

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Monday, 21 July 2025

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Claire Parris (Chair), Carolina Veres (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas and Nigel Williams

Start / End Start Time: 6.30pm
Time: End Time: 7.25pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Robert Boyle, Cllr Akin Elekolusi, Cllr Lynda Guy and Cllr Anne Wells.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 5 JUNE 2025

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Development Committee held on 5 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 25/00221/FPM - WILTRON HOUSE, RUTHERFORD CLOSE

The Committee received a presentation from the Team Leader (AD) on an application seeking permission for the demolition of the existing two-storey office building and construction of a new unit for flexible use (Classes E, B2 and B8), with associated access, servicing, parking and landscaping.

The Team Leader (AD) outlined the site context within the Gunnels Wood employment area, noting surrounding uses and residential dwellings to the north. Plans, elevations and landscaping proposals were presented. It was confirmed that 13 trees would be removed but replaced with new planting, and that design measures such as a stepped roof profile sought to reduce the visual massing of the building.

The Committee was advised that the Lead Local Flood Authority had lifted its objection, subject to standard conditions relating to drainage and surface water management.

A Member questioned why the existing office building could not be extended rather than demolished, commenting on potential waste and the impression that the scheme was designed for a specific occupier. In response, Officers advised that

there was no relevant planning history for redevelopment of the site, and that the landowner had chosen to submit an application to redevelop the site rather than extend. It was further noted that Stevenage had a shortage of modern employment floor space, and that the proposed building would address this need.

Members commented on the number of HGV spaces, adequacy of parking provision, and loss of trees. Officers confirmed that 35 car spaces would be provided, meeting parking standards for B2 and B8 uses, and that conditions required further parking details if the unit were to be occupied by a research and development user. Replacement planting and biodiversity net gain requirements were highlighted.

Questions were raised regarding cycle and pedestrian routes adjoining the site. Officers confirmed that highway improvements and segregated cycle routes associated with the wider west of Stevenage development would not be affected.

During discussion, Members commented regarding demolition of relatively modern buildings and the need for more robust local policy on this matter.

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be GRANTED the applicant having first entered into a Unilateral Undertaking to secure/provide contributions towards:

- S278 Agreement (covering access works)
- £6000 Travel Plan evaluation and support fee
- Local Employment and Apprenticeships
- Monitoring fee

The detail of which be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in liaison with the Council's appointed solicitor, along with the recommendations of the Lead Local Flood Authority, as well as the imposition of suitable safeguarding conditions.

Authority be given to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, to amend or add to the suggested draft conditions set out in this report, prior to the decision notice being issued, where such amendments or additions would be legally sound and most effectively deliver the development that the Planning Committee has resolved to approve. These suggested conditions are as follows:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
02001 REV PL01; 03000 REV PL02; 03001 REV PL06; 03002 REV PL01; 03101 REV PL02; 03102 REV PL02; 03103 REV PL02; 03201 REV PL05; 03210 REV PL01; 03211 REV PL01; 03301 REV PL03; 03302 REV PL02; 250109MJ-1; POE_322_001 REV D; POE_322_002; 25006-MBA-EX-SP-DR-E-0001 PL2.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

3. No site clearance or construction work relating to this permission shall be carried out except between the hours of 0730 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 0800 and 1300 on Saturdays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These times apply to work which is audible at the site boundary.
4. No demolition and site clearance shall commence until a demolition management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, demolition and clearance of the site shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved plan. The demolition management plan shall include details of the following:
 - a) Vehicle numbers, type, routing;
 - b) Access arrangements to site;
 - c) Traffic and pedestrian management requirements;
 - d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas);
 - e) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
 - f) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
 - g) Timing of demolition activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times;
 - h) Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of demolition/site clearance activities;
 - i) Where works cannot be contained wholly within the site, a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements;
 - j) A Site Waste Management Plan including mechanisms to deal with environmental impacts such as air quality and dust control measures, noise and vibration restriction measures, light and odour and predicted and latterly actual waste arisings and how this is to be managed and where it is sent to.
 - k) Dust control measures during demolition and construction from plant and machinery, and vehicles.
5. No development shall commence (excluding demolition and site clearance) until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including elements of the CLOCS standards as set out in the Highway Authority's Construction Management template. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan: The Construction Management Statement shall include details of:
 - Access arrangements to the site.
 - Traffic management requirements.
 - Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading / unloading and turning areas).

- Siting and details of wheel washing facilities.
 - Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway.
 - Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times.
 - Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities.
 - Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway.
 - Where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding which must be kept within the site boundary, pedestrian routes and remaining road width for vehicle movements.
6. Prior to commencing works on the vehicle access, technical plans shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of the vehicle access off Rutherford Close and associated highway works in accordance with the hereby approved plans. Prior to occupation, the access shall be delivered and retained as approved.
 7. Before the occupation of the proposed development, a Parking and Servicing Management Plan (PSMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which details how parking will be managed and enforced, including how egress of HGVs will be managed to ensure that at no point are two HGVs expected to pass each other along Rutherford Close. The PSMP shall then be in operation from first occupation of the development hereby approved and shall thereafter be kept operational at all times.
 8. The development shall ensure that arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.
 9. The cycle parking shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with the agreed details and completed prior to occupation of the development hereby approved and shall thereafter be retained, maintained, and kept available for the occupants of the development at all times.
 10. Prior to the occupation/use of the development hereby permitted, EVCPs (active and passive) shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and permanently maintained and retained.
 11. Prior to the first occupation/use of the development hereby permitted the car parking layout including servicing bays shall be installed in accordance with the approved detailed technical plans and thereafter retained at all times at the position shown or otherwise approved under condition 27.

