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Development and Conservation Manager
North Herts Council
PO Box 7075
Manchester
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Dr J Bickerton and Ms E A Price
8 Coach Drive
Hitchin
SG4 9AP

4th October 2026

Dear Sir

Reference 26/02208/FP

Full Planning Permission: Erection of 3no detached dwellings with garages following demolition of existing house and outbuildings. Formation of vehicular access onto the highway.

Trees, Gosmore Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 9AN

We note that this updated version of the plans submitted and rejected in 2025 as 25/00423/FP has:

- Removed the windows in the attic space and reduced the height of the buildings in plots 1 and 2 by around 0.5m
- Slightly reduced the footprint of the building on Plot 2
- Moved the building on Plot 2 slightly away from 8 Coach Drive

We welcome these changes. We do however still have some serious concerns.

We still have concerns about the cumulative scale of the development and believe some aspects of this application are in conflict with policies D2 and D3 of the Local Plan.

We are not convinced the new application fully addresses the issues raised by the Council Planning Department at that time, in that the development is still excessive and out of character, and has an overbearing visual impact on us at 8 Coach Drive. It also impacts significantly on our privacy.

In addition, the updated plans do not address the issues raised by the Planning Inspector in the Appeal Decision dated 24th October 2025 namely that the character and appearance of the proposed development (paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the Decision Notice) have not changed at all. The change to Living Conditions (paragraph 8) is minimal.

The proposed development would result in two properties with short rear gardens. Accommodation would be over two floors. For each plot this results in 5 bedroom windows and a bathroom window in the first floor rear elevation directly overlooking our property.

Overlooked

Our effective rear garden to No 8 Coach Drive faces south-west and abuts the rear boundary to the application site. This amenity space is currently private and not overlooked. Our large living room window also faces in this direction.

As described above, the proposed development would result in two properties with a large number of windows directly overlooking this space.

The proposals will therefore cause unacceptable actual and perceived overlooking to this private amenity space and the bedroom and living area windows of No. 8 Coach Drive.

Dominance

Two such large new buildings not far from our fence line will dominate our plot, particularly in comparison to our bungalow.

Conclusion

This close proximity of Plots 1 and 2 to our home and in effect main garden will cause an unacceptable overbearing impact.

Possible mitigations

As the height of the roof suggests the possibility of a third floor room under permitted development, we suggest that if planning permission for this development were granted, the option for further permitted development should be removed. We would also like to see a condition enforcing planting of effective year-round screening.

Supporting Evidence

We would like to see architect drawings of the proposed elevations from our direction. In the absence of these we include with this letter the current aspect from our living room window, and our visualisation of how it will be if the plans go ahead.

Yours Sincerely,

James Bickerton and Elisabeth Price