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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: 25/02868/FP
HCC ref: NH/27420/2025
HCC received: 4 December 2025
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

Porters End House, Porters End Lane, Kimpton, Hitchin, SG4 8ER

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Erection of two dwellings following demolition of two existing barns including hard and soft landscaping, parking, and two electric charging spaces, two air source heat pumps, bin storage and installation of fences/gates. Alterations to existing access

CON1) Prior to the first commencement of the development hereby permitted, a plan for cycle storage is to be provided and be designed in line with design standards contained in Chapter 11 of the Cycle Infrastructure Design' DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020). Prior to first occupation the approved design shall be fully implemented and thereafter retained for this purpose.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate cycle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies 1, 5 and 8 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018)

CON2) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved drawing numbers SK03 Rev B and SK04 Rev B The splay shall thereafter be retained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure that the level of visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles is satisfactory in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

CON3) No development shall commence until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including elements of the CLOCS

standards as set out in the Highway Authority's Construction Management template. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan: The Construction Method Statement shall include details of:

Access arrangements to the site.

Traffic management requirements.

Construction and storage compounds

Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway.

Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times.

Construction vehicle parking facilities

Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway.

Where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding which must be kept within the site boundary, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements

Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

CON4) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a swept path analysis shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The analysis shall demonstrate that a delivery vehicle of at least 6.0 metres in length can safely enter, manoeuvre within, and exit the site without encroaching on pedestrian areas or causing conflict with other vehicles. The swept path drawing shall be prepared using an industry-standard tool (e.g., AutoTURN) and shall clearly show the vehicle's turning movements and clearance.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety and operational efficiency in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

CON5) Before being brought into use, the parking/turning areas hereby approved shall be surfaced in hard surfacing, being made of tarmacadam (tarmac) or similar durable bound material, for the first 5 meters into the site and arrangements shall be made for surface water from the site to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge into the highway.

Reason:

To avoid the carriage of extraneous material and surface water on to the highway and to ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety and operational efficiency in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

HCC as Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Note (AN) to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980.

AN1) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN2) Obstruction of highway: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. Section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN4) Works within the highway (section 278): The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

COMMENTS

The Highway Authority comment previously on similar applications. These proposals are for a Full Planning Permission: Erection of two dwellings following demolition of two existing barns including hard and soft landscaping, parking, and two electric charging spaces, two air source heat pumps, bin storage and installation of fences/gates. Alterations to existing access.

Porters End Lane is an unclassified local access road and provides a local access function in the road hierarchy. Porters End Lane is highway maintainable at public expense. A 60mph speed limit applies. On Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement network Porters End Lane is classed as P1/M1 (Rural Lane). No reportable highway accidents recorded within the immediate vicinity of the application site (5-year rolling). No Public Right of Way (as shown on the Public Rights

of Way Map) directly affects the site or would be affected by the proposal. The county council considers Porters End Lane not to be a traffic sensitive road.

Policy Review:

The key documents used to assess the application are:

- Manual for Streets 2007
- National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
- Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan-4 [2018-2031, May2018]
- Cycle Infrastructure Design DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020)
- HCC's Place & Movement Planning Design Guidance (adopted in March 2024)

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has previous planning history application 24/02840/PNQ

DRAWINGS

The Highway Authority note the submission of materials in support of the planning application, including drawing numbers: 3103B_01_01, 3103B_01_02, 3103B_02_01 3103B_02_02 Rev C, Technical Transport Note September 2025, and Design & Access Statement

ACCESSIBILITY

Walking

While the site cannot reasonably be considered sustainable in terms of pedestrian access, the Highway Authority has advised that it would be disproportionate to refuse the application solely on these grounds. The site is not within easy walking distance of local shops or public transport facilities such as bus stops. In addition, Porters End Lane is a narrow rural road with no footpaths or street lighting, making walking unsafe and impractical. These factors mean the development does not fully align with the sustainable transport objectives set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which encourages developments to be located where sustainable travel options are available.

However, the Highway Authority acknowledges that the rural nature of the area limits opportunities for walking and cycling, and that car dependency is common for existing residents. Furthermore, there are a number of residential dwellings in close proximity to the application site, and the proposal would not introduce an isolated form of development. On balance, while the site is not ideally located for sustainable travel, refusal on this basis alone would be considered unreasonable given the local context and the limited scale of the proposal.

Cycling

'Cycle Infrastructure Design' DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020) recommends for cycle parking storage should be 2m (1.8m is acceptable) in length by 0.3m space between cycles. There should be parking for 1 cycle per dwelling. Outside cycle parking should be covered and lockable. The provision of well-located, safe and secure cycle parking for residents and visitors is a key factor in encouraging people to cycle as an alternative to using the private car. Drawing 3103B_02_02 Rev C illustrates that there is 1 covered and secure cycle parking space for each dwelling. However, please see Condition 1 above for the cycle parking requirements.

