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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: 26/00115/FP
HCC ref: NH/28352/2026
HCC received: 26 February 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

Land Adjacent 21, Danesbury Park Road, Pottersheath, Hertfordshire, AL6 9SH

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Erection of two detached dwellings with detached garages including parking and hard and soft landscaping

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:

The Highway Authority cannot support the application.

The proposal fails to demonstrate compliance with national and local policy requiring safe, sustainable and inclusive access for all users. The development does not provide, nor is it capable of providing, safe walking and cycling connections or policy compliant visibility splays. As such, it:

- Conflicts with Hertfordshire LTP4 Policies 5 and 6, and
- Contravenes the NPPF principles for achieving safe, suitable and sustainable access.

The development therefore presents a risk to highway safety and is not considered acceptable.

Highways comments:

The proposal involves the erection of 2 dwellings with associated garage parking on land that is currently not developed.

The applicant has submitted a Transport Technical Note (TTN) in support of the planning application. The Highway Authority (HA) has reviewed this document, and the key points presented by the applicant can be summarised as follows:

- Danesbury Lane is a private road maintained by residents.
- Danesbury Park Road is a highway not maintainable at public expense.
- Each dwelling proposes 3 cycle parking spaces within the garage.
- Narrow private roads are claimed to keep speeds low, with an assumed 85th percentile speed of approx. 20mph.
- The TTN states that low speeds enable safe sharing between vehicles and cyclists.
- Nearest bus stops ("Great North Road") are approx. 950m away.
- A five year personal injury collision review within 500m recorded no incidents.
- Visibility splays at the site access are stated to exceed requirements for a 20mph street.
- Access is claimed to accommodate an HCC fire tender based on swept path analysis.
- Waste collection is expected from Danesbury Lane, with residents moving bins on collection day.
- Refuse pickup point is approx. 10m from the waiting refuse vehicle.
- Traffic impact is stated to be negligible.

The level and suitability of car parking provision falls under the remit of the Local Planning Authority (LPA). However, the HA must ensure that the operation of parking and access does not result in unsafe manoeuvres or harmful impacts on the local highway network.

Although the additional vehicle trip generation from two dwellings is likely to be low, the HA's key concern relates not to volume of traffic but to the site's accessibility and safety for sustainable travel modes.

1. Accessibility and Sustainable Travel

The site is located in a rural area with no footways along Danesbury Lane, Danesbury Park Road, or the majority of The Avenue. There is also no street lighting, except for limited isolated points further south.

Current national and local policy, including NPPF (Feb 2025) and Hertfordshire LTP4, places strong emphasis on ensuring developments are accessible and safe for walking, cycling and public transport. The environment surrounding the site does not meet these criteria.

Walking Conditions

To access the nearest bus stops (approximately 950m–1km away, which is well in excess of the recommended 400m walking threshold for residential development), pedestrians are required to walk along the following routes:

- Danesbury Lane and Danesbury Park Road:
 - o Single lane rural carriageway
 - o No footway
 - o Unlit
 - o National speed limit (60mph) – Eastern arm heading north of its junction with Danesbury Lane
- The Avenue:
 - o Private "highway not maintainable"
 - o Mostly single lane with narrow sections
 - o Steep gradient in parts
 - o No formal footway provision for most of its length
 - o Minimal street lighting

- o 30mph only on private, unadopted sections; becomes 20mph only at the southern end where footway is present is initially not on public highway land until its junction with Gwynfa Close after which there is street lighting

These conditions do not present a safe or inclusive walking environment.

They particularly disadvantage:

- Families with small children
- People with pushchairs
- People with disabilities (Equalities Act)
- Those using mobility scooters
- Visually impaired individuals

The HA therefore considers the location to be unsuitable for residential development without provision of safe, lit, direct pedestrian routes.

2. Reliance on the Private Car

Due to the lack of safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and distance/conditions to nearest bus stops, future residents would be wholly dependent on private vehicles for even basic daily needs.

This is contrary to:

- NPPF aims for development in sustainable locations
- LTP4 policy objectives to minimise car dependence and maximise active travel
- Best practice guidance on creating safe and inclusive environments

The proposal therefore represents an unsustainable form of development.

3. Visibility, Speed Evidence and Junction Safety

The TTN states that 85th percentile speeds are “assumed” to be no more than 20mph.

The HA cannot accept unverified assumptions. Speed surveys are required to establish actual speeds, not anecdotal opinion.

Furthermore:

- Danesbury Park Road has a 30mph limit, and MfS requires 2.4m x 43m visibility splays for such speeds.
- The TTN instead shows splays of 2.4m x 25m, which are substandard.
- Visibility to the north at the Danesbury Lane/Danesbury Park Road junction is heavily restricted by dense foliage.
- It is unclear how any compliant splay, particularly northbound, could be achieved or maintained.

Given that the legal speed limit is actually 60mph on Danesbury Park Road east of its junction with Danesbury Lane (national speed limit), the required splays would need to be significantly greater and appear unachievable.

Without demonstrably safe visibility, any intensification of use at this junction cannot be supported.

The applicant must provide dimensioned drawings showing:

- Exact extent of highway and the sites boundary
- All obstructions
- How visibility splays can be secured and maintained permanently, not reliant on third party land or future maintenance.

4. Emergency and Refuse Vehicle Access

Although a swept path has been submitted for a fire tender, the available manoeuvring space at the Danesbury Park Road / Danesbury Lane junction appears insufficient.

Large vehicles would likely:

- Override verge corners
- Damage kerbs, foliage and surfaces
- Struggle to turn safely

This raises concerns regarding reliable emergency access.

Waste collection arrangements would follow existing practices, but this does not overcome wider safety issues.

5. Precedent

Approving development in a location with such limited and unsafe pedestrian and cycling connectivity would set an undesirable precedent for similar proposals in this local or in other rural, inaccessible locations across Hertfordshire.

Recommendation:

The Highway Authority cannot support the application.

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Signed

Senober Khan

18 March 2026