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

Director of Planning

East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Hertfordshire
SG13 8EQ

District ref: 3/24/1255/OUT
HCC ref: EH/21612/2024
HCC received: 10 June 2025
Area manager: Roger Flowerday
Case officer: Adrian McHale

Location

Land South Of A507, West Of A10 Buntingford

Application type

Outline

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Outline planning application for development of employment land (flexible use B2, B8, E(c) and E(g)), informal open space, associated works and infrastructure including a new access from A507, with all matters reserved except for access

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 AND COMMENTS

It is not considered the scope of the current Road Safety Audit (RSA) provided in support of the application sufficiently covers the full extent of the proposals. It is also considered that the road safety issues commented on by the RSA should be mitigated at this stage so they do not become road safety problems. HCC's active travel team also have numerous concerns over the designs for the active travel corridor.

HCC's road safety team considers that the current the current RSA is insufficient and identify a number of concerns:

- The Active Travel Connection to Buntingford Village Centre document was not reviewed during this Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, despite representing a significant portion of the scheme proposals.
- Based on local knowledge and comparisons with recent Buntingford active-travel projects, the varying proposals could introduce inconsistent guidance for pedestrians and cyclists.
- While Road Safety Audit is inherently a professional and subjective assessment, an initial review of the materials suggests there are safety aspects that local teams would customarily highlight at this stage.

Subsequently they recommend that a supplementary Stage 1 Road Safety Audit to ensure all active-travel elements and potential safety issues are fully examined.

Expanding on the last item the RSA identifies a number of Road Safety Issues in comments, such as the A10 being too long in this location to achieve safe speed reduction or the 'constant green effect' where drivers see the traffic green light and continue on to the roundabout without giving way resulting in collisions. These issues rather than being addressed in comments should be clearly highlighted as potential problems and mitigated before they become actual problems.

The RSA suggests that as there are crossings elsewhere in the UK which are located on wider and faster roads in the UK, a crossing can operate safely in this location west of Buntingford. However, HCC are sceptical of this response and have referred the RSA to our Road Safety Team and are awaiting their response. Its likely existing A10 vehicle speeds will be required to support their review.

Furthermore, if the crossing/ route cannot be used safely it won't encourage the mode shift we require and the site must be considered non policy compliant, a non sustainable location. Additionally, if flows and speeds on the A10 and A507 are too high, long crossing times may be encountered and as a result the crossing will be also ineffective.

The active travel team also comment as follows:

Drawing 23161 030 Rev P1: Baldock Road Roundabout – southern access

- Rather than the shared space at the crossing of the southern access road can segregation be maintained as it has been at the crossing of the A507.
- The crossing of the southern arm is located too far south and the desire line of pedestrians and cyclists is likely to be closer to the A507 junction.
- Given that the primary origin/destination of sustainable trips will be Buntingford and the buildings within the proposal site are also east of the southern access road the cycle track would be better on the eastern side of the access road. This may also help with forward visibility to and from the crossing which is likely to be encroached by vegetation in its existing location.
- Deflection on approaches to the site roundabout are considered insufficient, particularly those on the Baldock Road approaches, and will not encourage reduced speeds. Deflection should be in line with CD116.
- The crossing of the A507 should be located closer to the proposed bus stops on Baldock Road to encourage use of this mode.
- Given the higher speed nature of the A10 the crossing must be located at least 20m north of roundabout as required by DMRB CD116 and not the circa 12m currently shown.

- The location of the proposed southbound 60mph to 40mph speed limit change on the Northern A10 approach is too close to the Toucan crossing for vehicles to have slowed sufficiently by the time they reach it. Further, HCC RSA team comments are needed.

Drawing 23161 003 Rev P2: Active Travel connection to Buntingford village centre

- Eastbound bus stop immediately east of the A10: movement conflict between pedestrians and cycle users on the shared use footway as it passes the bus stop. Safety, particularly of bus passengers, should be considered. The 2024 Living Streets report on floating bus stops and bus stop boarders is informative in this regard. As a minimum, the bus shelter should either be set back from the shared use footway or visibility provided from within it to both directions along the shared use footway for the appropriate stopping sight distance.
- The Greenways bellmouth radii should be reduced in accordance with P&MPDG guidance to reduce turning speeds and put the crossing closer to the pedestrian and cycle desire line without making it unduly long. If the side road southbound traffic speeds are low enough this junction may be suitable for introducing a continuous footway (see HCC Standard drawings HST-1100-50 and 51).
- The transition between the shared use footway and the residential road (Deacon Place cul-de-sac) carriageway should be considered more thoroughly than appears on the drawing.
- Have Crossings been Identified as complying with LTN 1/20 Table 10-2.
- The width of the road narrowing located just to the east of The Pyghtle must not be in the critical 3.2-3.9m range that is dangerous to cyclists.
- The continuous footway proposed across The Folly should be designed in accordance with HCC Standard drawings HST-1100-50 and 51.
- It is likely that cyclists will not use the proposed cycle stands located circa 100m from the village centre and instead continue to it. The interaction of cyclists and traffic needs to be considered and appropriate speed controls introduced.

Signed

Adrian McHale

4 August 2025