

CONSULTATION RESPONSE TRACKER – PHASE 1 RM HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN 16 February 2026

LPA Reference: 25/02794/RM

Case Officer: Sarah Kasparian

STATUTORY CONSULTEE	CONSULTEE COMMENTS	BDW RESPONSE/COMMENTS
NHDC Design Officer, landscape consultant, highway officer and planning officer	Design Code Checklist setting out compliance, non-compliance and required revision commentary	See separate Design Code Checklist response and Rapleys covering letter
LLFA	The drawings provided for this RM are sufficient for the application. Our condition 15 on the outline is being dealt with concurrently under 25/01378/DOC. No Objection.	No Objection noted. The referenced DOC has now been discharged. No further action required.
Hitchin Forum	Object – sequencing of the development means those moving onto the site will lack basic amenities. Existing local infrastructure is already overburdened, particularly relating to local highways, footpaths, lack of the promised bus vouchers and improved frequency of bus services for serving the site, lack of promised school, no health clinic as originally proposed, no shop as originally proposed. The housing layout looks cramped.	Developments of the scale of the overall site (700) are always phased – the S106 requires a sequence of financial contributions according to dwelling occupation triggers which will be honoured by BDW (for bus services, offsite infrastructure /highway improvements). Specifically, the commencement of development triggers the payment of a raft of S106 financial contributions. The school (also subject to dwelling construction/occupation triggers) is nonetheless to be provided by the County Council, not BDW. The shop is set for provision within phase 3 or separate central square RM. A health clinic was never part of the proposal or policy requirement. These infrastructure/amenity points are matters set by the Outline Planning Permission, the phasing strategy approved under condition 5 and S106 and are not subject to this RM submission.
Housing Officer	Concern /comment that the mix of the affordable housing does not align with 2016 SHMA percentages. Particularly concerned that virtually the whole site requirement of ½ bed flats are being provided in this phase which does not accord with the S106. In addition, the flats require balconies and defensible outside open space and the two bed houses and flats should have separate kitchen/dining/living rooms.	See separate explanation and response to the comments set out within the Rapleys Covering Letter.

Oliver Sowerby – HCC Highways	Requests visibility splays marked up; requests details on lighting and tree planting within the highway. Why are there two spurs to the south of the main spine put forward for adoption – the northern loop was to be included specifically for the bus turning facility?	Our position has consistently been with HCC to offer the three internal loop roads for adoption (even since before planning), on the basis that the southern loop roads (to the west of the site near High Dane and the eastern loop road to the south), on the basis that these are required to allow vehicles to loop around prior to reaching the restriction/bus gate within the square. All three loop roads are designed to adoptable standards. As the spurs are to be delivered within phase 1 these have therefore been highlighted as proposed for adoption. WSP has provided a plan and further explanation as part of the package of revisions.
GUI - HCC	No comments to make. Note S106 contribution requirements.	Noted. No response required
NHDC EHO (Noise/Contaminated land/air quality)	No comments or objections.	Noted no objection – no response required.
Affinity Water	Site not located in an SPZ. Water Quality - The construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be done in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices, thereby significantly reducing the groundwater pollution risk. It should be noted that the construction works may exacerbate any existing pollution. If any pollution is found at the site then the appropriate monitoring and remediation methods will need to be undertaken. For any works involving excavations below the chalk groundwater table (for example, piling or the implementation of a geothermal open/closed loop system), a ground investigation should first be carried out to identify appropriate techniques and to avoid displacing any shallow contamination to a greater depth, which could impact the chalk aquifer. For further information we refer you to CIRIA Publication C532 "Control of water pollution from construction - guidance for consultants and contractors". Water efficiency: Being within a water stressed area, we expect that the development includes water efficient fixtures and fittings. Measures such as rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling help the environment by reducing pressure for abstractions. They also minimise potable water use by reducing the amount of potable water used for washing, cleaning and watering gardens. This in turn reduces the carbon emissions associated with treating this water to a standard suitable for drinking and will help in our efforts to get emissions down in the borough. <u>We currently offer a discount to the infrastructure charge for each new development where evidence of a water efficiency design to a standard of 110litres (or less) per person per day is expected. The discount</u>	Noted – no response required.

value for the charging period 2023/24 is £258. For more information visit Water efficiency credits (affinitywater.co.uk).

