

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2025, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Watson (Chair)
Councillors R Buckmaster, M Adams, V Burt,
S Copley, I Devonshire, J Dunlop, Y Estop,
G Hill, T Smith, T Stowe and J Thomas

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors B Deering, E Buckmaster and
V Glover-Ward

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Neil Button	- Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team)
Nikki Dawney	- Principal Planning Officer
Rachel Lee	- Legal Adviser
Peter Mannings	- Committee Support Officer
Martin Plummer	- Service Manager (Development Management and Enforcement)
Joanna Russell	- Principal Planning Officer
Stephanie Tarrant	- Assistant Director for Democracy, Elections and Information Governance

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor S Marlow. It was noted that Councillor M Adams was substituting for Councillor S Marlow.

197 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair introduced the Officers and reminded Members to use their microphones as the meeting was being webcast.

198 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Graeme Hill declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in planning application 3/24/1275/FUL, on the grounds that he was employed by the company that was submitting the application. He left the room whilst this application was being considered.

199 MINUTES - 13 AUGUST 2025

Councillor Stowe proposed and Councillor Devonshire seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2025, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

200 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

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/24/1275/FUL, planning

permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer said that a consultee response had been received from the fire safety team at Hertfordshire County Council, and their comments had been noted and condition 6 had been amended.

The Principal Planning Officer said that Officers had received some advice regarding the community facilities provision that was included in the application and paragraph 9.4 of the report had been amended.

Members were advised of the location of the site and were provided with a detailed summary of the proposed development including details of the energy generation in the context of the overall energy demands of the nearby GSK site.

The Principal Planning Officer presented a series of visuals and plans in respect of the proposed development. She said that there had been no objections from statutory consultees and Officers had received 39 representations of support and 12 objections.

The Principal Planning Officer said that in respect of biodiversity net gain there would be an 89 percent increase on area habitat across the site and a 1500 plus percent increase in hedgerow.

Members were advised that the applicant had engaged in depth with Hertfordshire County Council highways and a construction traffic management plan which was required to be submitted and approved. The Principal Planning Officer said that Hertfordshire Highways were satisfied that the development could be implemented without harm to motorists using the highway, or to cyclists and pedestrians. She said that the site would be very well screened by existing woodland and the panels were quite low in scale. Members were advised that the landscape team had examined the submitted information and were

satisfied that the most sensitive receptors of the visual impact were covered.

Sarah Lapsley and Paul Holmes-Ling addressed the committee in support of the application. They were asked questions by the Development Management Committee.

Councillor Stowe asked if there was to be a decommissioning bond for this site. The Principal Planning Officer said that there was no decommissioning bond but there were extensive conditions requiring a scheme for remediation of the land and there were measures in place to make sure that the land was made good.

Councillor Devonshire said that the Westmill Site was elevated, and he asked if there were any views to demonstrate to Members whether the development site could be seen from Westmill Site from the north.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the landscape and visual impact assessment that was submitted with the application set out the guidelines and methodology and Officers were satisfied that this was sound in terms of identifying the sensitive receptors. Members were advised that the development would be very well screened.

Councillor Burt asked for some clarity as to whether the location of the proposed solar would make the site a brownfield site and therefore more probable for housing to be approved on the site in the future.

The Principal Planning Officer said that this was a concern that had been raised and Officers had to report this as a concern. She said that the proposed development of a solar farm did not change the classification of the land at all and there was an emphasis on remediation of the land if it were not to be used for a solar farm in future.

Councillor Estop asked for some clarity in terms of the

proposed appearance and visibility of the solar panels. The Principal Planning Officer said that there was a quite a bit of informal guidance about glint and glare and she said that when details were submitted under condition 3, officers would have the powers to ensure that would not be excessive glint and glare from the solar panels.

Councillor Stowe asked if there would be a bund around the site of the battery storage to ensure that the ground around the site was not contaminated by water in the event of this being used to fight a fire. The Principal Planning Officer said that there were regulations covering the fire risk and battery energy security systems and this was covered by a condition requiring the applicant to submit details for an emergency plan in the event of fire.

Councillor Stowe said that there was limited detail about how a bund could be provided around the battery energy storage in the event of a fire to contain the water. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) said that officers had recommended a condition in discussion with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue and this condition had to be necessary and the detail that was being sought would be available when the conditions were discharged and this was a much smaller battery energy storage facility.

