

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 21
MAY 2025, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Watson (Chair)
Councillors M Adams, V Burt, S Copley,
T Deffley, I Devonshire, J Dunlop, G Hill and
T Stowe

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors V Glover-Ward, M Goldspink,
M Swainston and C Wilson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jackie Bruce	- Section 106 Programme Manager
Neil Button	- Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team)
Rachael Collard	- Principal Planning Officer
Nikki Dawney	- Principal Planning Officer
Rachel Lee	- Legal Adviser
Peter Mannings	- Committee Support Officer
Martin Plummer	- Service Manager (Development Management and Enforcement)
Sara Saunders	- Director for Place

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Sam Tearle - Hertfordshire Highways

27 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor M Adams and seconded by Councillor J Dunlop, that Councillor J Thomas be appointed Vice-Chair of the Development Management Committee for the 2025/26 civic year.

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

RESOLVED – that Councillor J Thomas be appointed Vice-Chair of the Development Management Committee for the 2025/26 civic year.

28 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Buckmaster, Y Estop, S Marlow, T Smith and J Thomas. It was noted that Councillor T Deffley was substituting for Councillor R Buckmaster and Councillor M Adams was substituting for Councillor S Marlow.

29 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked Councillor Marlow for his support as the Vice-Chair during the 2024/25 civic year.

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor I Devonshire declared an interest in application 3/22/1613/OUT, as he owned a flat in block A4 of this development. He said that he had no connection with the applicant, and he was approaching the application with an open mind. He said that he had no benefit or disbenefit by owning the flat.

31 MINUTES - 16 APRIL 2025

Councillor Devonshire proposed and Councillor Stowe seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and 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 16 April 2025, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

32 3/22/1613/OUT - FULL APPLICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3), TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, PLANT, SUB-STATION, LANDSCAPING, PUBLIC REALM AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS, OUTLINE APPLICATION (WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED) FOR RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C2 / C3), COMMERCIAL FLOORSPACE (USE CLASS E) AND CAR PARKING FACILITY, TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING, PLANT,

LANDSCAPING, NEW PUBLIC REALM AND INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKS AT GOODS YARD, STATION ROAD, BISHOP'S
STORTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE, CM23 3BL

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/22/1613/OUT, planning permission be granted subject to a legal agreement and subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer set out the planning policy context and summarised the relevant district plan policies. She said that the application should be assessed against the key aims of the NPPF and other relevant district plan policies.

Members were advised that the principle of redevelopment of this site is established with strong policy support spanning several years. The Principal Planning Officer summarised the planning history and presented a series of plans and elevation drawings relevant to the application. She set out the full details of the application and talked in detail about the proposed layout and recreational space.

The Principal Planning Officer said that Hertfordshire County Council was satisfied with the proposed parking arrangements in a highly sustainable location. She said that the decision by Network Rail to retain the railway sidings had resulted in these being removed from the development area. A new hybrid application had been submitted for the rest of the site, with an increased density with an uplift of 100 dwellings to 743 residential units.

Members were advised that there was an increased height to most buildings and the principle of the increasing

density and building heights was endorsed by the revised master plan for the area.

The Principal Planning Officer detailed the proposed housing mix for the full housing application. She explained that the details of all external materials would be secured by condition with sample boards displayed on site. Members were advised that there was no car parking proposed for the commercial space.

The Principal Planning Officer detailed the viability issues in respect of the proposed affordable housing provision and set out the heads of terms of the Section 106 legal agreement. Members were advised of the issues relevant to the planning balance in respect of the application.

The Principal Planning Officer concluded her presentation by referring Members to the recommendation detailed in the report, and by referring Members to the late representations document. Graham Oxborrow and Paul Dean addressed the committee in objection to the application. The Committee asked questions of the speakers in objection to the application.

David Bridges, Erin Futter and Simon Dunlop spoke for the application. They were asked questions by the Committee.

Councillor David Bower addressed the Committee on behalf of Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

Councillor Watson (Chair) proposed, and Councillor Hill seconded a motion that, in accordance with paragraph 6.5.6 of the constitution, the committee deviate from the speaking arrangements in paragraphs 6.5.2 to 6.5.5, to

allow Councillor Goldspink to address the committee in addition to the local ward Member.

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

RESOLVED – that in accordance with paragraph 6.5.6 of the constitution, the committee deviate from the speaking arrangements in paragraphs 6.5.2 to 6.5.5, to allow Councillor Goldspink to address the committee in addition to the local ward Member.

Councillor Wilson addressed the committee in respect of his concerns as the local ward Member. Councillor Goldspink also addressed the committee as a local Member.

