

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 15 JULY 2026, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Thomas (Chair)
Councillors V Burt, M Connolly, S Copley,
I Devonshire, J Dunlop, Y Estop, S Marlow,
T Smith and T Stowe

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor V Glover-Ward

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jackie Bruce	- Section 106 Programme Manager
Neil Button	- Interim Team Leader (Strategic Applications Team)
Rachel Lee	- Legal Adviser
James Mead	- Planning Officer
Peter Mannings	- Committee Support Officer
Martin Plummer	- Assistant Director (Place Delivery)
Stephanie Tarrant	- Assistant Director for Democracy, Elections and Information Governance

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2026/27 CIVIC
YEAR

It was proposed by Councillor Copley and seconded by
Councillor Marlow, that Councillor Thomas be appointed

Vice-Chair of the Development Management Committee for the 2026/27 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 2026/27 civic year.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors R Buckmaster, G Hill and S Watson. It was noted that Councillor Connolly was substituting for Councillor Hill.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reminded Members and Officers to use their microphones when speaking as the meeting was being webcasted.

The webcast of the meeting can be viewed [here](#).

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 MINUTES - 15 APRIL 2026

Councillor Devonshire proposed and Councillor Stowe seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2026 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. Councillors Estop and Connolly abstained from voting as they were not present at the meeting.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2026, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 3/25/1270/FUL - ERECTION OF 25 DWELLINGHOUSES
WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS FROM ERMINE STREET,
INCLUDING CARPORTS, PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND
ENABLING WORKS, FOLLOWING THE DEMOLITION OF
EXISTING BUILDINGS AT TOREEN, ERMINE STREET,
BUNTINGFORD, SG9 9RT

The Director for Place recommended that in respect of application 3/25/1270/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the site was in the rural area beyond the green belt. The site was made up of undeveloped grassland together with two former agricultural buildings and an existing bungalow. Members were advised of the various developments that surrounded the site.

The Principal Planning Officer summarised in detail the well vegetated site boundaries and presented a series of slides, elevation drawings, parameter plans and visual representations of the proposed development.

Members were advised that the former agricultural buildings were in a very poor condition and the proposal sought permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and agricultural buildings and the erection of 25 dwellings, resulting in a net increase of 24 dwellings.

The Principal Planning Officer set out details of the proposed access from Ermine Street with an internal access road running westwards into the site. Three attenuation ponds would be created on the site with two these along the site frontage and one within the central green space.

Members were advised that the development would provide a mix of two, three and four-bedroom dwellings with 40% affordable housing (10 dwellings), comprising 80% affordable rent and 20% shared ownership. There would be several family-sized affordable units, which were in high demand across the district.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the scheme would be delivered at a density of approximately 25 dwellings per hectare, which was comparable to constructed and consented developments in the area.

Members were advised that the scheme had been amended during the course of the application, with one dwelling removed and an area of green space incorporated into the central part of the development.

The Principal Planning Officer set out in detail the proposed house types and building heights. This was reflective of the building types present in the area. The material palette comprises a mix of brick, render, weatherboarding and tiling.

The site was in landscape character area 142, the High Rib Valley. The site was separated from the main valley landscape by Ermine Street, and the site was well contained by vegetation and highly influenced by neighbouring built development. Due to this, there would only be limited and highly localised landscape impacts.

Members were advised that a landscape and visual impact assessment was submitted with the application, and this had concluded that there would be very limited visibility of the development in mid to long distance views.

Members were advised that the scheme would result in a low level of vehicular trips with only 14 trips created during the AM peak and 13 vehicular trips during the PM peak. The Principal Planning Officer said that a new pedestrian crossing would connect the site to the existing footpath on the eastern side of Ermine Street. A total of

53 on site car parking spaces would serve the new houses.

The Committee was advised that all trees of moderate quality and above would be retained and 56 new trees would be planted in the non-private areas of the development, largely in the central green space and along the site frontage.

The Principal Planning Officer said that overall, the scheme would result in a biodiversity net loss of 12.85% due to the loss of grassland habitat for the built development. The applicant proposes to provide a biodiversity net gain through an off-site habitat bank, thereby satisfying the conditioned mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements.

