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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: 26/01462/PNR
HCC ref: NH/29573/2026
HCC received: 19 June 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

Agricultural Barn, Hall Barn, Ashwell Road, Newnham, SG7 5JX

Application type

Prior Approval

Proposal

Prior Approval Class R Agric to Flex Use : Change of use and conversion of two bays of existing agricultural barn to form two light industrial units (Class E (g) (iii)).

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.

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.

COMMENTS

The proposals are for a Change of use and conversion of two bays of existing agricultural barn to form two light industrial units (Class E (g) (iii)).

Context:

Ashwell Road is an unclassified local access road and provides a local access function in the road hierarchy Ashwell Road is highway maintainable at public expense. A 30mph speed limit applies. On Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement network Ashwell Road is classed as P1/M2 (inter-urban road). No reportable highway accidents recorded within the immediate vicinity of the application site (5-year rolling). A Public Right of Way (Caldecote Road to Ashwell Footpath 027) (as shown on the Public Rights of Way Map) directly passes the site but would not be affected by the proposal. The county council considers Ashwell Road to be a traffic sensitive road. Period 3: 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 County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan-4 [2018-2031, May2018]
- Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (Department for Transport Local Transport Note July 2020)
- HCC's Place & Movement Planning Design Guidance (adopted in March 2024)

PLANNING HISTORY

The application has no previous planning history.

DRAWINGS

The Highway Authority note the submission of materials in support of the planning application, including drawing numbers: Letter from Peter George Town Planning (PGTP), and AF01 to 4.

The letter from PGTP states:

A) Transport and Highways Impacts

Commentary: The site is located at the eastern end of Newnham within the main part

of the village. The site benefits from an existing vehicular access from/onto Ashwell Road which leads to the main farmyard which is laid to hardstanding for much of the area immediately to the front, side and rear of the barn.

The proposed use would operate on a relatively small scale with only 2-3 members of staff and a limited number of vehicle movements associated with occasional deliveries and collections. The use would not generate significant levels of customer traffic and is therefore unlikely to result in materially greater traffic generation than could reasonably arise from the lawful agricultural use of the site, which itself could involve regular vehicle movements associated with agricultural operations, deliveries and servicing.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety, the character of the surrounding road network, or the safe and free flow of traffic.

The Highway Authority is in agreement with the statement above. Access to the site is by a wide-open area fronting Ashwell Road where visibility is very good and passing traffic would easily observe any traffic movements from the site.

ACCESSIBILITY

'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. It is evident that cycle storage would easily be provided within the two light industrial units.

WALKING

Planning for Walking, issued by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) places emphasis on developments being located and designed, where practical, to give priority to pedestrian (and cycle) movements and have access to high quality public transport facilities. In terms of accessibility, 400m walking distance to bus stops is considered to represent a reasonable catchment. A bus stop is within a 4 -minute walk to Newnham and the Ashwell Road would be likely safe for cyclists

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. The Highway Authority would observe the parking is significant and is in line with recommendations found in Hertfordshire County Council's Place & Movement Planning Design Guidance (adopted in March 2024) Part 4 Chapter 6 Table 11.9.

EMERGENCY VEHICLE 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

The proposals for recycling bin storage must be 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.

CONCLUSION

The Highway Authority are content the change of use would have little if any impact on the surrounding highway network.

Should the LPA be minded to approve the application please note the above 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

6 July 2026