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Development Management  
Committee

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Development Management  
Committee agenda

Your contact: Peter Mannings  
Tel: 01279 502174  
Date: 15 October 2025

Dear Councillor,

## **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - 15 OCTOBER 2025**

Please find attached the Additional Representations Summary and an Officer response note in respect of the following applications:

- 5A 3/24/1275/FUL - Construction and operation of a circa 24MW (AC) solar farm development with a (Battery Energy Storage System) BESS, and associated infrastructure at Land to the West of Ware, Ware Park Farm, Ware, Hertfordshire, SG12 0DU
- 5B 3/24/1707/FUL - Construction of a building comprising commercial floorspace (Use Class E) and hotel accommodation (Use Class C1), improvements to the Bishop's Stortford transport interchange, and associated landscaping at Goods Yard, Station Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 3BL (Pages 2 – 9)

Yours faithfully,

Peter Mannings  
Committee Support Officer  
[peter.mannings@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:peter.mannings@eastherts.gov.uk)

**MEETING** : DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
**VENUE** : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
**DATE** : WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2025  
**TIME** : 7.00 PM

**East Herts Council: Development Management Committee****Date: 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

**Summary of additional representations received after completion of reports submitted to the committee, but received by 5pm on the date of the meeting.**

Agenda No	Summary of representations	Officer comments
5A	<p>Para 5.13 - Consultee response received from HCC Fire Safety team. Requires submission of a Fire Risk Reduction Strategy and outlines requirements to be highlighted in the strategy.</p>	<p>Condition 6 revised to reflect the comments.</p>
5B	<p>Para 6 – Other representations: Two additional objections have been received relating to:</p> <p>Traffic congestion: Existing road layout around the station (particularly Station Road bridge, Riverside, South Street, and Newtown Road) is already inadequate, with frequent peak-hour congestion.</p> <p>Public transport provision: The proposed development includes only three bus stops and limited shelters, considered insufficient given the number of bus operators and routes serving the area (Arriva,</p>	<p>The existing road layout falls outside of the site boundary for this development.</p> <p>The proposed development includes four bus stops increasing the current provision by one which is considered by HCC Highways and Planning Officers to be sufficient for existing bus operators. All four bus stops have adequate shelters with real time digital displays.</p>

	<p>Stephensons, Central Connect, Richmonds Coaches, Herts Lynx, and Stortford Shuttle).</p> <p>Operational space: Concern that the future of the nearby taxi and bus parking area is unclear; any reduction could harm public transport efficiency.</p> <p>Overall assessment: The proposed layout does not appear to offer a sustainable or effective transport solution for the station area.</p>	<p>The operational space for the nearby taxi and bus parking fall outside of the site boundary for this development.</p> <p>HCC Highways have been consulted and raise no objection to the scheme in this regard.</p>
	<p>Design: Whilst the principle of development has been accepted, serious concerns are raised to the overall poor design of such an important gateway building.</p> <p>Reference is made to para 1.7 of the officer report which makes reference to shading of the brickwork to '..soften the visual mass..'. The shading will not reduce the mass and will not achieve any softening. The design needs more articulation and seek a building with presence, rather than just accept another monolithic block.</p> <p>Reference is also made to Para 4.7 which states that the Conservation and Design Advisor considers that is a 'high standard of design'. Concerns are that the building is just</p>	<p>Extant permission and the subsequent approval of a non-material amendment to the approved scheme have firmly established the footprint, height and mass of the building. The current proposal seeks further design refinements.</p> <p>The design refinements respond to the role the building plays in shaping the northern entrance to the Goods Yard development site. The use of coloured brick work is a recognized architectural and urban design practice often used to soften the visual mass of large buildings. The angled alignment of the entrance which incorporates large glazing to the open reception lobby offers articulation and interest maximising the function of the building on a constrained site.</p> <p>The applicant has responded to design refinements requested by Conservation and Urban Design Officer during the life of this application increasing the quality of the design which is an</p>

	<p>a large 'slab' that does not embody a 'high standard of design.</p> <p>Para 7.4 makes reference to the Neighbourhood Plan describing new development should be 'creating a welcoming and pleasant public realm'. Concerns are that the design solution falls far short of such an objective, echoed comments made on the Bishop's Stortford Federation website supporting the view that the design as currently proposed is wholly unacceptable.</p> <p>Note is made of paras 7.20, 7.22, 7.23, 7.25 which reference the need for good design which the current proposal is not consistent with.</p> <p>Reference is made to para 8.3 the planning balance. Concerns are raised that the design will not sit comfortably within the urban context.</p> <p>A request is made that the application is deferred for design revisions.</p>	<p>improvement to the extant permission and subsequent non-material amendment.</p> <p>Elements of public realm that fall within the proposed site boundary service the Bus Interchange. The proposed surfacing is a practical improvement to the existing bus stop area. Details of the materials are subject to condition.</p> <p>Concerns relating to the wider public realm fall outside of the current proposal.</p> <p>The current design refinements are an improvement on the extant scheme resulting in a development which responds better to the immediate context, in terms of height, footprint, mass in an urban context.</p> <p>The proposal is legible in promoting a mix of uses and retains the local character of the area compliant with the expectations of the refined masterplan for the area, neighbourhood plan, local plan policies.</p> <p>Officers consider this is not justified for the reasons set out above and in the officer report.</p>
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**Table of errata and updates to reports submitted to Committee.**

