



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: 26/00415/PIP
HCC ref: NH/28234/2026
HCC received: 17 July 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

Waterdells, Pottersheath Road, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 9TA

Application type

Permission in Principle

Proposal

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Permission in Principle : Erection of one detached dwelling

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:

Whilst the submitted Transport Note and Means of Access drawing demonstrate that an appropriate vehicular access and visibility splays can be achieved, the site remains in an inaccessible and unsustainable location with limited opportunities for travel by walking, cycling or public transport. The proposal is therefore contrary to the sustainable transport objectives of the NPPF, LTP4 and the Place and Movement Planning and Design Guide (P&MPDG), and for these reasons the Highway Authority objects to the development in principle and does not support the proposal.

Highways comments:

The Highway Authority (HA) has reviewed the additional information submitted in response to the HA comments dated 11 March 2026, comprising a Technical Note (TN) Ref. ST-4119/TN-2607-Rev0 dated July 2026 and Proposed Means of Access (MoA) Drawing ST-4119-700 dated 07.07.2026. The HA has the following comments to make.

1. Sustainability and accessibility

The TN has been reviewed and the applicant's response is noted. The submission seeks to justify the proposal on the basis that the site is located within a rural area where opportunities for sustainable travel are inherently more limited and that the proposal comprises only a single dwelling which would generate a limited number of vehicle trips. The applicant also refers to the economic and social benefits associated with the provision of an additional dwelling.

Whilst these points are acknowledged, the additional information does not alter the HA's assessment of the site's accessibility credentials. The submission does not provide any improvements to pedestrian, cycle or public transport infrastructure, nor does it demonstrate how future occupiers would have realistic opportunities to undertake day-to-day journeys by sustainable modes. The site remains characterised by:

- No footways connecting the site to nearby services and facilities;
- No street lighting;
- No dedicated cycle infrastructure;
- No formal crossing facilities; and
- Limited public transport opportunities beyond a reasonable and attractive walking distance.

The applicant's reliance on Paragraph 110 of the NPPF is noted. Whilst the NPPF acknowledges that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, it does not exempt rural developments from the requirement to promote sustainable travel or provide safe, suitable and inclusive access for all users. The NPPF continues to require development proposals to support sustainable transport objectives and prioritise opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport wherever possible.

Furthermore, whilst the Draft NPPF (December 2025) has not yet been adopted, and therefore carries limited weight, it is considered relevant insofar as it indicates the direction of emerging national policy. The draft framework places greater emphasis on connectivity, sustainable accessibility and vision-led transport planning, with increased focus on reducing the need to travel by private car and ensuring developments are located where genuine travel choices are available. It also reinforces the importance of creating places that are safe, well-connected and accessible by sustainable modes.

In this instance, the site remains devoid of pedestrian infrastructure, dedicated cycle facilities and accessible public transport opportunities. Future occupiers would have no realistic alternative to private vehicle use for the vast majority of day-to-day journeys. Consequently, whilst opportunities for sustainable transport may vary between urban and rural locations, the proposal has not demonstrated compliance with the sustainable transport objectives of the NPPF, Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) or the Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance (P&MPDG).

The applicant's reference to another planning application on Pottersheath Road is noted. However, each application must be considered on its own merits and circumstances. The comments provided by the HA in relation to a separate site do not diminish the accessibility shortcomings associated with the current proposal.

The HA also notes that Hertfordshire County Council's Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance (P&MPDG) and Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) place sustainable and active travel at the forefront of development planning and require proposals to demonstrate compliance with the sustainable transport hierarchy. The submitted information has not demonstrated how the proposal supports walking, cycling or passenger transport, nor how it accords with the wider sustainable movement objectives of these documents.

Accordingly, the HA remains of the view that the site's accessibility credentials are poor and that the proposal represents an unsustainable form of development from a transport perspective.

2. Access and highway safety

The applicant has submitted a detailed MoA drawing based upon a topographical survey undertaken in July 2026. The submitted information demonstrates that visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m can be achieved in both directions from the proposed access and that these can largely be accommodated within the public highway and land under the applicant's control. The submitted drawing indicates that only minor vegetation trimming would be required to the south of the proposed access to achieve the required visibility envelope.

Based upon the information submitted, the HA is satisfied that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that a suitable vehicular access could be achieved and that the required visibility splays can be accommodated, subject to detailed design at any subsequent stage.

The HA's previous concerns regarding access geometry and visibility have therefore been satisfactorily addressed.

3. Highway position

The additional information has addressed the HA's concerns relating to access visibility and the ability to provide a suitable vehicular access.

However, the submission does not overcome the HA's principal concern regarding the sustainability and accessibility of the site. Future occupiers would remain heavily reliant on private vehicle use for the vast majority of day-to-day journeys due to the absence of realistic opportunities to travel by walking, cycling or public transport.

Whilst the scale of development is acknowledged, the applicant has not demonstrated how the proposal accords with the sustainable transport objectives of the NPPF, LTP4 or P&MPDG. The proposal therefore continues to conflict with national and local transport policy aimed at promoting safe, sustainable and inclusive movement.

Recommendation:

Whilst the submitted Transport Note and Means of Access drawing demonstrate that an appropriate vehicular access and visibility splays can be achieved, the site remains in an inaccessible and unsustainable location with limited opportunities for travel by walking, cycling or public transport. The proposal is therefore contrary to the sustainable transport objectives of the NPPF, LTP4 and the Place and Movement Planning and Design Guide (P&MPDG), and for these reasons the Highway Authority objects to the development in principle and does not support the proposal.

Signed

Senober Khan

2 August 2026