



Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CHN115
Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage
SG1 2ST

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: 24/01013/HYA
HCC ref: NH/21068/2024
HCC received: 4 August 2025
Area manager: James Dale
Case officer: Adrian McHale

Location

Land Surrounding Burloes Cottages, Newmarket Road, Royston, Hertfordshire,

Application type

Outline

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Outline Application : Hybrid application for residential development of up to 325 dwellings comprising (a) full planning application for Phase 1 comprising 106 dwellings and associated infrastructure including access from Newmarket Road, emergency and pedestrian/cycle access from Burloes Hall Drive, internal highways, public open space, landscaping and drainage and b) outline application for up to 219 dwellings and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from primary means of access and emergency and pedestrian/cycle access from Burloes Hall Drive

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 recommends that permission be refused for the following reasons:

REASON(S) AND COMMENTS

The proposal site is located just outside the eastern edge of town of Royston in North Hertfordshire and is bound to the west by the tree belt which borders the eastern edge of the existing urban area, to the north by the wooded corridor of Newmarket Road, to the east by further woods that surrounds the access lane to the historic Burloes Hall (currently a wedding venue), to the south by the densely packed woods that surrounds the Hall. A hybrid application has come forward to develop 325

homes on the site; a full planning application for Phase 1 (106 homes + associated infrastructure) and an outline application (219 homes).

Sustainable Transport Access

In line with the Policies of LTP4, particularly Policies 1 (the Transport User Hierarchy) and 5 (Development Management) it is essential given the declared climate emergency that this is considered first to unlock a site sustainably.

HCC Highways has concerns over the proposed sustainable transport corridor which could potentially unlock this site.

Within a 40mph zone the 3.0m shared foot/cycleway should be set back by ideally 1.0m (0.5m may be acceptable in certain circumstances). However, given the proximity of the shared path to the north of the Newmarket Road vehicle access to the 60mph zone, westbound vehicles may still be travelling in excess of the proposed 40mph speed limit past the foot/cycleway. Therefore, a 2.0m setback would be required or the 60/40mph transition signs need to be relocated further east and a 1.0m setback provided.

Shared foot/cycle lane junctions and bends must also provide for cycle turning circles realistic for the design speed to comply with Tables 5-1 to 5-7 of LTN 1/20. Whereas, currently the proposed design involves right angles with no curve or chamfer.

The shared use foot/cycle way between Icknield Walk and Poplar Drive required to provide a connection to the Icknield Walk First School on Poplar Drive and areas in the north of Royston, including the Rail Station and the Orchard Road Employment Area, is currently a substandard width and needs to be widened to at least 3.0m as per HCC Highways Place & Movement Planning and Design Guide (P&M PDG). Furthermore, to provide safely for this connection crossings over Icknield Walk and Poplar Drive are required.

As stated in the 10 June 2024 response by HCC Highways proposed footpath to Aintree Road is a clear desire line for cyclists and provides connections to Studlands Rise First School and areas to the South of Royston and needs to be upgraded to facilitate it.

Within the site it is unclear the exact gradient of the shared use foot/cycleway but it is envisaged that it is in the region of 1:15 (6.5%), which as per HCC Highways Place & Movement Planning and Design Guide (P&M PDG Part 3 Chapter 4 page 99) is too steep, and the appropriate resting platforms must be provided no more than 25m apart. Furthermore, adequate visibility to the shared foot/cycle way from residential driveways needs to be demonstrated.

Isochrones

The Transport Assessment (TA) shows 'As-the-Crow flies' walking and cycling Isochrones these are misleading and unacceptable as they do not take account of actual walking or cycling times which are likely longer due to gradients and obstacles such as busy roads and limited safe crossing points. Actual walking and cycling routes isochrones are required.

Bus Access

The average operating cost of a single vehicle is approximately £175,000 per annum, and thus we would seek contributions on this basis for a period of five years, totalling £875,000 (index-linked).

The vehicle would be added to an existing service that could divert into the site, or alternatively used to support the development of a new service if required at the time. This would aim to enhance connectivity to key locations such as railway station/s and interchanges with other services, supporting sustainable travel and local development.

Service levels will be reviewed at the time of introduction to determine the appropriate frequency, based on factors such as occupancy levels and the availability of local funding.

For sites like this, which include a dedicated turning point and infrastructure within the development, it is advisable that developers provide detailed tracking data and specify the infrastructure to be delivered. This should include Kassel kerbing, a shelter (with Hertfordshire flag bracket), a stop pole if not integrated with the shelter and bus cage/s to protect the stop from others parking. All infrastructure should be installed and accessible from day one of occupation.

