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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: 26/01634/FP
HCC ref: NH/29710/2026
HCC received: 8 July 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Shamsul Huda

Location

35 Grays Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 2HH

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Erection of one self-build dwelling including basement level and first floor area balcony area. Installation of external swimming pool, garden kitchen structure and pergola, external air source heat pump and associated hard and soft landscaping works including perimeter boundary fence, wall and gates following demolition of existing dwelling. Alterations to ground levels in rear garden

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:

Key documents and policy use to assess the application are.

1. National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024).
2. HCC's Place & Movement Planning Design Guidance adopted in March 2024
3. Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan-4 [2018-2031, May2018]
4. HCC's Dropped Kerb Policy May -2024
5. Manual For Street (MfS1 2007)
6. North Herts Local Planning policy [2011-2031]

Following the Highway Authority's comments dated 23 January 2026 on the associated application Ref. 25/03176/FP, the applicant has submitted the current application (Ref. 26/01634/FP) supported by additional documents, including the Existing and Proposed Plans, Visibility Information and Planning Statement.

Having reviewed the submitted information, it is considered that the applicant has not adequately addressed the principal highway concerns identified under the previous application. Consequently, the Highway Authority continues to recommend refusal of the application for the following reasons:

- Inadequate visibility resulting from the proposed 1.0m high brick walls at the site frontage.
- Proposed access gates located within the required setback distance from the highway footway.

The Highway Authority acknowledges that both access points are existing and have served the site for a considerable period. However, the introduction of the proposed brick walls and access gates gives rise to significant highway safety concerns.

Visibility / Brick Wall:

The submitted Existing and Proposed Plan (Drawing Ref. I30) indicates that a new wall, measuring approximately 1.0 metre in height, is proposed along the site frontage. This would restrict intervisibility between pedestrians and vehicles using the access points, thereby compromising visibility along Gray's Lane in both directions.

The Hertfordshire County Council Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (March 2024), Part 4, Chapter 6, Paragraph 19.1, states:

"Any parking space adjacent to a footway or carriageway must have clear visibility of oncoming pedestrians either side of a driveway of 0.65m. Low level planting is acceptable, but nothing that grows above 0.6m high, so that it is possible to see a small child."

In light of this guidance, the proposed wall height is considered unacceptable. The applicant would need to reduce the frontage wall to no more than 0.6m in height and demonstrate that pedestrian visibility splays of 0.65m x 0.65m can be achieved on both sides of each access in the interests of highway safety.

Access Gates:

The Existing and Proposed Plan (Drawing Ref. I30) also shows gates proposed at both site access points. The submitted drawings indicate that these gates would be positioned approximately 5.5 metres from the back edge of the highway footway.

The Hertfordshire County Council Place and Movement Planning Design Guide, Part 3, Chapter 8 – Planning Highway Links (Page 142, Paragraph 2.12) states:

"If security, garage or gate facilities are provided on residential premises, they shall be sited at least 6m from the highway boundary or back of footway as appropriate. This is to avoid waiting vehicles obstructing traffic, cycles and footway users passing the site. This may be reduced to 5.5m if the gates or doors do not open outwards."

Based on the submitted information, the proposal fails to demonstrate compliance with this requirement and may result in vehicles waiting on or obstructing the public highway and footway, causing potential hazards to highway users.

Conclusion:

For the reasons outlined above, the Highway Authority recommends that planning permission be refused. The proposal, as currently submitted, fails to demonstrate acceptable visibility standards and appropriate gate setback distances, resulting in concerns regarding pedestrian and vehicular safety.

Should the applicant satisfactorily address these matters through amended plans and supporting information, the Highway Authority would be willing to reconsider its recommendation.

Signed

Shamsul Huda

29 July 2026