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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: 26/01115/PNQ
HCC ref: NH/29213/2026
HCC received: 19 May 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: William Rogers

Location

Land Located To The Southwest Of Deadman's Hill, Gannock Road, Sandon, SG9 0RJ

Application type

Prior Approval

Proposal

Prior Approval Class Q Agric to Dwelling : Change of use of an agricultural barn to one dwelling to include alterations to fenestration and provision of two parking spaces

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 does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

COND1) Prior to the first use of the development, all access arrangements serving the development as shown on in principle plan drawing number DR-A-2003 Rev 1 shall be constructed and completed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction. Prior to its use commencing, arrangements shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure the provision of an access appropriate for the development in the interest of highway safety

COND2) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the vehicular visibility splay shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved drawing number(s) DR2. The splay shall thereafter be retained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure that the level of visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is satisfactory in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

INFORMATIVES

HCC as Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Note (AN) to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980.

AN1) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN2) Obstruction of highway: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made-up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN4) Avoidance of surface water discharge onto the highway: The applicant is advised that the Highway Authority has powers under section 163 of the Highways Act 1980, to take appropriate steps where deemed necessary (serving notice to the occupier of premises adjoining a highway) to prevent water from the roof or other part of the premises falling upon persons using the highway, or to prevent so far as is reasonably practicable, surface water from the premises flowing on to, or over the footway of the highway.

AN5) Works within the highway (section 278): The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the County Council website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

COMMENTS

Context: Gannock Road is an unclassified local access road and is highway maintainable at public expense. A 60mph speed limit applies, on HCC's Place and Movement network, Ardens Way is classed as P1/M1 (Eg. Rural Lane). No reportable highway collisions recorded within the immediate vicinity of the application site (5-year rolling). No Public Right of Way (on the PRoW map) directly affects the site or would be affected by the proposal. The county council considers Gannock Road not to be a traffic sensitive road.

Proposed Development: Involves the change of use of an agricultural barn to one dwelling to include alterations to fenestration and provision of two parking spaces.

Access: The application form states that a new or altered vehicular or pedestrian access is proposed to or from the public highway. The proposal is to amend the existing agricultural access to a suitable made-up access. As detailed within the submitted Access Appraisal document (Journey Transport Planning ref AA838) "The access would be designed in accordance with Hertfordshire design guidance and would be made up of a bound surface for the initial 6m into the access. Parking for the dwelling would be provided in accordance with current standards with a suitable area for turning being provided within the site to enable vehicles to enter and exit the site in forward gear. Any gates would be sited at least 6m into the access from the carriageway edge and would be inward opening only." The applicant will need to enter into a S278 agreement with HCC as Highway Authority in relation to the modified access arrangement, an advisory note is recommended in this respect (AN5).

Visibility: A speed survey has been carried out demonstrating the 85%ile speeds are less than 60mph. As detailed within the submitted Access Appraisal document (Journey Transport Planning ref AA838) "The DMRB indicates that for a recorded 85%ile speed of 50.9mph, visibility at 2.4m by 154.0m to the south from the access would be required and for an 85%ile speed of 51.0mph, the DMRB recommends visibility at 2.4m by 154m would be required to the north from the access. As set out in Section 2 of this report, the achievable visibility at the access has been assessed and is achievable at 2.4m by 187m to the north and 2.4m by 215m to the south."

Trip Generation: The additional habitable space to be created as a result / nature of the proposed development is unlikely to result in a sever increase in additional vehicle trips to and from the site. No significant, or severe, impact on the transport network is identified.

Parking: The LPA shall be responsible for assessing the proposed development against local parking standards and to satisfy for itself that any level of parking it requires can be achieved within the boundary of the site and not overhang the highway, including the highway footway / vehicle crossover. The Highway Authority would observe the following. Hertfordshire's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (PMPDG Part 4, Chapter 6, Paragraph 11.9) says proposed driveway parking spaces should be a minimum size of 2.5 x 5.0 m each, vehicles shall be located on land within the ownership of the applicant, any overhanging vehicle on the footway would be deemed an obstruction of highway (it is an offence to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway). A hardstanding area would make provision for onsite parking space for two vehicles as well as a turning area for vehicles to enter and exit in forward gear.

Sustainability: Planning for Walking, issued by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) places emphasis on developments being located and designed, where practical, to give priority to pedestrian (and cycle) movements and have access to high quality public transport facilities. In terms of accessibility, 400m walking distance to bus stops is considered to represent a reasonable catchment, further for a railway station (800m). There are no footways near the site. The options for sustainable travel to and from the site are limited when taking into account the rural location. Nevertheless HCC as Highway Authority accepts that there is an existing use on site and the proposal represents alterations to the existing agricultural building and that there is provision within the NPPG (at para 108) that permitted development right does not apply a test in relation to sustainability of location. This is deliberate as the right recognises that many agricultural buildings will not be in village settlements and may not be able to rely on public transport for their daily needs. Instead, the local planning authority can consider whether the location and siting of the building would make it impractical or undesirable to change the use to residential.

Surface Water Flood Risk to the highway: The transport network needs to be resilient to the risks from the impacts of climate change, including changing weather patterns and extreme events. Policy 5 and of the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) seek to secure developer mitigation measures to limit the impacts of development on the network. HCC's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (Part 3, Chapter 16 Para 4.7), states that water from areas that are not adoptable highway must not be allowed to run onto areas of adopted highway. The Government's flood risk maps for planning indicate parts of the nearby highway carriageway to be at low risk of surface water flooding: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

The application does not appear to indicate how surface water will be discharged from the site, an informative is recommended in this respect (AN4).

Emergency Vehicle Access: Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 117 (d), applications for development should allow for access by emergency vehicles. Guidance is set out in Manual for Streets (MfS) (6.7.2). HCC's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (P&MPDG) (Part 2 Chapter 4). Requirements are set out in the Building Regulations: Fire Safety Approved Document B, Vol 1, dwellings, 2010 (as subsequently amended). Access for a pumping appliance should be provided to within 45m of a single building (and within 45m of all points within the building). As far as it can be reasonably ascertained from submitted plans, the proposed development would be within the recommended emergency vehicle access distance from the highway.

Access for Refuse Vehicles: The proposal will not affect access arrangements for kerbside collection.

CONCLUSION

HCC as Highway Authority has considered the proposal and concludes that due to its limited scale it would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on the safety or operation of the surrounding highway. It raises no objections but recommends the inclusion of the above conditions and highway informative / advisory notes.

The applicant will need to enter into a S278 agreement with HCC as Highway Authority in relation to the modified access arrangement an advisory note is recommended in this respect (AN5). Further information can be found on the county council's website:

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

Signed
William Rogers

8 June 2026