Members were advised that the proposed drainage strategy would utilise surface water filtering through permeable paving and manholes into an underground network. Surface water would then run via gravity into one of three attenuation basins or into an underground tank before being discharged at a controlled rate into a water course on the eastern side of Ermine Street.

The Principal Planning Officer said that no objections had been received from statutory consultees. Officers had concluded that the benefits of the development, including the delivery of market and affordable housing, carried significant positive weight and this outweighed the identified adverse impacts which, when taken cumulatively, would attract limited to moderate negative weight.

Members were advised therefore that the adverse impacts of the scheme would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The application was accordingly recommended for approval, subject to planning conditions and the completion of a section 106 legal agreement.

Mr Tim Northey addressed the committee in support of the application. He was asked questions by the committee.

Members raised concerns regarding the proposed two-storey dwellings and their relationship with surrounding development, noting that neighbouring properties to the north and south include a number of single-storey bungalows and houses. They had noted that the landscape officer was happy with the proposed development.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that most of the adjacent development to the northern side of the development to the south comprised two-storey housing and the Landscape Officer had concluded the development would have limited visibility in wider views and would not result in significant landscape harm. Officers felt that on balance that two storey dwellings were acceptable.

Questions were raised regarding traffic generation, parking provision and the sustainability of the location. Officers advised that the applicant's transport assessment had included a trip generation calculation that had estimated approximately 13 vehicle movements in the morning peak and 14 in the evening peak. Hertfordshire Highways, as a statutory consultee had raised no objection on the basis that this stretch of Ermine Street did not experience heavy traffic.

A significant proportion of the debate focused on highway safety, particularly the proposed pedestrian crossing on Ermine Street, where the speed limit remains 60mph. Several Members expressed concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, school children, wheelchair users and families crossing the road. Members also questioned whether the speed limit should be reduced and whether additional measures such as lighting or a formal crossing should be provided. A concern was also

expressed about the lack of a section 106 contributions for bus services.

The Principal Planning Officer said the crossing had been the subject of a stage one road safety audit and this had been judged to safety. He said the traffic level was low and there was good visibility along Ermine Street, and this had been judged to be acceptable in terms of highways safety.

Members were advised that a contribution towards bus services had not been requested in terms of the lack an identified project to expand the bus service. An identified project was required for a contribution to be secured and there were proposed new and existing bus stops within reasonable walking distance to the site.

Members expressed concerns that the cumulatively the town was built up and there were no major supermarkets, minimal leisure and poor access and the area was not being sufficiently supported as a sustainable place to live.

The Principal Planning Officer said that the highway authority had raised no objections to the application in sustainability terms in respect of bus stops. Members raised a number of concerns regarding water sustainability and water supply in the context of existing supply problems and the proposed new build housing.

Members expressed concerns regarding the entry / exit of the development onto road with a 60mph speed limit and referred to the highway safety measures agreed by the highways department for the nearby Redrow development. A question was asked if similar measures could be insisted upon for this development.

Members had an in-depth discussion and debate in respect of their concerns and thoughts regarding the current 60 mph speed limit on a section of road where the traffic from the proposed development would enter and exit the site.

The Team Leader (Development Management) reiterated the advice from highways that the existing speed limit had been subject to a stage one road safety audit and there would be no severe harm from additional trips or highway safety concerns. Officers had no further way forward to force any further changes that might be desirable in principal and the advice from the experts was that this was not necessary.

Members raised a number of points regarding the design of the proposed development and in particular regarding the attenuation basins, the green space in the centre of the site and the turning head between two of the proposed units and also in respect of the building heights and the general design quality of the proposed estate.

The Chair reminder the committee that Members could not change the design of the application before them and the committee must determine the design as it was presented. At this point in the debate, Members requested that the following matters be strengthened through planning conditions:

- Provision of solar photovoltaic panels (condition 13)
- Inclusion of air source heat pumps (condition 13)
- Installation of swift bricks for biodiversity enhancement (condition 15)
- A minimum of one electric vehicle charging point per dwelling (condition 24)
- Additional cycle storage provision (condition 25)
- Planting of fruit and nut-bearing trees (condition 33)

The Team Leader (Development Management) reiterated the importance of taking heed of the highway's safety viewpoint of Hertfordshire County Council's Highways authority and for Members to consider this in their conclusions. A stage one road safety audit had been undertaken and reviewed and had identified no significant issues that would warrant refusal on the grounds of highways safety.

