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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: 26/00006/FP
HCC ref: NH/28015/2026
HCC received: 30 January 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Shamsul Huda

Location

Land To North Of, Stevenage Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7JX

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Erection of 50no. residential dwellings (including affordable) with public open space, associated parking, landscaping and access

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:

COMMENTS:

The Highway Authority has reviewed the submitted Transport Assessment (TA), Travel Plan (TP), General Arrangement Plans (GAP), Proposed Site Layout Plans, and associated technical documents. Based on the information provided, the Highway Authority is unable to support this application at this stage due to insufficient information and unresolved concerns relating to highway safety, capacity, and compliance with current design standards.

In the absence of the required information and given the number of outstanding matters with potential implications for highway safety and convenience, the Highway Authority must recommend refusal. However, the Authority remains willing to reconsider the proposal should the issues outlined below be addressed satisfactorily.

1.HIGHWAY SAFETY:

Personal Injury Collision (PIC) Data

- Paragraph 2.6.1 of the Transport Assessment refers to PIC data from 2020–2024. This is not the most up-to-date five-year period and must be refreshed.
- The data suggests a notable number of incidents, including a fatal collision.
- Need to provide up-to-date PIC data and clarify whether this location is classified as a hazardous site.

Speed Reduction

The proposal to reduce the speed limit within the cul-de-sac to 20 mph via a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is acceptable in principle and aligns with HCC's Place & Movement Planning and Design Guide (P2/M1).

The applicant is advised to submit a formal speed reduction application with all necessary supporting documents in accordance with HCC's Speed Management Strategy 2020.

2 FOOTWAY AND ACCESSES:

Footways

- Para 3.2.2 proposes 1.8 m-wide footways; however, the Highway Authority requires at very least 2.0 m-width footways.
- Drawings (Ref 34653 H 01, P2) do not show compliant footways on both sides of the proposed access road.
- The applicant is advised to amend drawings to provide 2.0 m footways on both sides to be consistent with the TA

Access

Access arrangement shown on drawings (Ref 34653 H 01, P2) and Ref-34653 H 02 P1) are acceptable in principles, subject to resolving the following:

Junction 1 – Ashbrook Cul De Sac / Stevenage Road

- Existing western radii are excessively large and should be reduced to slow vehicle speeds.
- Consideration should be given to providing left- and right turn lanes to improve junction capacity to enter Stevenage Road.

Junction 2 – Stevenage Road / A602

- No mitigation measures have been proposed despite known congestion and safety issues.
- Consideration should be given to providing left- and right turn lanes to improve junction capacity to enter A602

Junction 3 – Access to School

- No pedestrian crossing or safety enhancements have been proposed for access to/from the school on the A602. The applicant needs to provide appropriate junction safety and capacity mitigation measures.

3. INTERNAL ROAD LAYOUT

Visibility

- No visibility splays are shown for internal bends and junctions.
- Provide visibility splay details in accordance with HCC's Place & Movement Planning and Design Guide (March 2024) and P2/M class streets

Tactile Paving

- No tactile paving provision is shown at the internal crossing points
- Include tactile paving at all internal pedestrian crossing points

Footway Link to PROW 15

- No details of the proposed connection to the Public Right of Way have been submitted.
- Need to provide PROW connection design details in accordance with HCC's Non-Motorised Routes Design Guide (September 2020).

Adoption

The applicant proposes adoption under Section 38 (Ref- para 3.3.1 of TA). The Highway Authority notes that such adoptions are no longer common for estate roads without wider public benefit.

4. SERVICING AND REFUSE COLLECTION

- A refuse vehicle length of 11.4 m has been used in tracking.
- Current NHDC standard vehicle length is 12.2 m.
- Reassess refuse tracking using the correct vehicle specification.

5. OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS

While the applicant offers some s278 works, these are considered insufficient. Further key improvements are required to mitigate development impacts, including:

- Bus stop upgrades (provide shelters, RTI screens) on Stevenage Road and outside Kingshott School
- Safety/capacity improvements at Stevenage Road / A602 junction
- Widening existing A602 footways to LTN 1/20 standards
- Footway widening to 2 m where applicable
- Improvements at Whitehill Road / A602 junction

6. TRIP GENERATION

The TA assumes a 5% reduction in vehicle trips due to sustainable travel measures. The Highway Authority considers this unachievable without on site car club provision.

7. HIGHWAY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The capacity assessments raise significant concerns, particularly at the A602 / Whitehill Road junction. Across all scenarios:

- RFC values reach 0.85–0.93 → indicating operation at or over capacity (Greater than acceptable limit)
- Delays of 52–85 seconds → exceed acceptable thresholds (35-45 is acceptable)
- LOS F recorded in all scenarios → severe operational conditions

Detailed Interpretation for A602 and Whitehill Junction

RFC Values

RFC (Ratio of Flow to Capacity) indicates how stressed the junction is:

- the RFC between 0.85 and 0.93 for several streams.
- Anything at or above 0.90 is typically considered failing.

Results from the summary are as follow:

- 2025 AM: 0.90 (LOS F)
- 2031 AM: 0.90–0.89 (LOS F)
- 2031 PM: 0.92–0.93 (LOS F)

These figures clearly suggest the junction cannot cope with the forecast flows.

Delay (seconds)

In terms of delay, the Highway Authority authorities consider delays over 35–45 seconds per vehicle to indicate severe congestion. This junction results show as follows:

- AM delays 63–70 sec
- PM delays 52–85 sec

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This is well above acceptable limits.

Level of Service (LOS)

LOS rating: A–C is acceptable, D is borderline and E–F is unacceptable

The summary results show, that, the LOS is as “F” for key streams across all forecast years which is unacceptable in the context of Para 116 of NPPF (Dec 2024). It says that development must be refused if it results in:

- Unacceptable impacts on highway safety
- Severe residual cumulative impacts

8. TRAVEL PLAN:

The applicant must address following , for the Travel Plan to receive approval:

- Once TPC is appointed, please provide, an estimate of time allocated to the role and if they will be based on/off site
- A secondary contact to the TPC should be provided, once appointed
- A Statement from the developer stating that they are commitment to implementing the travel plan
- A wider range of travel plan measures, rather than reliance on the travel information pack and access/infrastructure improvements. Eg promotional walking and cycling events, a travel information noticeboard, community travel website

9. CONCLUSION

Given that no mitigation has been proposed, the Highway Authority concludes that the development would result in severe residual impacts arising from the substantial unresolved issues relating to highway safety, capacity, lack of footway provision, and inadequacies in the junction design.

Therefore, the Highway Authority recommends refusal of this application based on the current submission and the insufficiency of mitigation measures.

However, the Authority remains willing to reconsider the proposal should the applicant address all of the matters outlined above to the Highway Authority's satisfaction.

Signed

Shamsul Huda

6 March 2026