

ICKLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL



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Mr Thomas Howe
Planning Officer/Development Management
North Hertfordshire Council
PO Box 10613
Nottingham
NG6 6H

September 2025

Dear Mr Howe,

Re: Planning Application: 25/01904/FP – Land to the Rear of 34 Arlesey Road, Ickleford (Local Plan IC1)

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Herts County Council as Highway Authority, Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants and Philips Planning Services Limited's comments to the above Planning Application.

Herts County Council as Highway Authority

Whilst every consideration has now been given as to how the development must proceed, with emphasis being on cleanliness, noise pollution, screening etc., not once has any mention been made to Duncots Close and its residents.

In their initial objection to the Application, their views were very understanding of the fact that Duncots Close has no footpaths (the road is bordered by a narrow strip of grass), which for the residents has never been a problem, as awareness that someone may be walking in the road has always been appreciated.

No amount of cleaning, noise pollution, screening or anything else to do with this development, will take away the fact that the residents of Duncots Close, will not only have to tolerate the consequences of building traffic using their cul-de-sac, while construction is taking place, but for the future, they will have to suffer the continuing safety aspect of not only just walking to and from their homes, but

losing the freedom for their children in play, because of traffic wanting to enter and leave the new site, this being approximately 18-27 vehicles.

The Parish Council fully support the concerns raised by the residents of Duncots Close pertaining to safe road access and feel that the Highway Authority should reconsider their change of view.

Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants

It is obvious that the report was either perceived by desktop technology or observed from a vehicle remaining at the entrance to Duncots Close.

The Author under Item 1 states “Duncots Close is an existing shared surface road in Ickleford, currently serving four residential dwellings” whereas in fact there are seven dwellings in Duncots Close. Please see below:



As stated above, there are no footpaths for pedestrians.

Low speeds may be respected by those living within the proposed new development, but visiting delivery vehicles rarely observe a respectful speed, as they have a time limit to achieve. Our concerns are therefore drawn to the fact that on leaving the new development at speed, it will be almost impossible to achieve

full and clear vision by car or van drivers to the left, which could bring about a danger to vehicles, walkers or children approaching the exit from these three dwellings in Duncots Close.

In conclusion, it is felt that Stomer Civil Engineering Consultants should revisit, in person, Duncots Close and observe the full situation, which will include the three houses not observed from their desk top plans.

Phillips Planning Services Limited

Traffic, Access & Parking, Refuse

Items 4 and 5 have been dealt with above.

Insufficient Parking

Whilst we appreciate that PPS abides by the Council's standards and that in this case Herts Highways confirm, nonetheless, these standards only allow for 2 cars per household, as has been the case for many years. These standards have been allowed for in the Plan, but we must look to the future. With the number of bedrooms being allowed for, we must assume that children will be expected to reside here. Once the age of 17 is reached, the majority of teenagers these days, look forward to driving their own vehicle. Nowhere on this development has allowances been made, apart from visitor parking, which is inadequate in itself, for extra vehicles. It is therefore expected that extra cars will have to park on the road or in the case of liberties being taken on Duncots Close and Arlesey Road. Because of garage design, many are unable to facilitate the modern car, let alone two.

The opinion of the Parish Council still remains, that with insufficient parking, manoeuvrability within the development will be almost impossible, especially for Refuse and more importantly Emergency vehicles.

Tracking & Turning for Larger Vehicles

Regarding Tracking and Turning, please see above.

With Stomer Civil Engineering Consultants misunderstanding the layout of Duncots Close, the Parish Council are very much concerned with Refuse and larger vehicles leaving the proposed development. We have mentioned in our comments to Stomer's remarks that full and clear vision will be unable to be

achieved by car and van drivers to the left, towards the three extra dwelling that Stomer missed, however, with regard to larger vehicles, visibility will be almost impossible.

Refuse Storage

The Parish Council is disappointed to read that no provision has yet been made to accommodate the number of bins now required to be stored, which as of today number four in total plus a food caddy per residence. It is, however, interesting to see that PPS agree that garages, because of not being of a size to allow for the modern car, can be utilised to store refuse bins!

Archaeology & Heritage

It is good that serious consideration is being given by the Applicant to the Archaeology of the Site. To do so, is not going beyond the minimum requirements, it is doing what is expected for an area that could withhold the past history of the area.

Heritage

Having witnessed with other development applications, house designs can change from those originally put forward. In the case of one site, house heights were altered to accommodate a third floor, bringing the roof lines much in view of the surrounding Conservation Area, thankfully this was refused.

