

Your Ref: S62A/2023/0028
Our Ref: HT/SD/RMc/48884
Date: 14/02/2024



Essex County Council

To: Inquiries and Major Casework Team
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Response to letter dated 30 January 2024 (IT2259L.30.01.24)

Application No.	S62A/2023/0028
Applicant	Stockplace Investments Ltd
Site Location	Land off Chelmsford Road, Hartford End, Chelmsford, Essex
Proposal	Construction of up to 50 dwellings (Use Class C3) and associated access and bus stops with all matters reserved apart from access

Further to our response to PINS dated 12th January 2024 and Intermodal's response to the issues raised dated 30th January 2024, the highway authority would like to offer the following response for consideration by the Inspector.

Within the Transport Statement submitted, the recorded average 85th percentile southbound speed was noted as 41mph (paragraph 3.5) to which a wet weather correction of 2.5mph was added. Within the response dated 30/01/2024, the recorded average 85th percentile southbound speed is noted at 41.5mph, to which a wet weather correction of 2.5mph was added. Although a difference of just 0.5mph, this does impact on the required visibility splay to the extent that 102m may not be sufficient.

It seems disingenuous to claim that the highway authority did not raise any fundamental concerns with the position of the access, when the correspondence is clear that a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit would be required (with designer's response) – this indicates that the officer providing the advice would rely on the expertise of the road safety auditors to establish whether the proposed access presents safety concerns.

South of Hillside, there appears to be a roadside ditch. At this stage, it is difficult to say whether that ditch used to continue further north fronting Hillside and whether that ditch is now piped. We would be able to require clearance of any hedge beyond the roadside brow of any historic ditch but no further. The highway boundary information that Essex Highways previously provided includes a proviso in relation to this matter. We remain concerned about the deliverability of the hedge clearance to facilitate the provision of the visibility splays – not only must the splays be provided, they must also be maintained in perpetuity. No information has been submitted as to how this splay would be maintained if the bulk of the hedge is to remain in situ.

The highway authority consider that pedestrian visibility splays should be set-back from the carriageway edge by a minimum of 1.5m, or preferably 2m to allow pedestrians to wait comfortably. The applicant has used a 1m set-back which we do not consider appropriate. The visibility splay to the north from the southbound bus stop crossing point is of particular concern, particularly as the speed survey data shows vehicles travelling faster in this direction. We also do not accept the visibility splay being plotted to the centreline of the ditch – the highway boundary runs along the roadside brow of the ditch and neither the highway authority nor the applicant has control of land behind that.



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