Councillor Copley asked for some clarity on the differences between the outline and full applications, and what that meant for Members in their deliberations and decision making. The Principal Planning Officer said that the full part of the application was the element of the hybrid application that included block C and a portion of the station square. The outline application was highlighted in blue, and Members were referred to building heights shown on the screen.

The Principal Planning Officer referred Members to the parameter plans in respect of building heights, landscaping and cycle movements. She highlighted the areas that were in outline form and said that reserved matters could come before Members should outline permission be granted and the above details would be secured at that point with full consultation.

Councillor Deffley referred to affordable housing and asked about the process whereby the council had sought outside consultation in respect of affordable housing and financial viability. The Principal Planning Officer said that the viability assessment submitted by the developer was sent to an independent consultant, and the response was conclusive that the development would be looking at a deficit.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that the development when tested for 100% market housing was an unviable development. He referred to a deficit of around £25 million with 100% market housing, and Officers had given a small proportionate benefit to the proposed provision of affordable housing. Members were advised that this was an additional type of housing to the provision of market housing.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that the potential provision of C2 senior living accommodation, and there was a range of different types of accommodation which overall had been given significant positive weight in the planning balance. He said that some shared ownership housing had been seen as more of a benefit than having none at all.

Councillor Devonshire said that as a lot of the application was in outline form, was there a chance that the affordable housing provision would increase as the scheme progressed. The Principal Planning Officer said that the development had committed to an additional viability assessment, and should the development turn a profit this would immediately lead to the provision of affordable housing as there was ongoing assessment due to the outline permission.

Councillor Stowe asked for some clarity as to the frequency of the review mechanisms. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that an early review could take place, followed by a mid-stage and possibly a late-stage review at the end of a development. Members were referred to the affordable housing supplementary planning document (SPD). The nature of the review mechanisms were set out in the heads of terms of the Section 106 legal agreement.

Councillor Stowe asked about the degree of the ramp, and whether this would be suitable for disabled people in wheelchairs and for parents with buggies. The Principal Planning Officer said that when the reserved matters elements of the outline application that included the ramp came forward, there would be a complete design review and there would be detailed plans subject to consultation.

Members were advised that the ramp design would be reviewed to ensure this was accessible for all and provided the required access. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that more information would be known when the design for building A6 came forward for approval.

The Hertfordshire Highways Officer said that the indicative design of the ramp was in keeping with the Department for Transport's inclusivity design guide for gradients. He said that this meant this provision would be suitable for mobility impaired users.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) answered a number of more detailed questions from Members in respect of the planning balance. He talked about the weight given to the provision of housing at a

time when the council did not have a 5-year housing land supply.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that there was a balance to be struck between reducing the number of vehicle trips and ensuring that sustainable development was supported. Councillor Burt asked a number of questions about the local Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan and building heights.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the Neighbourhood Plan had been factored into the decision-making process. She said that Officers had considered the refined masterplan that came along in 2022 that had allowed an increase in stories and dwellings. Members were advised that this was a material planning consideration.

Councillors Deffley and Devonshire made a number of comments in respect of car parking and building heights. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that the application included a range of building heights, and he referred to the conditions regarding an assessment for parking need.

The Hertfordshire Highways Officer said that there was an allocation for future residents, and this would be reviewed as part of the car parking needs assessment. He said that this was a highly sustainable location and a reduction in car parking spaces was acceptable for that reason.

Members debated the access and usage restrictions along Sextons Road during construction and for residents, buses, cyclists and taxis. The Hertfordshire Highways Officer and the Planning Officers gave advice to Members on these matters. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic

Applications Team) said that the proposed bike parking provision was considered suitable for the plot c of the proposed development.

The Legal Adviser said that the law in decision making stipulated that the more up to and recently adopted planning policy carried more weight. She said that other earlier policy considerations were not ignored, and Members had a difficult decision to make on balance.

Members were reminded that paragraph 8.3 of the report summarised quite succinctly how the titled balance was engaged regarding this application. The Legal Adviser referred to the principles of paragraph 11d of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) regarding giving significant weight regarding housing land supply.

Councillor Deffley referred to the geography of the situation in reference to the river and detritus from the building works running off into the river. The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team) said that the phasing plan would determine how the site would come forward in the first instance. He said that there were conditions relating to constructing environmental management and also conditions regarding landscape and ecological management.

The Legal Adviser explained that, in reference to the Section 106 legal agreement, this would be drafted on the basis that what was on offer at the application stage in respect of affordable housing provision could not be reduced.

Councillor Watson proposed and Councillor Dunlop seconded, a motion that application 3/22/1613/OUT 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 3/22/1613/OUT be granted planning permission subject to a suitable legal agreement and subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

33 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Chairman
Date