



Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CH0242
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8DE

Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AW

District ref: 6/2023/1124/FULL
HCC ref: WH/17057/2023
HCC received: 8 June 2023
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

2 Hill Rise Cuffley Potters Bar EN6 4EE

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Erection of 5 bedroom dwelling following the demolition of existing dwelling

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:

Reasons for refusal:

The application has failed to demonstrate and substantiate a satisfactory design-led approach to the development's vehicle access design and layout.

The proposed use of the existing northern vehicle access sited opposite The Driveway junction with Hill Rise for the new build continues with past obsolete standards which are prejudicial to the highway safety of all road users, contrary to current higher standards of design and safety.

The application has failed to demonstrate a satisfactory policy and design-led approach to the provision of pedestrian visibility splay and the installation of gate which are prejudicial to the highway safety of pedestrians.

No cycle parking/storage has been shown, Cycle parking provision and storage for the new dwelling should be compliant with policies.

Highway comments:

The proposals involve the demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a new 5 bed replacement dwelling with 3 on site open car parking bays with two vehicle accesses, but no cycle parking.

The proposed car parking provision and layout 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.

With new builds the planning process seeks/provides the opportunity to improve conditions for both development and highway safety by applying current higher standards of design, build and safety to new developments, and not to retain and/or continue with past obsolete standards.

The applicant has shown 2 vehicle accesses each with gate, but no pedestrian visibility splays, furthermore the northern vehicle access is opposite an existing road 'The Driveway' creating a crossroad, and no cycle parking provision has been shown.

Under the proposals the proposed use of the existing northern vehicle access which is opposite 'The Driveway' would result in the continuation of a crossroad for a new build development, this is not acceptable under current guidance's and policies for new developments.

Statistically, the greatest numbers of accidents occur at junctions/crossroads due to several reasons, prime among them being multiple turning movements involving both pedestrians and vehicles, parked cars obstructing sightlines, etc., all within a relatively small, concentrated area and with limited views requiring quick decision making which, if misjudged, can potentially result in an accident.

In order to minimise conflict points and to prevent them from exacerbating such conditions is why guidance's advice vehicle accesses should be located away from junctions such as The Driveway. Parking restrictions/double yellow lines are installed at all junctions including at this junction The Driveway/Hill Rise, to prevent parking on the highway and any vehicle crossovers, therefore guidance/practice recommend that depending on the highway conditions vehicle accesses should not be located within 10/15m from a junction. The HA would not support any dropped kerb/vehicle access within the double yellow markings at junctions.

Local Highway Authorities (LHA's) do not support second vehicle access/dropped kerbs serving a single dwelling/development. This is because more than one, in particular unjustified, vehicle accesses serving a development create more potential conflict points between pedestrians and vehicles and vehicles with vehicles, reduces the amount of safe footway for pedestrians to walk along due to more crossovers, it would also set a precedent for other developments to apply for more than one vehicle access exacerbating the conditions. (see the following Council guidance: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Highways-roads-and-pavements/Changes-to-your-road/Dropped-kerbs/Dropped-kerbs.aspx#Second%20Dropped%20Kerb>)

For pedestrian safety reasons it is necessary to maintain within the site areas measuring 2m by 2m, with no obstruction more than 0.6m high, either side of where the vehicle access meets the back edge of the footway, known as pedestrian visibility splays, within which unobstructed visibility is available for drivers to see and be seen by pedestrians on a footway to avoid a potential hazard in time. The splays must be wholly within the site's curtilage and physically protected (dwarf wall/ped gate) from being driven over thereby undermining their necessity.

LHA's do not support gates/barriers at vehicle accesses in close proximity to the public highway due to the obstruction caused by a standing vehicle at the entrance to both pedestrians and vehicle traffic

flow while the gates are opened/refused access. Alternatively, gate facilities provided on residential premises, they shall be sited at least 6m from the highway boundary or back of footway as appropriate. This is to avoid waiting vehicles obstructing traffic and pedestrians on the road and footway passing the site. This may be reduced to 5.5m if the gates or doors open inwards or are in the form of a roller.

The applicant has not shown any cycle parking for the new dwelling. For the proposal to satisfy Local Plans and Residential Design Guides, cycle parking provision including the layout and design, should be in accordance with the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan. The provision of adequate cycle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development is in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the Local Transport Plan.

The applicant has not shown EV charging provision for the new dwelling. The County Council sets out its support of EV infrastructure within its' Local Transport Plan (2018) noting that this can reduce vehicle emissions and gives support to government and private sector led efforts to increase adoption of ULEV technology (Policy 20) and ensuring parking provision in new developments provides facilities for electric charging of vehicles (Policy 5).

Conclusion

The LHA will not support substandard provision and layout of car parking, particularly in new build developments, any variation from the required standard should be justified.

With new builds the planning process seeks/provides the opportunity to improve conditions for both development and highway safety by applying current higher standards of design, build and safety to new developments, and not to retain and/or continue with past obsolete standards.

It is not acceptable for a new build development to be of a substandard design resulting in a continuation of substandard builds, this is contrary to policies and guidance's and consequently unsafe.

Furthermore, such substandard designs if allowed would set a precedent for other new builds to seek similar treatment, consequently resulting in an inconsistency in approach by the HA, thereby exacerbating safety conditions for all road users.

Recommendation:

The Highway Authority under the current submission cannot support the application due to the application has failed to demonstrate a satisfactory policy and design-led approach to the vehicle access arrangements contrary to Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) policies 5 and 6 and also contrary to the principles of sustainable development contained in the NPPF, therefore the proposals represent a risk to highway safety for all road users.

Signed

Senober Khan

28 June 2023