PARKING

The LPA shall be responsible for assessing the proposed development against local parking standards and to satisfy for itself that any level of parking it requires can be achieved within the boundary of the site and not overhang the highway, including the highway footway / grass verge / vehicle crossover.

ACCESS

The access point is currently an established, gated farm entrance. The proposal includes removing the existing gates to improve accessibility. The width of the access will remain sufficient to allow two vehicles to enter and exit simultaneously without obstruction. (See section 3.5 of the Transport Technical Note) The Highway Authority are satisfied with the proposed arrangement. (see Drawing Ref- 3103B_02_02 Rev C). Please be aware that a section 278 (works within the highway) the applicant will need to be enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority.

SURFACE MATERIAL

Please see condition 5 above

VISIBILITY

"Porters End Lane is subject to the national speed limit of 60mph, which would normally require visibility splays of 2.4m x 215m in both directions. The proposed splays of 2.4m x 110m to the west (see Drawing Ref- SK03 Rev B) and 2.0m x 54m to the east fall (see Drawing Ref- SK04 Rev B) below this standard and are therefore technically substandard.

However, the context of the lane must be considered. Porters End Lane is a narrow rural road that does not carry significant commuter traffic and primarily serves local residents and occasional deliveries. Traffic volumes are low, and the nature of the road restricts two-way movement along much of its length, although passing places exist. Achieving full compliance with design standards would be unrealistic without disproportionate intervention.

The proposed access will deliver a material improvement over the existing arrangement, enhancing visibility and safety for vehicles entering and exiting the site. On balance, and having regard to the rural context, low traffic flows, and improved conditions compared to the current situation, it is considered reasonable to accept the substandard splays in this instance. Please see Condition 2 above.

TRIP GENERATION

The Highway Authority has reviewed the applicant's trip generation assessment, which is based on TRICS data for comparable rural sites. The methodology and assumptions are considered robust and proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development. The predicted level of trips is very low and will primarily consist of private car movements, which is typical for this rural location. Given the limited traffic volumes on Porters End Lane and the absence of any capacity or safety concerns, the Highway Authority accepts the proposed trip generation and is satisfied that it will not have a material impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network

SWEPT PATH ANALYSIS

Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide 2024 (Part 3, Chapter 9, para 3.4) states:

“In certain circumstances, a scheme proposal may need to include a swept path analysis. Due to the increasing size of vehicles, HCC no longer accepts tracking paths for a ‘Medium Sized Car’ (Volvo 440) from AutoTRACK’s ‘European pre-2006 Library.’ Instead, an ‘Estate Car’ (Volvo V70) from the ‘European post-2006 Library’ is now considered appropriate.”

Drawings SK05 Rev B and SK06 Rev B demonstrate that a saloon car can manoeuvre satisfactorily within the proposed layout.

A swept path analysis should be provided for plot 2 to demonstrate that a delivery vehicle of 6.0 m in length can safely enter, manoeuvre within, and exit the site in a forward gear. Please see condition 4 above.

EMERGENCY ACCESS

Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), paragraph 116 (d), applications for development should allow for access by emergency vehicles. Guidance is set out in Manual for Streets (MfS) (6.7.2). HCC's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (P&MPDG) (Part 2 Chapter 4). Requirements are set out in the Building Regulations: Fire Safety Approved Document B, Vol 1, Dwellings, 2010 (as subsequently amended). Access for a pumping appliance should be provided to within 45m of a single dwelling house (and within 45m of all points within the dwelling house). As far as it can be reasonably ascertained from submitted plans, the proposed development would be within the recommended emergency vehicle access distance from the highway.

REFUSE / RECYCLING

Drawing Ref-(3103B_02_02 Rev C) illustrates the proposals for recycling bin storage are in line with Manual for Streets MfS 6.8.9 residents should not be required to carry waste more than 30m and be within 25m of the kerbside/bin collection point.

CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (CMS)

It is important that a CMS is provided considering the nature of Porters End Lane being very narrow. The statement must have or be shown as a drawing of the construction site and the dedicated areas within. These should include but not limited to, construction parking area, wheel washing, and storage area. Please see Condition 3 above.

CONCLUSION

Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority has considered that the proposal would not have a substantial increase in the traffic generation to the development consequently the vehicle movements have been considered not to significantly increase from the existing access onto the local highway network, therefore Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority has considered that the proposal would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining highways subject to the inclusion of the above planning conditions and highway informatives.

Signed

Paul Marshall

10 December 2025