

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2026, AT 7.00
PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, B Deering, V Glover-
Ward and G Williamson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jackie Bruce	- Section 106 Programme Manager
Neil Button	- Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team)
Steve Fraser-Lim	- Principal Planning Officer
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

327 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors V Burt and J Dunlop. It was noted that Councillor V Smith was substituting for Councillor J Dunlop.

328 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The full webcast of the meeting can be viewed here: Development Management Committee – [11 February 2026](#).

329 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Joe Thomas declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in planning application 3/24/0284/OUT, on the grounds that he worked for the Passenger Transport Unit at Hertfordshire County Council, who had made a request for Section 106 monies. He left the room whilst this application was being considered.

330 MINUTES - 15 OCTOBER 2025

Councillor Devonshire proposed and Councillor Stowe seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 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 15 October 2025, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

331 3/24/0284/OUT - OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE ERECTION OF UP TO 36 DWELLINGS WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS AT LAND WEST OF HIGH ROAD, HIGH CROSS, HERTFORDSHIRE

The Director for Place recommended that in respect of application 3/24/0284/OUT, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer summarised the late representations that had been received and set out the designation of High Cross as a group two village. Members were advised that the application had been reassessed under policy GBR2, and it was of note that the site was not within the village boundary. A number of amendments to the report were summarised by the Principal Planning Officer.

The Principal Planning Officer summarised the application for outline planning permission with all matters reserved apart from access. She presented a series of parameter plans and slides that covered the location of the site in the context of the surrounding area. Members were advised of the main planning issues that were pertinent to the application. Of particular note was that the site was rural land beyond the green belt and there were no landscape designations on the site.

Members were shown an indicative masterplan for the site and a plan showing the bridleways and public rights of way that were referenced in the landscape and visual impact assessment. The heritage context of the site was also set out for the committee.

Members were reminded that landscape, layout, appearance and scale were not for consideration at this stage. The committee were able to consider the access to the site as well as the pedestrian access to the school.

Jacqueline Veater addressed the committee in objection

to the application. She was asked a number of questions by the Development Management Committee.

Thaddaeus Jackson-Browne and David Baker-Brook addressed the committee in support of the application.

Councillor Andrews addressed the committee as the local ward Member. He was asked questions by the Development Management Committee.

Questions were asked regarding whether the site had been submitted to the call for sites, and also in relation to the identified local need and whether the housing was for local needs and also whether lower end of substantial harm meant substantial.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the situation was ever changing in respect of the call for sites. She said that in terms of local need the need was across the district as a whole and there was no request specifically that this site be reserved for local needs. Members were advised that the harm was less than substantial harm otherwise the scheme would more likely have been recommended for refusal.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that the site was not part and parcel of the listed buildings, and the expanded comments of the conservation officer were helpful in that regard. The site was in the wider locality of the village church and the school but was not part of what made the character of those buildings special.

Members were advised that the open space and the proposed SUDS provisions to the south of the site would now provide a very large gap between a barn and the site. It was confirmed that this location was in the call for sites.

Concerns were expressed regarding how the privately run bus service was going to be improved and a question was asked about the size of the school in terms of forms of

entry. The Section 106 Programme Manager explained the bus contributions went directly to the county council and the sustainable transport team allocated funds to the routes as a potential subsidy to encourage more buses per hour.

Members expressed a number of concerns regarding the unsustainable nature of the site with a particular reference to the poor bus service and the lack of facilities in the village. The Principal Planning Officer said that both the locationality of the site and the location of local services in relation to the village had been considered. High Cross as a group two village had been assessed as having very good levels of accessibility due to the bus service, pavements and lighting and how close it was to other settlements. The appropriate level of harm had been identified as moderate, and this had been weighed up in the planning balance.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) explained that Members should have regard to the location of High Cross in the context of Wadesmill and Thundridge. Members should consider that in broader terms there were more services that were walkable or easily accessible between the three villages. The matter of the tilted balance was also highly relevant and less than full weight should be assigned to district plan policies as there was not a 5-year supply of deliverable sites.

The Principal Planning Officer responded to a query regarding archaeological work and explained that there would be appropriate reporting and recording of any findings and this would not stop development on the site.

A concern was expressed regarding the sterile nature of the proposed development adjacent to a warm and attractive settlement that had grown organically over the years. Members also made a number of points in respect of the lack of a five-year housing land supply and the allocation of sites in the district plan.

The Principal Planning Officer responded to a question about protected views and said that she had very thoroughly considered the views from Marshalls Lane. She presented a series of views from the PowerPoint slides including views extracted from the Neighbourhood Plan. A concern was expressed regarding the landscape parameter plans and the lack of information regarding the impacts of the scheme.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) said that Members had to consider the detail in the parameter plans pertinent to this application and the conditions that were set out in the report. Details in respect of archaeology, buffer treatments and design would all come forward later and there was clear evidence that this site was deliverable within a five-year period. Members were advised that the NPPF was a significant material consideration in respect of the titled balance.

