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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: 25/02708/FP
HCC ref: NH/27157/2025
HCC received: 15 April 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

School House , School Lane, Offley, Hertfordshire, SG5 3AT

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Full Planning Permission : Erection of two 3- bedroom dwellings and one 1- bedroom dwelling including 5 parking spaces and alterations to existing vehicular access off School Lane.

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:

CON1) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a visibility splay measuring 2.4 metres x 23 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).

CON2) Prior to the first commencement of the development hereby permitted a plan of cycle parking should be submitted in accordance with (Cycle Infrastructure Design' DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020) and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to first occupation the approved scheme 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)

CON3) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted any access gate(s), shall be installed to open inwards, set back, and thereafter retained (in perpetuity) at a minimum distance of 5.5 metres from the edge of the highway.

Reason: To enable vehicles to safely draw off the highway before the gate(s) or obstruction is opened and/or closed in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

CON4) 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, including designated areas for parking, loading/unloading, and turning
- Location and details of wheel washing facilities
- Cleaning of site entrances, tracks, and adjacent public highways
- Timing of construction activities, including delivery and waste removal, with consideration to avoid school pick-up/drop-off times
- Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to the commencement of construction
- Post-construction restoration and reinstatement of working areas and temporary highway access
- A site layout plan for any works extending beyond the site boundary, showing hoarding limits, 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).

INFORMATIVES

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 website:

<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, 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 website:

<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) Avoidance of surface water discharge onto the highway: The applicant is advised that the Highway Authority has powers under section 163 of the Highways Act 1980, to take appropriate steps where deemed necessary (serving notice to the occupier of premises adjoining a highway) to prevent water from the roof or other part of the premises falling upon persons using the highway, or to prevent so far as is reasonably practicable, surface water from the premises flowing on to, or over the footway of the highway.

COMMENTS

The proposals are for an AMENDED PROPOSAL Full Planning Permission: Erection of two 3-bedroom dwellings and one 1- bedroom dwelling including 5 parking spaces and alterations to existing vehicular access off School Lane.

Context:

School Lane is an unclassified local access road and provides a local access function in the road hierarchy. School Lane is highway maintainable at public expense. A 30mph speed limit applies. On Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement network School Lane is classed as P2/M1 (Residential Street). 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 School 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, May 2018]
- 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 site has previous planning history.

DRAWINGS

The Highway Authority note the submission of materials in support of the planning application, including drawing numbers:

Location Plan 736 1-00PE, Existing Plans 736 1-01PC, 1-02PC, 1-03PC
Proposed Plans 736 2-01PD, 2-02PD, 2-03PD, 2-04PD, 11-01PD, 11-02PD, and
Design and Access Statement 736 DAS rev C.

ACCESS

The site has an existing dropped kerb and vehicle crossover provides an acceptable form of vehicular access from the highway to the site. Vehicles are able to both leave and enter the site in forward gear.

VISIBILITY

PMPDG Part 3 Ch9 para 12

Initially achievable levels of inter-visibility between drivers exiting the site and other highway users (vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians) were not achievable as a 30mph carriageway required a visibility splay of 2.4 x 43 meters. The applicant carried out a speed survey to determine the 85th percentile. See below:

The Highway Authority are satisfied the standard stopping distance identified for south and northbound traffic is an average of 19mph which translates to a 23-meter stopping distance. Please see Condition 1

ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS

Policy 5 of the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) seeks to ensure that access arrangements are safe, suitable for all people and built to an adequate standard and adhere to the county council's Highway Design Standards.

Further advice may be found in the (gov.) guidance on permeable surfacing of front gardens and in Part M of the Building Regulations, which states that approach routes should be safe and convenient for everyone including older and disabled people and some wheelchair users. Inter-alia, all external parts of an approach route should have a suitable surface:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/540330/BR_PDF_AD_M1_2015_with_2016_amendments_V3.pdf

TRIP GENERATION

The additional vehicle trips generated by the development would not be significant and would fall well below the threshold at which impacts could be considered severe; therefore, the impact on the transport network is not material.

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 following: Space 5 on drawing Ref-(736/11-02 PE) should be 2.7m wide as it close to the fence line

CYCLE STORAGE

No increased provision for cycle storage is observed. The availability of secure cycle parking at home can have a significant influence on cycle use, encourage modal shift and reduce the need for travel by less sustainable modes. Its provision would be supported by the Highway Authority, consistent with policies 1 and 8 of the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4). Further guidance can be found in Local Transport Note LTN 1/20: Cycle infrastructure design:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Condition 2 is set out for the LPA's consideration.

ACCESSIBILITY

A footway is provided along the frontage of the application site, offering pedestrian connectivity to the surrounding area. Whilst the site is not within convenient walking distance of local shops, the nearest main retail facilities are located in Hitchin, approximately a 90 minute walk away. However, bus services are available within close proximity to the site, with bus stops located approximately two minutes' walk away, providing access to a wider range of services and facilities. Given the established and extensive surrounding residential area, it would not be appropriate to refuse the application on the basis of distance to shops alone.

Surface Water Flood Risk to the Highway:

The transport network needs to be resilient to the risks from the impacts of climate change, including changing weather patterns and extreme events. Policy 5 and of the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) seek to secure developer mitigation measures to limit the impacts of development on the network. HCC's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide, states that water from areas that are not adoptable highway must not be allowed to run onto areas of adopted highway. The Government's flood risk maps for planning indicate parts of the nearby highway carriageway to be at low risk of surface water flooding: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

The block plan drawing Ref-(736 2-01 PE) indicates the use of Piora permeable block paving for the driveway area including the pedestrian access from the public footway to the main entrance of each dwelling. See Informative above

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.

ACCESS FOR REFUSE VEHICLES

The proposal will not affect existing access arrangements for kerbside collection.

Refuse vehicles must be able to stop within a maximum carry distance of 25m from a bin collection point (Manual for Streets, 6.8.9). Residents should not be required to carry waste more than 30m to a storage point (Manual for Streets, 6.8.9).

GATES

Existing gates are mentioned in the Design and Access Statement. If the gates are to be retained, they must be set back 5.5 meters from the back edge of the carriageway to allow vehicles to safely pull off the carriageway without impeding other road users. See Condition 3

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT STATEMENT (CMS)

It is important that a CMS is provided considering the nature of School Lane and the surrounding residential area. 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 4 above.

CONCLUSION

HCC as Highway Authority has considered the proposal and concludes that it would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on the safety or operation of the surrounding highway. It raises no objections but recommends the inclusion of the above conditions and highway informative / advisory notes.

Signed

Paul Marshall

6 May 2026