[redacted]
9 Elizabeth Drive
Hartford
Huntingdon
PE29 1WA

Friday, 20 November 2026

FORMAL OBJECTION – PLANNING APPLICATION 26/01897/FUL

Proposal: Erection of a discount foodstore (Use Class E), including access, parking, landscaping and other associated infrastructure and works.

Location: Land northeast of 2 Old Houghton Road and southeast of Main Street, Hartford.

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing to formally object to the above planning application for the proposed Lidl discount foodstore in Hartford.

I have lived on the Birds Estate for approximately [redacted] I have also spent much of my adult life in the Huntingdon area and have a longstanding understanding of the local road network, residential environment and wider community.

I strongly oppose this development. I do not believe this is an appropriate location for a supermarket of this scale, and I have significant concerns about the impact it would have on the surrounding residential area, existing infrastructure and the character of Hartford.

My objections are set out below.

1. Highway safety, traffic congestion and the impact on the Birds Estate

My primary concern is the additional traffic this development will generate and the impact it will have on an already heavily congested road network.

The proposed site is situated in close proximity to the BP roundabout, the existing Owl Way junction and Old Houghton Road. Hartford Main Road already experiences considerable congestion during normal daily traffic conditions, particularly with vehicles travelling towards Huntingdon and the ring road, as well as those leaving the town.

Accessing the main road from the Birds Estate, particularly when travelling towards Huntingdon and the A1307, is already challenging. There is a near-constant flow of traffic from the roundabout, making it difficult for residents to find a safe opportunity to exit the estate. This regularly results in drivers having to turn left and navigate around the roundabout to travel in their intended direction.

The introduction of another significant traffic generator in such close proximity to these junctions will inevitably add further pressure to an already constrained road network.

I am also concerned about the potential for traffic displacement. If access to and from the main road becomes increasingly difficult, drivers may seek alternative routes through the Birds Estate, using Sapley Road and the residential streets as a means of avoiding congestion.

This risks turning an established residential estate into a rat run. Despite the existing 20mph restrictions and traffic-calming measures, the estate is home to families with young children and older residents. It is widely used by residents walking dogs, walking and cycling, and allowing children to ride their bikes safely. Increased through-traffic would undermine the safety and residential character of this community.

2. Site access, junction safety and delivery vehicles

I have serious concerns about the positioning of the proposed site entrance and its proximity to the existing Owl Way junction and the access serving the Birds Estate.

The formal consultation response from Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Division, dated 12 November 2026, raises several concerns about the proposed access arrangements. In particular, it identifies potential conflicts between vehicles turning into the development and those using the existing Owl Way junction, as well as an increased risk of rear-end collisions.

I am particularly concerned about the findings relating to delivery vehicles. The submitted swept-path analysis indicates that incoming articulated HGVs require space within the opposing traffic lane to complete their turn into the site. The highways authority also identifies the possibility of vehicles being left partially within the live carriageway while waiting to enter.

Given the proximity of the roundabout, the existing junction and the two-lane carriageway, I question whether this site has sufficient space to safely accommodate the delivery vehicles required to operate a supermarket of this size.

These are significant concerns, not least because large delivery vehicles manoeuvring across opposing traffic lanes could create additional hazards in an area already experiencing congestion and complex vehicle movements.

I would urge the planning officer to give particular consideration to the highways authority's consultation response and the implications of these findings for the safety of existing road users.

3. Pedestrian safety and accessibility

The application appears to place emphasis on serving the local community, but I question how accessible this development will genuinely be to residents who do not have access to a car.

The existing pedestrian infrastructure in this area is already limited. The pedestrian crossing near the Old Houghton Road bus stop took considerable time and effort to secure and construct, and provides an important safe route across the road for residents accessing public transport and Old Houghton Road.

I have not seen sufficient evidence that the proposal will deliver meaningful improvements to pedestrian connectivity or provide safe and convenient access for those wishing to walk to the store.

