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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: 25/02547/FP
HCC ref: NH/26941/2025
HCC received: 24 October 2025
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

Land South And West Of Senuna Park,, Station Road, , Ashwell,

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Residential development of 36 no. dwellings including creation of vehicular access off Station Road, associated parking, drainage, amenity space and 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 does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

The development hereby permitted shall not commence (save for the access road into the development) until the proposed access has been constructed to base course construction for the first 12 metres and the join to the existing carriageway has been constructed to the current specification of Hertfordshire County Council and to the local Planning Authority's satisfaction. Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan

Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, the main access road gradient of the access shall not be steeper than 1 in 20 for the first 12 metres

from the edge of the carriageway, shall be constructed to a minimum of 5.5m wide with the kerb radii being 6m complete with improved footways 2.0m wide footways on both sides of the access, continuing through the site and Station Road along the frontage of the site and pedestrian crossing point with tactile paving and dropped kerbs at site access. Thereafter the access and highway improvements shall be retained at the position identified on the approved drawing.

Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan

Before the access is first brought into use, relocating the 30mph speed limit further east on Station Road, speed transition moved 121m east of the site access, aligning with visibility splays and ATC 85th percentile speed data to both directions shall be provided and permanently maintained as identified on the approved drawings. Within which, there shall be no obstruction to visibility between 600 mm and 2.0 metres above the carriageway level. These measurements shall be taken from the intersection of the centre line of the permitted access with the edge of the carriageway of the highway respectively into the application site and from the intersection point along the edge of the carriageway.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

Before commencement of the development, a 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' must set out:

- the phasing of construction and proposed construction programme.
- the methods for accessing the site, including wider construction vehicle routing (swept path drawings).
- the numbers of daily construction vehicles including details of their sizes, at each phase of the development.
- the hours of operation and construction vehicle movements. (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times.
- details of any highway works necessary to enable construction to take place.
- details of construction vehicle parking, turning and loading/unloading arrangements clear of the public highway. (swept path drawings)
- details of any hoardings and how visibility splays will be maintained.
- management of traffic to reduce congestion.
- control of dirt and dust on the public highway, including details of the location and methods to wash construction vehicle wheels.
- the provision for addressing any abnormal wear and tear to the highway.
- waste management proposals.
- Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- 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 and remaining road width for vehicle movements.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the construction process on the on local environment and local highway network in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

ADVISORY NOTE

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.

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.

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.

New or amended vehicle crossover access (section 278): Where works are required within the public highway to facilitate a new or amended vehicular access, the Highway Authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their satisfaction and specification, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. If any of the works associated with the construction of the access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission, requirements and for the work to be carried out on the applicant's behalf. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/dropped-kerbs/dropped-kerbs.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

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.

Highways comments:

A Transport Statement (TS) has been submitted by the applicant in support of their planning application for a residential development comprising of 36 dwellings. The TS has been informed by pre-application discussions undertaken with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) highways officers in June 2025.

The Highway Authority (HA) has reviewed the TS and has the following comments to make:

The proposed car parking provision is the responsibility of the LPA to determine the level and suitability of the car parking proposals, however, it is essential that it is operated in efficient and safe manner to minimise the impact on the local highway network which is the responsibility of the HCC HA.

In brief the applicant is proposing the following:

A planning app (ref: 20/03070/FP) for 28 dwellings on adjacent land southwest of the current application site was refused for non-transport reasons (HA raised no objection subject to conditions), then approved on appeal which included upgrade existing footway and install a new bus stop adjacent to the development.

The current TS states and proposes the following:

Access:

- Bellmouth junction from Station Road (approx. 5.5m wide, 6m radii).
- Visibility splays: 2.4m x 125.1m (primary) and 2.4m x 121.1m (secondary), compliant with DMRB and HCC standards. based on ATC results

Pedestrian & Cycle Access:

- 2m footways on both sides of the access, continuing through the site for full pedestrian permeability.
- Pedestrian crossing point with tactile paving and dropped kerbs at site access.

Station Road Improvements:

- Relocate 30mph speed limit approx. 121m east of site access to include frontage - the HA supports this measure.
- Aim to reduce vehicle speeds and enhance highway safety and the residential character.
- A gateway feature is proposed at the new speed limit transition point incorporating appropriate road markings to signal the change.

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit:

- RSA recommended: relocating the 30mph/40mph speed limit further east on Station Road.
TS response: speed transition moved 121m east of the site access, aligning with visibility splays and ATC 85th percentile speed data.
- RSA recommended: a crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving.
TS response: Crossing provided at the site access to accommodate anticipated pedestrian movements.

Sustainable transport contribution:

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) policy requires planning obligations for sustainable transport on all developments. The revised NPPF (July 2021) promotes accessibility by sustainable modes such as bus, cycling, and walking. Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, planning obligations, guided by CIL Regulations, can be used to mitigate development impacts. HCC has adopted a toolkit for calculating contributions toward sustainable transport. Full details are available at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/property/planning-obligations-guidance.aspx#developercontributions>

Based on this policy, HCC will seek obligations to improve sustainable transport facilities and services for future residents and the wider area. The current headline figure is £9,861 per dwelling, equating to approximately £354,996 for 36 dwellings (index-linked to March 2024).

The contribution justification relates to:

Ashwell Route – LCWIP Context

Referenced multiple times in LCWIP; dedicated section 7.5 Other Priority Routes.

Route: Ashwell to Ashwell & Morden Station.

Audit Findings & Preferred Option

Route audit conducted post-LCWIP consultation.

Several options identified for a continuous shared-use path:

- Option 1: Widen existing footway (may require new footways, reducing road space).
- Option 2 (Preferred): Create shared-use path on land adjacent to the road.

Requires further investigation and collaboration with:

Cambridgeshire County Council.

Local landowners.

Additional Measures

- Manage/maintain verges and hedgerows for space and visibility.
- Remove parked cars on verge/footway near station.
- Increase cycle parking provision at station.

Current Issues

- No safe walking/cycling route from Ashwell Village to station.
- Station Road (main route):
- Narrow, incomplete footway.
- High hedgerows, blind bends.
- High vehicle speeds → poor visibility → unsafe for walking/cycling.

Bus service improvements

For funding improvements to the bus service/s along this corridor,

Conclusion:

The HA has reviewed the TS and considers that the proposed development of 36 dwellings, with the recommended mitigation measures, will not materially impact the operation or safety of the local highway network. This conclusion is supported by the HA's previous acceptance of 28 dwellings and the subsequent appeal decision, making the proposal acceptable.

Furthermore, the site benefits from good accessibility to a wide range of sustainable transport options, offering viable alternatives to private car use. This significantly reduces reliance on private vehicles and demonstrates strong alignment with both local and national transport policies.

Recommendation:

The HA raises no objection, subject to conditions:

Signed

Senober Khan

5 December 2025