The PTU team have concerns over the ability of services to operate via the proposed priority controlled access due to its proximity to the 60mph section of Newmarket Road and would also prefer the 60/40mph transition signs relocated further to the east.

Furthermore, swept path analysis needs to demonstrate that a 12m vehicle can enter/ exit the site and turn around within.

Spine Road

HCC Highways welcomes the changes to the detailed layout of the Spine Road since the previous application and HCC response, however we consider that more than one bollard might be needed on junction corners.

Road Safety

The TA fails to present a detailed analysis of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) in the vicinity of the site that would enable HCC Highways DM to appropriately consider the impact of the proposals upon the safety of the road network.

HCC Highways consider that an 5 year RTC analysis of Newmarket Road between the A10 and A505 and 200m either side of the A505/Newmarket Road junction should be undertaken. The most upto date RTC data for the last 5 years can be obtained from Anthea.Nott@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

Travel Plan (TP)

HCC's Travel Plan team have reviewed the submitted TP and consider that it requires amendment before we can approve. In particular, more ambition in relation to modal shift targets, a commitment to annual monitoring and review, and a commitment for the plan to be in place until 5 years post full occupation.

This Travel Plan does require amendment before we can approve. In particular, more ambition in relation to modal shift targets, a commitment to annual monitoring and review, and a commitment for the plan to be in place until 5 years post full occupation. Detailed comments are as follows:

- Travel Plan Co-ordinator details should be provided on appointment along with those of a secondary contact in case of personnel changes.
- An indication of time allocated to role and frequency on site should also be provided.

- We also ask that a statement of management commitment be provided from a suitable member of the estate management company to demonstrate commitment to the robust implementation of the plan.
- Residential travel vouchers, which could be used either towards walking, cycling, or towards any diverted/new bus services, should be provided in line with our guidance, see www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/travelplans Table 1 p13.
- Given the potential for the use of sustainable modes suggested by the assessment of the site's accessibility and likely bus service diversion, modal shift targets should be more ambitious – 8% over 5 years, with only a 1% increase in walking being targeted. We would like to see a minimum 10% over 5 years, obviously this can be reviewed following the baseline survey and based on opportunities at the site.
- We require annual surveys (not alternate years as proposed) and the Travel Plan needs to be in place for 5 years post full occupation (which may be longer than the 5 years proposed) – this is assuming targets are met during this period. Review of the plan needs to take place after each survey.
- An Evaluation and Support fee of £1200 per year should be sought for the Travel Plan to be in place until 5 years post full occupation.

Traffic Analysis

Whist HCC Highways are aware that the the Traffic Impact of the site was considered acceptable subject to previously agreed S106 contributions and the trip generation was determined robust, the application has however since lapsed and the analysis presented in the 2017 TA (2021 design year) is considered extremely dated and should be brought up to date using fresh traffic counts before a decision can be made as to the developments traffic impact.

S106 Contributions

HCC Highways operate two levels of mitigation agreements (Strand 1 and Strand 2). Strand 1 mitigation works being works that are directly required to unlock the development and solely the responsibility of the development. Strand 2 mitigation works being works that address the wider cumulative impact of the development for which the development isn't solely responsible for but does derive benefit from.

In the first instance HCC would envisage that S278 works to integrate the site into the walking and cycling networks, finalised bus contributions and travel plan contributions are delivered via a Strand 1 s106 agreement.

In the second instance (Strand 2) HCC calculate an appropriate headline figure based on the findings of HCC's adopted Developers Planning Obligation Toolkit (2021). Strand 2 contributions should address the cumulative impacts of all development, large and small, facilitating delivery and enhancement of the necessary active and sustainable transport networks. These local sustainable networks must be provided in their entirety to provide the sustainable connections to the key trip generators, as such contributions will be pooled to fund these networks within the local area (subject to any legislative restrictions), as supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This second strand contribution is intended to help implement broader transport measures in the catchments of new development from which contributions are secured. The need for second stand contributions will be balanced against the level of first strand contributions and any other relevant planning matters.

For the development HCC Highways calculates the Strand 2 contribution at £3,204,825 (Mar 2024) would be required if this development were to proceed. This would be aimed at improving the

sustainable network that the site could integrate into and allocated to schemes such as those identified in the recently adopted NHDC LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan, September 2023) or Package 15 (Royston) of the emerging North Central Growth and Transport Plan (NC GTP), a sub document of LTP 4. The headline strand 2 contribution however, could be reduced if the event the applicant decides to deliver more of the Newmarket Road LCWIP route to the west of Poplar Drive.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/lcwips-2022/north-hertfordshire-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan.aspx>

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/highways/north-central-gtp/ncgtp-interventions-paper-final-acc..pdf>

Signed

Adrian McHale

26 August 2025