Simply providing a supermarket in proximity to residential housing does not automatically make it accessible to those residents, particularly where existing road infrastructure presents barriers to safe pedestrian movement.

I also note that the highways authority has raised concerns about the lack of a continuous pedestrian route connecting the site to the surrounding community, alongside the absence of dedicated cycle access and insufficient evidence of safe access to nearby bus stops.

4. Impact on residential amenity

The proposal includes approximately 118 parking spaces. Assuming opening hours comparable to Lidl's existing Stukeley store, understood to be between 8am and 10pm, this could result in a substantial and continuous volume of vehicle movements throughout the day.

The impact will not necessarily be limited to traditional morning and evening peak periods. A supermarket of this nature will attract customers throughout its operating hours, creating regular movements into and out of the site.

Furthermore, delivery arrangements need careful consideration. Early morning deliveries, in particular, could create additional disturbance for nearby residents through vehicle movements, reversing alarms, loading and unloading activities.

There are already residential properties in the vicinity which have installed acoustic fencing and other measures to mitigate existing road noise. The introduction of a large commercial development, with additional traffic, lighting and servicing activity, risks further affecting the amenity of those living nearby.

5. Impact on the character and appearance of Hartford

I have significant reservations about whether a development of this scale and nature is appropriate for this particular location.

The proposed foodstore is a substantial commercial building which, in my opinion, is not in keeping with the established character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Hartford has an established residential and village character. Introducing a large discount supermarket, extensive parking provision and associated infrastructure risks creating a visually intrusive development that is at odds with its surroundings.

I believe this development would be an unwelcome and inappropriate addition to the area, fundamentally changing the character of this part of Hartford for the benefit of a commercial retailer rather than the existing community.

6. The need for additional supermarket provision and impact on the local community

I question the justification for introducing another supermarket in an area that is already well served by established food retailers.

Huntingdon and the surrounding area already benefit from Tesco, Sainsbury's, M&S, Aldi, Lidl's existing Stukeley store, Tesco Express and other retail options. There are also established online

grocery delivery services available to local residents providing jobs to community delivery drivers.

I appreciate that competition between retailers is not, in itself, a reason to refuse a planning application. However, I question whether another discount supermarket is genuinely needed in this location, particularly given the potential consequences for the surrounding community.

I am also concerned about the potential impact on Hartford Village Stores. Independent local businesses play an important role in maintaining the character and community spirit of a village. The introduction of another large supermarket could place additional commercial pressure on an existing local business that serves the immediate community.

7. Drainage, flood risk and environmental considerations

I would also ask the council to carefully consider the flood risk and drainage implications of this development.

The introduction of a large building and extensive areas of hardstanding and parking will change the existing surface-water characteristics of the site. It is important that the potential impact on surrounding properties and the wider area is fully considered.

The application should also be assessed in terms of its impact on existing habitats, biodiversity, landscaping and the wider environment.

Conclusion

I strongly oppose this development and do not believe a supermarket of this scale is appropriate for this location in Hartford.

My concerns extend beyond the inconvenience of additional traffic. They relate to the fundamental suitability of the site, the existing limitations of the road network, the safety of residents and other road users, the impact on the character of Hartford and the wider consequences for the local community.

Having lived on the Birds Estate [redacted] I have seen first-hand the existing pressures on the local road network. Residents already experience difficulties accessing and leaving the estate, and I do not believe introducing another significant traffic generator in such close proximity to the roundabout and existing junctions is appropriate.

The concerns raised by Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Division in its consultation response dated 12 November 2026 reinforce many of these issues. I would ask that the planning officer gives this response careful consideration, particularly in relation to the proposed site access and delivery vehicle movements.

Ultimately, I do not believe the benefits of introducing another supermarket in this location outweigh the potential harm to the surrounding residential community and the established character of Hartford.

I respectfully ask that planning permission is refused.

Please ensure that this objection is formally registered against planning application **26/01897/FUL** and that the matters raised are taken into consideration when determining the application.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

9 Elizabeth Drive, Hartford, PE29 1WA

[redacted]