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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: 26/01094/FPH
HCC ref: NH/29104/2026
HCC received: 22 June 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

5 Highbury Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 9RW

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Full Permission Householder : Erection of detached garage/workshop outbuilding and detached summerhouse outbuilding following demolition of existing detached garage. Widening of existing vehicular access and replacement retaining wall, pillars and access gates. Hard and soft landscaping works

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 does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

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 does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

COND1)

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. A plan detailing the site. 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. This especially if delivery or earth moving vehicles will be parked in Highbury Road at or near the access.

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.

Parking for construction vehicles.

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).

COND 2) Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay measuring 0.65x 0.65 metres shall be provided to each side of the access where it meets the highway and such splays 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).

INFORMATIVES

HCC as Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Notes (AN) to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highways 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 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:

<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 public highway land: It is an offence under Section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in obstruction, the applicant must contact the Highway Authority before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the link above 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 material or debris on a highway. Section 149 allows the Highway Authority to remove such material at the applicant's expense.

All reasonable measures must be taken to ensure vehicles do not deposit mud, slurry or debris on the highway.

Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.

COMMENTS

Full Permission Householder: Erection of detached garage/workshop outbuilding and detached summerhouse outbuilding following demolition of existing detached garage. Widening of existing vehicular access and replacement retaining wall, pillars and access gates. Hard and soft landscaping works.

Context:

Highbury Road is an unclassified local distributor road (B656) and is highway maintainable at public expense. A 30mph speed limit applies. It is classified as P2/M1 (Residential Street) within Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement network.

No reportable highway accidents have been recorded within the immediate vicinity of the access over the last five years. No Public Rights of Way are affected by the proposal.

The road is considered traffic sensitive between 07:00–09:30 and 16:00–18:30, Monday to Friday.

Policy Review:

The key documents used to assess the application are:

- Manual for Streets 2007
- National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
- Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 4 (2018–2031)
- Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (DfT LTN 1/20, July 2021)
- HCC Place and Movement Planning Design Guidance (2024)

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has previous planning history.

DRAWINGS

The Highway Authority note Drawings: 144 2025 001 Rev B, 005 Rev E, 006 Rev E, 007, 008 Rev C, 010 Rev E, and 012 Rev D.

GATES

The proposed gates are positioned adjacent to the footway and do not meet the 6m setback set out in the Place and Movement Planning Design Guidance (2024).

However, upon review of the site context, the absence of recorded collisions, and the presence of similar gate arrangements along Highbury Road, it is felt that the proposal would not give rise to a material highway safety concern. The access would serve one dwelling, with low traffic generation and infrequent gate operation.

On this basis, the gate arrangement as illustrated on Drawing Ref-(006E) is considered acceptable in this instance, and a full 6m setback is not considered necessary.

PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY

Visibility splays are simply clear sightlines at an access point. They ensure that drivers leaving a site can see pedestrians approaching along the footway, and vice versa.

In practical terms, this means keeping areas either side of the access free from walls, fences, gates, or landscaping that could block views. The aim is to avoid situations where a driver pulls out without being able to see someone walking past.

In this case, no pedestrian visibility splays have been shown. Given that Highbury Road is a busy route, with Hitchin Girls' School and the Music School approximately 120m to the south, there is likely to be a high level of pedestrian activity.

It is therefore important that visibility splays are provided. These should consist of a clear area (or "envelope") of 0.65m either side of the access gates, kept free from obstruction to allow safe intervisibility between drivers and pedestrians. Refer to Place and Movement Planning and Design Guidance (2024), Section 3, Visibility (or Chapter on Visibility) See Condition above.

VEHICLE VISIBILITY

As has been said under 'GATES' upon review of the site context, the absence of recorded collisions, and the presence of similar gate arrangements along Highbury Road, it is felt that the proposal would not give rise to a material highway safety concern

ACCESS FOR VEHICLES

The site is currently served by an existing vehicle crossover. See 'GATES' for a more detailed explanation

ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS

Policy 5 of the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan requires safe and suitable access for all users. The existing access is considered acceptable.

PARKING

The LPA will assess parking provision against adopted standards and must ensure it is contained within the site without encroachment onto the highway. The Highway Authority note the parking area as shown on Drawing Ref-(006E) illustrates a usable parking area of approx. 10m by 3.5m

GARAGE

Drawing Ref-(010 Rev E) illustrates the garage does not meet the minimum internal dimensions of 6.0m x 3.0m set out in the Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (2024).

As the LPA is the Parking Authority it is for them to decide if the garage meets its own standards. A cycle store is shown on Drawing Ref-(006E). Its provision is adequate however; it must be covered and lockable especially as its in a prominent position for passers-by to observe.

CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (CMS)

It is important that a CMS is provided considering the restricted nature of parking and access along Highbury Road. 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.

CONCLUSION

Should the LPA be minded to approve the application please note the above conditions and informatives. This level of development is unlikely to generate any extra movements which would ultimately lead to demonstrable harm to the highway network in terms of free flow and capacity, therefore; the highway authority would not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission.

Signed

Paul Marshall

25 June 2026