However, with St Katherine's Church (Grade 1) being situated on a rise, and the proposed development in a lower elevation, once all foliage has fallen during the Autumn and Winter months, the new development could well be visible. Visibility would undoubtedly be impaired for the Grade 2 Ivy Cottage, Grade 2 Orchard Cottage and their neighbours in Arlesey Road, all being located within the Conservation Area and overlooking the Site.

Flooding and Surface Water and Foul Drainage

Climate Change is here, and something we have to learn to live with and accommodate, especially when looking to develop areas that are known to be liable to flooding.

Duncots Close has witnessed flooding in the years since it has been built. Being situated within the same lower elevation as the proposed site, torrential rain finds

its natural course and mixed with a Victorian sewage system that is unable to cope, backwash is an ever-occurring problem, causing sewage to rise in gardens and homes.

Whether the development is included in the Local Plan or not, it cannot be assumed that there will be adequate room to accommodate these homes within the Foul water system. As pointed out many times and yet ignored, Anglian Water while measuring for foul water disposal, do not consider run-off water. It is therefore inevitable, after a deluge of storm water run-off, the system is unable to cope and therefore, backs up.

There is no water course within Ickleford, capable of accommodating any run-off water from new developments. It will be a misdemeanour to even consider that the water course located near to the proposed development, can be used as an appropriate sustainable drainage connection to the river Hiz (not Ivel or Purwell as shown on Google Maps), which must be, once again, pointed out is a 'pure chalk stream'.

Therefore, the Developer must ensure that all run-off water from houses and roads is retained by a SuDS system, which every developer and planning authority know, are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses.

Have the developers sought and gained permission to discharge surface water to a watercourse – from the Environment Agency and the local lead flood authority - Hertfordshire County Council?

The attached 'flood risk summary statement/Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Strategy' (page 7, section 5.1.2) does not give an adequate rationale for not considering ground drainage or surface water drainage system.

We believe it is ambiguously quoting the Environment Agencies 'order of consideration' hierarchy. Additionally, the Page 7, section 5.1.3 statement – 'The site-specific SI report identified that infiltration methods would not be suitable for the disposal of surface water runoff due to the high groundwater table observed' – This needs to be challenged and qualified.

With such developments there is a "sustainable drainage hierarchy" which firstly promotes trying to discharge to ground (e.g. infiltration into the soil) or a surface water drain and only considering discharge to a watercourse as a last resort after all other options have been ruled out. Sustainable drainage

systems (SuDS) Standards and Part H of the Building Regulations require that the first choice of surface water disposal should be to discharge to infiltration systems where practicable. This should even be applied where infiltration can only account for a proportion of the runoff from the design event.

As a Parish Council we have listened to the input and concerns of the River Hiz Conservation Group on potential pollution and have included the comments within our letter of objection.

The River Hiz and its tributaries hold significant environmental importance in the area's ecological system.

The River Hiz Conservation Group is concerned that the proposed residential development at Duncot's Close, Ickleford, will negatively affect this precious watercourse. We hold the opinion that the developers 'Flood Risk Summary Statement and the Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Strategy' has not adequately considered the environmental impact in line with regulatory requirements.

The River Hiz is fed from water held within an underlying chalk bedrock. As a chalk stream it is a globally rare and special habitat present only in England, France and Denmark. 283 chalk streams are found in England, which represents 85% of the global total. Most are located in the South and East of England. The alkaline nature of the watercourse provides a particular character and ecology. The filter process ensures the water is clear, pure, and fortified with many inorganic nutrients that provide essential building blocks for life. These characteristics allow a huge diversity of aquatic plants to thrive, supporting many fish, invertebrates, and other species.

The proposed drainage strategy increases the risk of 'urban diffuse pollution'. This includes run-off from roads, roofs and pavements and contains a high number of fine sediments. This form of pollution also carries potentially toxic chemicals from human activities, such as copper from car brake pads and zinc from car tyre wear. Without careful planning to ensure run-off is captured and treated at source, the current proposed drainage strategy will increase the amount of polluting run-off flowing into the River Hiz, and adversely affect the rivers ecological system.

The River Hiz Conservation Group therefore objects to this development's 'Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Strategy' and insist this proposal is urgently reviewed to ensure regulatory and environmental requirements are achieved to the highest possible standard.

In conclusion, whilst it is appreciated by the Parish Council that this is a Site included in the Local Plan, we feel that the above responses, made on behalf of the residents of Duncots Close, the River Hiz Conservation Group and more importantly the Village, should be addressed.

Kind Regards

Steven Patmore

Steven Patmore

Clerk/RFO

Ickleford Parish Council

Cc: District Cllr Louise Peace
County Cllr David Barnard