The Legal Adviser said that Members had a duty to determine applications that were submitted and validated by the local planning authority, and as a matter of law the committee could not ask the applicant to withdraw an application. She reiterated that, as regards the titled balance, considerable weight must be afforded to housing delivery and for an application to be refused in the tilted balance, there would have to be substantial and significant harm in the context of all of the policies of the NPPF as a whole.

A query was raised regarding the possibility of improvements to cycle ways due to the short distances between High Cross and Wadesmill and this being a natural cycle journey but too far to walk. The Principal Planning Officer said that the walkable/cyclable reference was an inference in relation to the lit pavement access to the villages. This matter was not raised by Hertfordshire Highways, or active travel and a priority had been given to bus travel due to the scale of the development and the nature of the location in High Cross.

The Principal Planning Officer said that in reply to the comments from the committee on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and flooding, this was a highly technical matter that had been covered in the report along with a summary of the comments of the lead local flood authority (LLFA). She said that there would be an improvement of the current situation on site regarding surface water flooding and no harm in that regard.

Councillor Watson proposed and Councillor Copley seconded, a motion that application 3/24/0284/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 3/24/0284/OUT be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

332 3/25/0917/FUL - ERECTION OF BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY INCLUDING ACCESS WORKS, LANDSCAPING AND ALL ASSOCIATED ENGINEERING WORKS AT DELLOWS, GINNS ROAD, STOCKING PELHAM, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG9 0JA

The Director for Place recommended that in respect of application 3/25/0917/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer set out the context of the application and the application site in the wider area in and around Stocking Pelham. He said that the application had been accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment. The Principal Planning Officer summarised in detail the proposed development.

Members were presented a series of visuals, elevation drawings and photos that showed the views and location

of the site. The Principal Planning Officer explained that some trees and hedgerows would need to be cut back and managed to facilitate access and visibility splays.

The Principal Planning Officer set out the intending routing for construction vehicles and said that there would be no vehicles heading westwards through Stocking Pelham. He drew members attention to the risk management plan and the outline battery safety management plan. He also commented on the assessment of the application against the national fire chief council guidance on fire safety.

Members were updated in respect of the drainage strategy for the site, and the strategy had been reviewed by the LLFA, and they were no satisfied subject to conditions in the report. The Principal Planning Officer summarised the late representations that had been received and Members were updated on a number of amendments to the heads of terms in respect of the Section 106 legal agreement.

Ian DeBurgh-Marsh addressed the committee in objection to the application.

Jonathan Cooper addressed the committee in support of the application. He was asked questions by the Development Management Committee.

Councillor Colin Berthoud and Dani Fuimicelli addressed the committee on behalf of Stocking Pelham Parish Council. They were asked questions by the Members of the Development Management Committee.

Councillor Geoffrey Williamson addressed the committee as the local ward Member.

In reply to a question regarding the Crabbs Lane (Crabbs Green) site by Officers, where an application for a BESS had been refused in 2025, the Principal Planning Officer set out the main planning considerations as to why that planning application had been refused by officers.

Members asked a number of questions regarding noise, heritage impact, the route to be taken by HGVs involved in the implementation of these proposals, fire safety and the shutting down of equipment in the event of fire and contaminated water and the cumulative impact of five BESS schemes in this area.

The Principal Planning Officer said that this application was different in that Environmental Health had not objected to the application at Dellows and application site at Crabbs Green was closer to more residential properties in Stocking Pelham and Crabbs Green. Members were advised that Dellows was further from residential receptors and there were less of them.

Members were advised that the noise mitigations at Crabbs Green had been a lot more substantial to achieve worst result than would be the case at Dellows. The planning balance on this application was more in keeping with the other BESS applications that had been recommended for approval.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed to Members that the site at Dellows was 4.1 hectares and in terms of the acoustic barrier, Environmental Health were very aware of the issue of low frequency noise. Further information was submitted to assess the impact of low frequency noise as Environmental Health had concerns that there was not much information submitted in that regard.

Members were further advised that details were available in the background documents and all of the above details regarding noise mitigation could be secured by the planning conditions. This included details of an example of a planted acoustic wall which would have more of a mass than an acoustic fence.

The Principal Planning Officer explained that in terms of the routing of construction traffic to and from Dellows, the traffic could use the previously approved route without

vehicles travelling through the village.

Members were advised that both Essex County Council and Hertfordshire County Council had considered that the proposed route was acceptable, and any impacts would be manageable.

The Principal Planning Officer said that any runoff from the site in terms of drainage would be directed to a drainage basins and then this would discharge into the water course. He set out in detail the mitigations that would be implemented in the event of a fire or a battery malfunction to prevent the discharge of water from the basin to the outfall.

In reply to a query regarding the impact on the area of five BESS schemes and the cumulative impact, the Principal Planning Officer said that Essex County Council could have requested further information regarding traffic mitigation, and they would have done so if they had sufficient concerns that the highways impact would be unacceptable.