Infrastructure connections and diversions: There are potentially water mains running through or near to part of proposed development site. If the development goes ahead as proposed, the applicant/developer will need to get in contact with our Developer Services Team to discuss asset protection or diversionary measures. Due to its location, Affinity Water will supply drinking water to the development in the event that it is constructed. Should planning permission be granted, the applicant is also advised to contact Developer Services as soon as possible regarding supply matters due to the increased demand for water in the area resulting from this development.

Herts Fire & Rescue Services	Fire Hydrants – Following assessment, no objection . HFRS will not assign Hydrant Numbers until final design is approved and agreed.	Note no objection. No response required.
Herts Constabulary	Requests the applicant engage with Herts Crime Prevention Design Service to seek to achieve accreditation to the Police SBD. Not able to fully support application but are not objecting to it.	Note comments. Layout accords with the approved Design Code and responds to all the design concerns/accessibility/permeability points raised by NHDC. Buildings are all designed in accordance with operational Building Regulation requirements.

PUBLIC COMMENTS	ACTIONS/RESPONSES
Highways infrastructure around Hitchin cannot cope. Proper traffic surveys should be undertaken which will prove this point. Congestion is major issue. Issues with footpaths to Town Centre as well from the site – under narrow rail bridges and the paths themselves are unfriendly and narrow	Appropriate traffic surveys were carried out prior to the application submission and throughout its determination (including additional traffic work requested by Councillors at the July Committee in 2023) in accordance with standard practice guidelines and the requirements of the County Council Highway Authority. Outline planning permission for the whole site of 700 dwellings was subsequently granted in November 2024. This current application is the first phase reserved matters providing the detail for the road design, open space and 236 dwellings – it does not, therefore, and cannot, open up the debate again about highway infrastructure and traffic impact from the site. S106 financial contributions are being made in accordance with adopted requirements, and at a level reflective of the development impact, for the Highway Authority to finance a number of identified off-site improvement schemes.
Flooding at site and off site is an issue and the development will add to this.	The drainage principles for the Site were approved as part of the outline planning permission. Since then, condition 15 dealing with the detailed drainage design has been approved and discharged, alongside the Infrastructure RM which included the detailed construction of the infiltration basins, swales, pipework, etc. Both the LLFA and the local water companies are satisfied that the Drainage strategy for the Site is acceptable.

The development is on Green Belt yet was given the go ahead despite residents objections

The adoption of the Local Plan in 2022 removed the site from the Green Belt and established the principle of development on the site, following the Examination of the Local Plan by an independent Inspector. The outline application for the whole site was granted on 28 November 2024. This is a reserved matters application for one phase of the development.

Infrastructure generally cannot cope – doctors, dentists, hospitals all oversubscribed. There is need for investment in essential facilities. Sustainable neighbourhoods require more than housing and there is nothing of this in this application.

The outline planning permission was accompanied by a S106 Agreement which contains commitments and triggers for the payment of financial contributions for off-site education, leisure, health, footpaths, ecological and highway improvement provision. The principle of a primary school, alongside a financial contribution for it was also part of the outline permission, although the actual provision of the school in phase 2 is the responsibility of the County Council.

Support the houses in principle as there is a clear need for additional housing.

Support is noted.

More detail required on the affordable housing, whether it is social, genuinely affordable.

The application Planning Statement provides the necessary detail for this Phase 1 RM – overall site provision is 40% as required by the S106 Agreement, where the split must be at least 65% social/affordable rent and 35% intermediate tenure; the Phase 1 provides 40% with a split of 71.6% (no. 6) social/affordable rent and 28.4% (no. 27) intermediate tenure – this detail is provided within the submitted Planning Statement for the Phase 1 RM application.

The housing roofs should be able to accommodate at least 4kw solar panels mounted between SE and SW orientation.

The house roofs can accommodate solar panels as appropriate. The approved Sustainability Strategy (discharged under condition 12) clarifies that the Phase 1 dwellings will be built to Building Regulations Part L, 2021 standards and that these all include the provision of solar pv panels on the roofs.

Please can phase 2 be published so those of us living on High Dane can understand the road access.

High Dane is actually Phase 3 (circa 94 dwellings) and has not been designed as yet. Notwithstanding this, the Infrastructure RM (24/02780/RM), approved on 27th October 2025, clearly showed how The Avenue through the main site was to be designed and connect to High Dane.