Members were reminded that any minor matters could be addressed through detailed design via the Section 278 stage two safety audit, which could pick up further changes to make the junction safer. All of the additional highway works would be secured by that Section 278 works agreement. Members were strongly urged to be guided by the professional auditors and by the county council's highways advisers.

Following a request from a Member, the Principal Planning Officer provided a breakdown of the view of Officers regarding the titled balance.

Councillor Thomas (Vice-Chair in the Chair) proposed, and Councillor Copley seconded, a motion that planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions detailed in the officer's report and subject to the following:

- Provision of solar photovoltaic panels (condition 13)
- Inclusion of air source heat pumps (condition 13)
- Installation of swift bricks for biodiversity enhancement (condition 15)
- A minimum of one electric vehicle charging point per dwelling (condition 24)
- Additional cycle storage provision (condition 25)
- Planting of fruit and nut-bearing trees (condition 33)

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

The Legal Adviser said that any refusal of planning permission would need to be supported by clear planning reasons. She said that the Hertfordshire County Council Highways department had raised no objections as the statutory consultee. A refusal on highway safety grounds could prove difficult to defend in law at any appeal as the highways department had not identified an issue with this application. There would have to be very clear reasons that could be supported by relevant planning policy considerations.

The Legal Adviser said that a deferral would need to identify the additional information required. Members were advised that the defeat of the approval motion did not constitute refusal of the application.

The Legal Adviser stated that a further motion would be required either to approve the application, refuse the application with clear planning reasons, or defer the application for further information.

Officers reiterated that the Highway Authority remained satisfied with the proposal and that highway safety concerns would continue to be reviewed through the detailed design process and the stage two road safety audit.

The Assistant Director (Place Delivery) said that if Members deferred the application, there was a risk of on appeal for non-determination. Members discussed whether there could be further clarification from Hertfordshire Highways regarding the crossing arrangements and speed limit. Members continued to discuss highway safety concerns, particularly the crossing of Ermine Street.

The Team Leader (Development Management) said that the council would not be reconsulted on the stage two road safety audit and the Section 278 agreement. The detailed design stage might result in further requirements to make the situation safe and comply with rigorous highways safety standards.

Councillor Copley proposed, and Councillor Marlow seconded, a motion that application 3/25/1270/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report, and subject to the following amendments to conditions and information being passed to Hertfordshire Highways as a statutory consultee:

- Provision of solar photovoltaic panels (condition 13)

- Inclusion of air source heat pumps (condition 13)
- Installation of swift bricks for biodiversity enhancement (condition 15)
- A minimum of one electric vehicle charging point per dwelling (condition 24)
- Additional cycle storage provision (condition 25)
- Planting of fruit and nut-bearing trees (condition 33)
- Officers raise Members' concerns regarding highway safety and the Ermine Street speed limit with Hertfordshire Highways through the subsequent highway design process (stage 2 road safety audit and the Section 278 agreement)

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

RESOLVED – that application 3/25/1270/FUL be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report, and subject to the following amendments to conditions and information being passed to Hertfordshire Highways as a statutory consultee:

- Provision of solar photovoltaic panels (condition 13)
- Inclusion of air source heat pumps (condition 13)
- Installation of swift bricks for biodiversity enhancement (condition 15)
- A minimum of one electric vehicle charging point per dwelling (condition 24)
- Additional cycle storage provision (condition 25)
- Planting of fruit and nut-bearing trees (condition 33)
- Officers raise Members' concerns regarding highway safety and the Ermine Street speed limit with Hertfordshire Highways through the subsequent highway design process (stage 2

road safety audit and the Section 278
agreement)

7 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (IF REQUIRED)

There was no urgent part two business.

The meeting closed at 8.28 pm

Chairman

Date