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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: 25/00018/FP
HCC ref: NH/24053/2025
HCC received: 29 August 2025
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

23a Hitchin Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire, SG7 6AQ

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Full Planning Permission : Change of use from a funeral parlour - E(c)(ii), to 4 number dwellinghouses - C3(a) and associated single storey extensions. Removal of existing entrance portal and installation of new privacy gates following demolition of existing car port roof structures

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:

CON1) No development shall commence until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including elements of the CLOCS standards as set out in the Highway Authority's Construction Management template. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan: The Construction Management Statement shall include details of:

Access arrangements to the site.

Traffic management requirements.

Construction and storage compounds

Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway.

Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times.

Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway.

Where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding which must be kept within the site boundary, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements

Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

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 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.

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) Street works licence (New Roads and Street Works Act - Section 50): The applicant is advised that they are not authorised to carry out any work within the Public Highway and that to do so they will need to enter into a legal agreement with the Highway Authority (NRSW agreement). This consent is separate and additional to any planning permission that may be given. Before proceeding with the proposed development, the applicant shall obtain the requirements and permission for the associated placement of apparatus within the adjacent highway as part of the proposal via the County Council's website at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/permit-scheme/east-of-england-permit-scheme.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234 40047. This should be carried out prior to any new apparatus is placed within the highway.

COMMENTS

The proposals are for Amended Proposal Full Planning Permission: Change of use from a funeral parlour - E(c)(ii), to 4 number dwellinghouses - C3(a) and associated single storey extensions. Removal of existing entrance portal and installation of new privacy gates following demolition of existing car port roof structures

Context:

Hitchin Street is a classified (B6141) local access road and provides a secondary distributor function in the road hierarchy Hitchin Street is highway maintainable at public expense. A 30mph speed limit applies. On Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement network Hitchin Street is classed as P3/M2 (High Street). No reportable highway accidents recorded within the immediate vicinity of the application site (5-year rolling). No Public Right of Way (as shown on the Public Rights of Way Map) directly affects the site or would be affected by the proposal. The county council considers Hitchin Street to be a traffic sensitive road.

Policy Review:

The key documents used to assess the application are

- Manual for Streets 2007
- National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
- Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan-4 [2018-2031, May2018]
- Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (Department for Transport Local Transport Note July 2020)
- HCC's Place & Movement Planning Design Guidance (adopted in March 2024)

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has previous planning history.

DRAWINGS

The Highway Authority note the submission of materials in support of the planning application, including drawing numbers: Design & Access Statement, PL100 Rev A, PL200 Rev C, and PL100 Rev A.

ACCESSIBILITY

'Cycle Infrastructure Design' DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020) recommends for cycle parking storage should be 2m (1.8m is acceptable) in length by 0.3m space between cycles. There should be parking for 1 cycle per dwelling. Outside cycle parking should be covered and lockable. The provision of well-located, safe and secure cycle parking for residents and visitors is a key factor in encouraging people to cycle as an alternative to using the private car. This is adequately illustrated on Drawing (Ref PL200 Rev C)

Walking and Public Transport Accessibility

The guidance document Planning for Walking, issued by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT), emphasises that developments should be located and designed, where practical, to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements and ensure access to high-quality public transport facilities.

In terms of accessibility, CIHT considers a 400m walking distance to bus stops to represent a reasonable catchment area, with 800m being appropriate for access to a railway station. In this case, the site benefits from good public transport connectivity, with at least four bus stops located within a 1 to 4-minute walk. This supports the car-free nature of the development and aligns with sustainable transport principles, although it remains important to ensure that pedestrian routes to these facilities are safe, direct, and compliant with relevant design standards.

PARKING

Section 7 of the Design & Access Statement notes that the existing vehicular access will not be retained, as the site lacks sufficient turning space to allow vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear. Instead, the proposal prioritises private amenity space over on-site vehicle parking. This approach is supported by the availability of good public transport links in Baldock.

This is a positive aspect of the proposal, as it aligns with the principles of sustainable development and promotes active travel, in accordance with the objectives set out in Local Transport Plan 4.

ACCESS

It is also noted and welcomed that pedestrians and cyclists will access the site via the existing entrance, which is shared with Lyme Cottage, Hart Cottage, and the White Hart PH (not a public access route).

VISIBILITY

As the development is car-free, there will be no vehicular movements associated with the site itself. Pedestrian and cycle access will be via the existing shared entrance, which also serves Lyme Cottage, Hart Cottage, and the White Hart PH (not a public access route).

The existing pedestrian visibility at this access point remains unchanged and is considered appropriate for the scale and nature of the development. Given the absence of on-site vehicle traffic, the current visibility arrangements are sufficient to ensure safe and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists.

EMERGENCY ACCESS

Given the nature of the site, the proposed access may be approaching or exceeding the 45m threshold of hose length, which could place it at odds with national guidance. The Fire Service will be informed and direct their comments to the Local Planning Authority (North Herts)

REFUSE / RECYCLING

The proposals for recycling bin storage must be in line with Manual for Streets MfS 6.8.9 residents should not be required to carry waste more than 30m and be within 25m of the kerbside/bin collection point.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT STATEMENT (CMS)

It is important that a CMS is provided considering the busy nature of Hitchin Street and lack of parking. The statement must have or be shown as a drawing of the construction site and the dedicated areas within. These should include but not limited to, construction vehicle access for deliveries and storage area.

CONCLUSION

Should the LPA be minded to approve the application please note the above condition and informatives. This level of development is unlikely to generate any extra movements which would ultimately lead to demonstrable harm to the highway network in terms of free flow and capacity, therefore; the highway authority would not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission.

Signed

Paul Marshall

15 September 2025