Members were advised that no such request had been received and there was a condition that the Highways departments be consulted on the final version of the construction traffic management plan.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) advised that the cumulative impact in terms of noise, traffic, heritage impact and landscape character and visual impact were all key considerations that were critical to the decision making of the committee. He said that all of these points were addressed in the report on a cumulative basis.

Members were advised that it was not for the local planning authority or the planning inspectorate to place a limit on an area as part of determining planning applications. He said that the report covered in

considerable detail that there was limited intervisibility between the two sites.

The landscape officer had advised that the application was an acceptable scheme in respect of landscape harm and the cumulative impact, and the impact of this particular site was moderate at worst.

The Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) said that each application had to be considered on its own merits on a case-by-case basis in respect of noise. Members were advised that the impact on listed buildings had been covered in the late representations sheet that had been published.

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The Principal Planning Officer and the Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications) addressed Members at length in respect of landscape harm, the noise impact and also on the impact on listed buildings and the conservation of heritage assets. The public benefits, which Members must give significant weight to, would outweigh those harms. Members were reminded that the NPPF did allow the public benefits to outweigh any identified harm to the setting of the heritage assets.

At this point in the meeting, 9:55 pm, Councillor Watson proposed and Councillor Thomas seconded, a motion that the meeting would continue for 20 minutes beyond 10 pm.

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

RESOLVED – that the meeting continue for 20 minutes beyond 10 pm.

The Legal Adviser said that the matter of the cumulative impacts was part of the weighting in the balance, and this

was a difficult consideration for the committee. She said that the government guidance for significant national infrastructure projects recognises the dilemma facing Members.

Members were advised that they should be making proportionate assessments based upon the information available at the time. The Legal Adviser said that Members had to consider what was before them in the context of this application. The threshold of harm was a difficult question, and Members had a difficult task in balancing the planning considerations set out in the report weighted against the public benefits.

Councillor Estop proposed and Councillor Thomas seconded, a motion that application 3/25/0917/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report and also subject to the following amended/additional conditions (the amended wording of condition 24 is to be finalised in consultation with Chair of the Development Management Committee).

Condition 17: Acoustic Boundary Treatments

17. First use of the development shall not take place until a detailed specification of acoustic boundary treatment in general conformity with the Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, which shall comprise a plantable retaining wall structure (rootlock or similar). The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the development and retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area, including residential occupiers in accordance with East Herts District Plan policy EQ2.

Condition 24: Development in accordance with acoustic

report

- 24 During operation, the Site must operate ensuring that there are no audible tones between 20 Hz and 315 Hz in third octave bands at any existing residential dwelling. Tones may be determined objectively through measurement at the residential dwelling, following guidance given in BS 4142 and relevant Standards. Where tones are found to be present, remedial action will be required to mitigate the particular tone, with details of further mitigation measures to be submitted for approval to the local planning authority. During all periods, the Site must operate within the operational noise levels as noted in the E3P Noise Impact Assessment Reference: 51-401-R1-3 with rating levels of no more than 37 dB LAeq,1hr during the day and 25 dB LAeq,15mins during the night, in accordance with BS 4142.

Reason: in order to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents and the surrounding area, in accordance with East Hertfordshire District Plan policy EQ2.

New condition 28: Landscaping

- 28 Prior to the first occupation / use of each phase of the development hereby approved, full landscaping details for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:
- Hard surfacing materials;
 - Soft landscaping proposals intended to screen the development;
 - Retained landscape features;
 - Planting plans detailing schedule of plants, species, planting sizes and density of planting
 - An implementation timetable.

Thereafter, the site covered by that phase shall be

landscaped in full accordance with the approved details and implementation timetable.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design, in accordance with Policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

New condition 29 (landscape implementation)

- 29 All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die, or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the maintenance of landscaping, in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

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

RESOLVED – that application 3/25/0917/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report and also subject to the following amended/additional conditions (the amended wording of condition 24 is to be finalised in consultation with Chair of the Development Management Committee):

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approved in writing by the local planning authority, which shall comprise a plantable retaining wall structure (rootlock or similar). The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the development and retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of the surrounding area, including residential occupiers in accordance with East Herts District Plan policy EQ2.

Condition 24: Development in accordance with acoustic report

24. During operation, the Site must operate ensuring that there are no audible tones between 20 Hz and 315 Hz in third octave bands at any existing residential dwelling. Tones may be determined objectively through measurement at the residential dwelling, following guidance given in BS 4142 and relevant Standards. Where tones are found to be present, remedial action will be required to mitigate the particular tone, with details of further mitigation measures to be submitted for approval to the local planning authority. During all periods, the Site must operate within the operational noise levels as noted in the E3P Noise Impact Assessment Reference: 51-401-R1-3 with rating levels of no more than 37 dB LAeq,1hr during the day and 25 dB LAeq,15mins during the night, in accordance with BS 4142.

Reason: in order to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents and the surrounding area, in accordance with East Hertfordshire District Plan policy EQ2.

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Reason: To ensure the maintenance of landscaping, in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

333 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

334 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (IF REQUIRED)

There was no urgent part two business.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm

Chairman
Date