

Hitchin Forum

CARING FOR OUR TOWN

29 Bearton Road

Hitchin

SG5 1UE

11 July 2025

Planning Department

North Herts Council

Gernon Road

Letchworth Garden City

For the attention of Thomas Howe

Dear Sirs

25/01412/FP 18-19 Bancroft

I am writing to you on behalf of Hitchin Forum.

We object to these proposals for the following reasons:-

This is an important site in the Conservation Area. It is surrounded by listed buildings and faces Hermitage Road with views from Windmill Hill.

The present building, previously a Safeway Supermarket, is one of Hitchin's most unlovely buildings. This is a real opportunity to improve a very important & visible street scene in the town centre. We are pleased indeed at this opportunity to change the front elevation of the building.

We support the principle of smaller retail units plus residential but the scheme does not in our view make full use of the possibilities for this important central site.

We are not happy with the proposed front elevation facing Bancroft, and feel this should be re-examined and improved, particularly as regards the bow windows, and the overall “almost symmetry”, caused by the differing window widths between floors and the uncomfortable integration of the pedestrian ground floor link to the right hand side of the elevation.

We would have liked to see several more dwellings in the centre of the site rather than the three large houses as proposed. Central locations are precious and we want more people to live within the town. We do not accept the argument put forward in the Design and Access Statement of the submission, that the very much denser (recently withdrawn) proposals for redevelopment of the former Woolworths site at 9-10 High Street would (if built) meet the need for smaller houses in the town.

The steps down to the rear of the shops are, we suggest, not very practical for deliveries.

Yours faithfully

Neil Dodds

On behalf of Hitchin Forum