Settle Homes, I would have expected to find references to SBD etc. this is because SBD is a proven method of crime reduction as it produces an over eighty percent reduction in burglary offences. It also reduces the incidence of ASB and vehicle crime.

- I have substantive concern with the ground floor plans for this development as all the bedroom and lounge windows appear to be readily accessible. I would expect to see that all these windows are third party certified to PAS 24:2022 or equivalent standard and that those that are not opening onto the balconies have some form of 'Hostile Planting' in front of them to deter offenders and protect the occupant's privacy. This should take the form of bushes such as pyracantha or berberis and are kept with a maximum growth height of one metre.
- I also have substantive concern with the natural surveillance of the parking from the flats. For Policing purposes, the only rooms that are classes as 'active rooms' for natural surveillance are the kitchen, lounge/dinning rooms, and study/utility rooms. Bedrooms, bathrooms, and toilets are not classed as active rooms since their windows are either opaque or covered by curtains. This means that there are only three windows on this level that overlook the parking area. This reduced surveillance level could result in increased levels of

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vehicle crime.

Given the concerns raised the Police are unable to fully support this application. However, if this is granted planning permission, I would request that an 'Advisory' is added to the grant to encourage the developer to engage with the Police regarding SBD accreditation. It could read something like, "Prior to construction the applicant will contact the Hertfordshire Constabulary CPDS with a view to seeking to achieve accreditation to the Police preferred minimum security standard that is Secured by Design.

Reason: To ensure that the development is compliant with both National and Local Planning Policies, in addition, this will also demonstrate the discharge of obligations under Approved Document 'Q' – Security of Building Regulations."

Yours faithfully

Mark Montgomery

Mark Montgomery
Crime Prevention Design Advisor
Hertfordshire Constabulary

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