Agenda No	Paragraph No	Updates
5A	Condition 6	<p>In response to Fire Safety team comments, condition 6 replaced with the following condition:</p> <p><b>Fire Risk Reduction Strategy</b></p> <p>6. Prior to the commencement of works above ground, a Fire Risk Reduction Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The strategy shall cover the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the project and include details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The components and construction techniques to be used</li> <li>• Automatic fire detection and suppression system</li> <li>• Measures to contain and restrict the spread of fire through the use of fire-resistant materials, and adequate separation between elements of the BESS to ensure that fire cannot spread between BESS containers</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy will demonstrate consideration of the National Fire Chiefs Council guidance in accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance and any relevant Fire Protection Association guidance.</p> <p>The Strategy shall include an Emergency Response Plan that includes details of the hazards associated with lithium-ion batteries, isolation of electrical sources to enable firefighting activities, measures to extinguish or cool batteries involved in fire, management of toxic or flammable gases, minimise the environmental impact of an</p>

		<p>incident, containment of fire water run-off, handling, and responsibility for disposal of damaged batteries, and establishment of regular onsite training exercises.</p> <p>The emergency response plan should be maintained and regularly reviewed by the occupier and any material changes notified to HFRS. Environmental impact should include the prevention of ground contamination, water course pollution, and the release of toxic gases.</p> <p>The Strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the Battery Energy Storage Infrastructure being brought into use and retained as such thereafter.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of safety and to ensure that the proposed development would accord with the relevant fire safety guidance, including guidance from the National Fire Chiefs Council and international standards; and in accordance with East Herts District Plan policy DES4.</p>
5A	8.41, 9.4 and 9.9	<p>Amend para 9.4 as follows (see deleted text and new text <u>underlined</u>):</p> <p><i><u>'The proposals would also result in limited positive economic benefits in terms of construction job generation and an ongoing contribution proposed by the applicant and towards the provision of community facilities for the life of the development. These <u>which has ve been attributed limited positive weight as part of application decision making.</u></u></i></p> <p>In the report, limited positive weight is given to the provision of a community fund, as reflected in condition 27. Subsequently, advice has been provided that such funds are separate from and not a material consideration for planning authorities in England, Wales and Scotland. On this basis, no weight is now assigned to the community fund in terms of</p>

		<p>the conclusions about green belt very special circumstances, and the acceptability of the proposal in the final balancing exercise.</p> <p>Taking account of the remaining positive and negative impacts of the proposal, this variation does not affect the overall conclusion.</p> <p>It is therefore concluded that the benefits of the proposal (excluding the provision of a community fund) as detailed in the officer report, along with the specific geographical requirement to locate the facility in close proximity to GSK, provide very special circumstances which outweigh the harm by inappropriateness to the Green Belt and the other harms identified.</p> <p>On this basis, applying the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development, on balance and for the reasons detailed above, it is still recommended that planning permission be granted for the proposals.</p>
5A	Supporting documents	Document D1003 – ‘draft proposed passing places plan’ should be referenced as revision C and dated 13.12.24.
5B	<p>Para 8 – Conditions</p> <p>Condition 7</p> <p>Condition 10 (now 7)</p>	<p>Numbering amended</p> <p><b>Hotel Guest Occupancy</b> – Removed. GDPR restricts the operators ability to maintain a list of occupants personal data and retain it for two years.</p> <p><b>Bus Interchange Delivery</b> - Condition amended to request formal certificate of practical completion. Wording amended to read (new text underlined)</p>

	<p>Condition 11 (now 8)</p>	<p><i>The hotel shall not be occupied until the bus interchange has been constructed to a practical completion standard meaning that the bus interchange is ready for its intended use as a public transport facility and made available for use, <u>and a formal certificate of practical completion has been issued.</u> In any event, the bus interchange shall be completed and made available for use no later than 31 December 2027 <u>unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council.</u></i></p> <p><i>Reason: To secure the timely provision of the bus interchange in the interests of sustainable transport and the wider public benefit in compliance with policy TRA2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.</i></p> <p><b>Marketing and Management Strategy</b> – Management Strategy is not required. Submission and implementation of an approved Marketing Strategy is sufficient to safeguard the viability and vitality of the Class E floor space. Wording amended to (see deleted text and new text <u>underlined</u>) :</p> <p><i><u>Prior to the first occupation of any Class E floorspace, a Management and Marketing Strategy for that space shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Marketing Strategy shall set out the proposed approach to marketing the floorspace to relevant occupiers. Once approved, the Marketing Strategy shall be implemented in full and adhered to at all times during the marketing period. include details of:</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i><u>(a) the proposed approach to marketing the floorspace to appropriate occupiers;</u></i></li> <li><i><u>(b) measures to ensure the active use and ongoing vitality of the commercial floorspace;</u></i></li> </ul> <p><i><u>and</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i><u>(c) arrangements for monitoring and reporting to the Local Planning Authority.</u></i></li> </ul> <p><i><u>The approved Strategy shall be implemented in full and adhered to at all times thereafter.</u></i></p>
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		<i>Reason: To ensure the viability and vitality of the site in compliance with Policy BISH7 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.</i>