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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: 26/02122/FP
HCC ref: NH/30461/2026
HCC received: 17 September 2026
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Paul Marshall

Location

25 Lower Road, Breachwood Green, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 8NS

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Erection of four dwellings including landscaping, parking, cycle stores and installation of four air source heat pumps. Creation of vehicular access off Lower Road

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 has reviewed the submitted information and considers that insufficient information has been provided in relation to the following matters:

- Safe access for pedestrians, wheelchair users, mobility-impaired users, cyclists and other non-motorised users.
- Connectivity between the development and the existing footway network on Lower Road.
- Refuse collection and servicing arrangements in the vicinity of the Orchard Way junction.
- The methodology and assumptions used to prepare the submitted vehicle tracking assessment.
- An independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and accompanying Designer's Response. In the absence of this information, the Highway Authority cannot be satisfied that the development would provide a safe, suitable and inclusive means of access for all users.

Proposal

The application is for the erection of four dwellings including landscaping, parking, cycle stores and the installation of four air source heat pumps, together with the creation of a new vehicular access off Lower Road.

The Highway Authority has previously provided pre-application advice in relation to the proposed access arrangements.

Site Context

Lower Road is an unnumbered classified road that performs a local access function within the highway hierarchy and is highway maintainable at public expense. A 30mph speed limit applies. Within Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement Framework, Lower Road is classified as a P2/M1 Residential Street.

No recorded personal injury collisions have been identified within the immediate vicinity of the site during the most recent five-year review period. No Public Rights of Way are directly affected by the proposal and Lower Road is not considered to be a traffic-sensitive route.

Documents Reviewed

The Highway Authority has reviewed the following documents:

- 3870/01B - Location Plan and Existing Site Plan
- 3870/02B - Existing Site Plan with Demolitions Carried Out Indicated
- 3870/04 - Plans and Elevations of Existing House (as previously existing)
- 3870/05J - Proposed Site Plan
- 3870/06D - Plots 1 and 2 Proposed Plans and Elevations
- 3870/08D - Plot 3 Plans and Elevations
- 3870/15A - Plot 4 Plans and Elevations
- 3870/10B - Site Elevations and Sections
- 3870/11B - Perspective View from East (Illustrative)
- 3870/12B - Perspective View from Orchard Way (Illustrative)
- 3870/13B - Aerial View (Illustrative)
- Design, Access and Planning Statement
- Letter from GH Bullard and Associates: Lower Road, Breachwood Green - Access Location
- Speed survey and visibility information
- Vehicle tracking information

Policy Assessment

The proposal has been assessed against:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026
- Hertfordshire County Council's People and Places: A Planning and Design Guide (P&P)
- Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)
- Manual for Streets (MfS)
- Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2)
- Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20)
- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

Access and Inclusive Movement

The applicant has submitted a speed survey and visibility assessment in support of the proposed access arrangements. The Highway Authority acknowledges this work and accepts that it assists in establishing the visibility requirements associated with the proposed access.

However, insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate how pedestrians, wheelchair users, mobility-impaired users, cyclists and other non-motorised users would safely access and leave the development.

Whilst the visibility information focuses on vehicle movements, the application does not demonstrate how future residents would safely connect between the site entrance and the existing footway network on Lower Road. Nor does it demonstrate how vulnerable users would navigate the area surrounding the proposed access and the Orchard Way junction.

The proposed access would be located almost directly opposite the junction, and the applicant has not demonstrated how potential conflicts between turning vehicles, site traffic and non-motorised users would be minimised. As such, the Highway Authority is not satisfied that the proposal has adequately addressed the movement hierarchy and inclusive design principles promoted through P&P and LTP4.

Refuse Collection and Servicing

Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate how refuse collection vehicles would safely and efficiently service the development.

The applicant has not clearly demonstrated where a refuse collection vehicle would stop, how collection activities would be undertaken in relation to the Orchard Way junction, or how servicing operations would be accommodated without affecting highway safety.

Given the proposed location of the access opposite the junction, the Highway Authority considers that further information is required to demonstrate that refuse collection activities would not obstruct vehicle movements, reduce visibility or adversely affect the safe operation of the highway network.

Vehicle Tracking

Vehicle tracking information has been submitted in support of the application.

However, the submitted information does not clearly identify the software platform, design vehicle parameters or methodology used to prepare the swept-path assessment.

The Highway Authority would typically expect swept-path assessments to be prepared using recognised industry-standard software. In the absence of this information, the Highway Authority cannot verify the submitted tracking or be satisfied that larger servicing vehicles, including refuse collection vehicles, have been robustly assessed.

Road Safety Audit

No independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit or accompanying Designer's Response has been submitted.

Given the proposed location of the access opposite the Orchard Way junction and the outstanding matters relating to non-motorised users, servicing arrangements and vehicle movements, the Highway Authority would expect the proposed access arrangement to be supported by an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

Such an audit would assist in identifying any road safety concerns and any mitigation measures required to address them.

Recommendation: Objection

The Highway Authority has reviewed the submitted speed survey, visibility information, access location assessment and vehicle tracking information. Whilst the submitted speed survey assists in

establishing the visibility requirements associated with the proposed access, insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the development would provide a safe, suitable and inclusive means of access for all users.

In particular, the applicant has not demonstrated:

- How pedestrians, wheelchair users, mobility-impaired users, cyclists and other non-motorised users would safely connect to the existing footway network from the development;
- How the relationship between the proposed access and the Orchard Way junction would operate safely for non-motorised users;
- How refuse collection vehicles would service the development without adversely affecting the operation of the local highway network;
- That the submitted vehicle tracking assessment has been prepared using a robust and verifiable methodology; and
- That the safety implications of the proposed access arrangement have been independently assessed through a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and accompanying Designer's Response.

Accordingly, the Highway Authority cannot be satisfied that safe, suitable and inclusive access has been demonstrated for all users and therefore recommends refusal on highway grounds. The proposal is considered contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), Hertfordshire County Council's: A Planning and Design Guide and Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 4.

Signed

Paul Marshall

7 October 2026