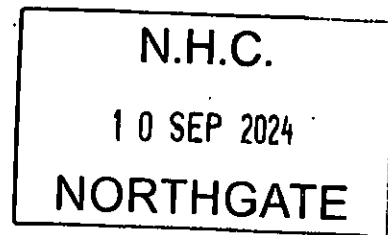


LONG BARN
SCHOOL LANE, PRESTON
HITCHIN SG4 7SA



06 September 2024

The Chief Planning Officer
North Herts Council
Letchworth

Dear Sir

**Ref. 24/01604/FP - Temple Dinsley (formerly The Princess Helena College) School
Lane Preston Hertfordshire SG4 7RT**

I have been unable to register my comments on-line and submit these in this letter for your attention:

1 I welcome the re-use of the former buildings for residential use and the care and respect being given to the historical context and their immediate surroundings. The layout and site planning however, gives me considerable concern in two key areas:

a Fire safety and means of access for emergency vehicles

The means of escape from the former school buildings being retained rely upon stairs that do not, as far as I can see, offer alternative means of escape in case of fire. (The drawings offer limited floor plans of all floor levels.) The exit routes do not appear to offer easy access externally to a point of safety. I hope this matter will be very carefully assessed by all regulatory authorities.

b Congested access and circulation

I feel the route leading into the development will become unduly congested at the area close to the main access into the centralised car park where it coincides with servicing vehicles that will have to park nearby. The conceptual layout for access relies upon residents being able to walk quite considerable distances from their parked cars and I seriously wonder how attractive this will be for older residents. Gaining access for deliveries and coping with the collection of waste will rely upon a management company, I understand. How reliable will this become some years into the future?

2 Access in the park

I welcome the proposal to improve access within the outer parkland by linking permissive paths with footpaths and especially to relieve the danger of walking (and cycling) along School Lane that has a blind, and very dangerous bend. However, the lack of maintenance of the boundary hedgerows along School Lane has added to this danger and I'm grateful for the assurance by the developer that this will be trimmed and cut back regularly. Could be controlled by an obligatory commitment?

I am also pleased and very grateful for the introduction of recreational facilities that can be enjoyed by the wider community in the village.

3 Peripheral development

I strongly support the views expressed by Hugh Reeves in his submission regarding the woodlands, the park and the buildings in these areas. I believe far greater concern should be given to control and limit the outlying elements of the planning proposal as it unnecessarily creates tentacles of a built environment into the countryside.

Cont./p2

Cont. P2

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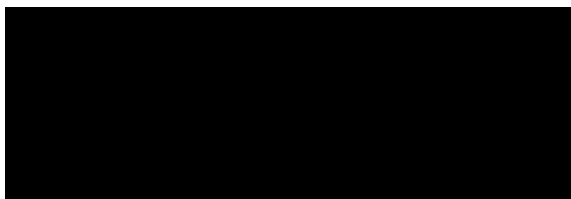
4 Dark skies

I have lived in Preston for 50 years and we strongly value and wish to see the rural character of the village maintained. I do not wish to see street lighting and pavements encroaching and changing this character.

I am therefore concerned that the main entrance roadway and pathways into this overall development should not be lit by street lights and other means of external lighting that will otherwise result in a 'glow of light' across the countryside destroying our 'dark skies'.

This concept is embraced by our Neighbourhood Plan. We are accustomed to using torches at night with minimal dependance upon external lighting...and I sincerely hope this will be respected by the development architects as the detailed design develops.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Michael Kellard.

Michael Kellard