Members had a general discussion around the conditions and Officers responded to questions about the proposed conditions. Councillor Dunlop proposed and Councillor Devonshire seconded, a motion that application 3/24/1275/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that application 3/24/1275/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

201 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

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/24/1707/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer summarised the late and additional representations that had been received. She said that two objections had been received regarding the application and potential traffic congestion, public transport provision, and a query regarding paragraph 7.4 and a reference to the Neighbourhood Plan, and also an objection regarding the design.

The Principal Planning Officer summarised the application in detail and presented a series of visuals and plans in respect of the proposed development. She detailed the full planning history of the wider Bishop's Stortford Goodsyards and Members were advised that the site was allocated in the District Plan. The Principal Planning Officer said that this allocation was supported by the Neighbourhood Plan for Bishop's Stortford and part of Thorley. She said that the proposals should be assessed against the aims of the NPPF and other relevant District Plan policies.

The Principal Planning Officer set out the wider planning context and said that the principle of redevelopment of the whole of the goodsyard site is established with strong policy support spanning several years.

Members were advised that the site was located on the northern part of the wider goodsyard development and it was intended that the both the proposed hotel and bus interchange would be delivered concurrently. The

Principal Planning Officer explained that certainty of delivery would be ensured by the planning permission being structured on a phased basis with the bus interchange being phase one and the hotel forming a separate phase.

Members were advised that this would enable planning conditions to be discharged independently for each phase thereby preventing delays to one element if issues arose with other phases of development. The Principal Planning Officer said that the phasing plan had been prepared on this basis, and this would be secured by conditions to ensure that the bus interchange could be still delivered if the hotel was delayed.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the applicant had responded to design refinements requested by conservation and urban design officers and these officers considered that the scheme was appropriate to its urban context and they felt that the development would have a neutral impact on the adjacent conservation area.

Members were advised of the proposed parking arrangements for hotel guests in Jackson Square Multi Storey Car park and Crown Terrace Car Park and also the proposed cycle parking for the employees of the hotel.

The Principal Planning Officer said that Hertfordshire Highways had not objected to the application and officers considered that, in planning terms, the principle of the development was firmly established and the proposal benefited from extant permission, policy support, an improved design, economic benefits, public transport improvements, and strong sustainability measures and the regeneration of a vacant site.

Members were advised that all of the above were public benefits that should be given significant weight, and the recommendation was to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

Simon Dunlop and Oliver Milne addressed the committee in support of the application. They were asked questions by the Development Management Committee.

Councillor R Buckmaster asked how the allocations of spaces in Jackson Square and Crown Terrace were to be determined by the Officers. The Principal Planning Officer said that the parking spaces would be secured via an agreement with East Herts and the applicant, and this would not be matter that would be controlled by planning.

Councillor Stowe asked how the deliveries to the hotel could be guaranteed to be made by lorries no larger than 18 tonne rigid lorries. He also asked if officers could show the location of the layby for deliveries. The Principal Planning Officer said that the application would be subject to a condition for this kind of information. She put up a plan that showed the location of the layby on Dane Street.

Councillor Stowe asked about the discharge of water into the River Stort and the wording of the agreement that was being drawn up. The Principal Planning Officer said that the Canals and Rivers Trust had advised that planning conditions were required to secure the drainage design and this was in accordance with the drainage design that would be approved by the LLFA and secured by condition.

Councillor Devonshire commented that Crown Terrace was a long way from the hotel site, and Jackson Square was also a good 10-minute walk as well. He said that hotel guests would be more likely to use the Station Car Park, which was closer but very expensive.

Councillor Estop asked about Section 106 obligations in respect of sustainable transport and in particular for walking and cycling. She said that Station Road was a very important walking and cycling and it was very poor in its existing state and everyday people towards the Station from the main shopping area and people also walked east to west from Hockerill to South Street.

Councillor Estop asked if there had already been Section 106 provision for improving Station Road and making the walking routes continuous or whether this needed to be added to this application. The Principal Planning Officer said that these provisions had already been secured via the existing extant outline planning permission, and some more Section 106 had been secured by the most recent hybrid application and the Section 106 on that application was currently being finalised.

Councillor Hill asked for some clarity about the existing provision for cycle parking on site and the wider area. The Principal Planning Officer said that officers had considered the site wide provision as being sufficient along with the existing provision at the train station along with the cycle parking that had been implemented by the extant permission.

The Principal Planning Officer responded to questions from Members regarding retail deliveries, waste management, biological net gain, landscaping and the bus shelter design. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) said that all of the details that shaped the design of the bus interchange were considered to be acceptable in planning and highways safety terms.

Councillor Stowe proposed and Councillor Adams seconded, a motion that application 3/24/1707/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that application 3/24/1707/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

202 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Chairman

Date