12. If contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
13. The development hereby permitted shall not come into night time use until a verification report containing evidence of compliance with the maximum off-site artificial lighting levels as set out in Drawing Number 25006-MBA-EX-SP-DR-E-0001 Rev PL2 dated March 2025 cited in the External LED Lighting Assessment Report by MBA Consulting Engineers (Version 3, dated 22/4/2025) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The luminaires and associated lighting equipment shall thereafter be retained, operated, and maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' specifications.
14. The rating level of noise emitted by any or all fixed plant shall not exceed 54dB(A) within the curtilage of any nearby residential property between 07:00 and 23:00 and 38dB(A) between 23:00 and 07:00 hours. Any measurement or computation, and assessment shall be made in accordance with BS 4142:2014+A1:2019.
15. The development hereby permitted shall not come into use until such time a noise barrier has been erected as shown on drawing 24-072-03001 Rev PL06 and within the Assessment of Noise report prepared by Sharps Acoustics LLP dated 20 March 2025. The barrier shall be imperforate and be retained and maintained for the life of the approved use.
16. There shall be no use of on-board commercial vehicle refrigeration or compressor units whilst on site at any time.
17. No vehicle internal combustion engine shall be used on site at any time other than in connection with that vehicle's movement.
18. There shall be no use of tonal alarms by any vehicle on site at any time.
19. The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with the external materials specified on drawing number 03201 REV PL05 submitted as approved or any alternative to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
20. All soft landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details as shown in drawing number POE_322_001 REV D to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice.

21. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development.
22. Any trees or plants comprised within the scheme of landscaping, which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
23. No tree shown retained on the approved landscaping scheme, shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped within five years of the completion of development without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.
24. The measures to address adaptation to climate change as set out within the Energy and Sustainability Strategy and BREEAM Pre-Assessment by MBA Consulting Engineers shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.
25. The recommended mitigation measures and enhancements set out within the Ecological Appraisal by Aspect Ecology dated March 2025 shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.
26. The external lighting strategy set out within the External Lighting Assessment Report by MBA Consulting Engineers rev PL3 dated April 2025 and drawing number 25006-MBA-EX-SP-DR-E-0001 Rev PL2 shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.
27. Should the end user of the building hereby approved fall within planning use class E(g)(iii), a parking layout plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.
28. No piling shall take place until a piling method statement (detailing the depth and type of piling to be undertaken and the methodology by which such piling will be carried out, including measures to prevent and minimise the potential for damage to subsurface sewerage infrastructure, and the programme for the works) and piling layout plan including all Thames Water wastewater assets, the local topography and clearance between the face of the pile to the face of a pipe has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with Thames Water. Any piling must be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the approved piling method statement and piling layout plan.
29. No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied prior to the implementation of the approved Travel Plan, dated May 2025. Those parts of the approved Travel Plan that are identified therein as being capable of implementation after occupation shall be implemented in accordance with the

timetable contained therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied.

INFORMATIVES

1. The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highwaysdevelopment-management.aspx>
2. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>
3. New or amended vehicle crossover access (section 278): Where works are required within the public highway to facilitate a new or amended vehicular access, the Highway Authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their satisfaction and specification, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. If any of the works associated with the construction of the access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission, requirements and for the work to be carried out on the applicant's behalf. Further information is available via the County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/dropped-kerbs/dropped-kerbs.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
4. It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highwaysdevelopment-management.aspx>

5. A Section 106 agreement will be required for the following: Approved Travel Plan with individual monitoring fees in accordance with the current HCC Travel Plan Guidance for Business and Residential Development (£6k per use). The above contributions will come under the auspices of the Planning Obligations Guidance Toolkit for Hertfordshire (2008) for schemes in the local area that accord with the three CIL tests.
6. Avoidance of surface water discharge onto the highway: The applicant is advised that the Highway Authority has powers under section 163 of the Highways Act 1980, to take appropriate steps where deemed necessary (serving notice to the occupier of premises adjoining a highway) to prevent water from the roof or other part of the premises falling upon persons using the highway, or to prevent so far as is reasonably practicable, surface water from the premises flowing on to, or over the footway of the highway.
7. A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed online via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.
8. Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule at Full Council on 27 January 2020 and started implementing CIL on 01 April 2020. This application may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Team for clarification with regard to this. If your development is CIL liable, even if you are granted an exemption from the levy, please be advised that it is a requirement under Regulation 67 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) that CIL Form 6 (Commencement Notice) must be completed, returned and acknowledged by Stevenage Borough Council before building works start. Failure to do so will mean you risk losing the right to payment by instalments and a surcharge will be imposed. NB, please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions if relief has been granted.

Stevenage's adopted CIL Charging Schedule and further details of CIL can be found on the Council's webpages at www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL or by contacting the Council's CIL Team at CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk.

9. To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk or phoning us on 01438 879990.

To make a building regulations application please apply through our website portal at <https://www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk/contact-us/payment> can be made online or by

phoning the above number after the application has been uploaded. Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control for fees guidance on 01438 879990.

Hertfordshire Building Control can also be contacted by post at Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

Once a building regulations application has been deposited with relevant drawings and fee building work may commence. You will be advised in their acknowledgement letter of the work stages we need to inspect but in most instances these are usually:

- Excavation for foundations
- Damp proof course
- Concrete oversite
- Insulation
- Drains (when laid or tested)
- Floor and Roof construction
- Work relating to fire safety
- Work affecting access and facilities for disabled people
- Completion

Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control on 01438 879990 before 10.00am to ensure a same day inspection (Mon - Fri).

10. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

Based on the information available, this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun (Phase Plans).

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Claire Parris, Carolina Veres and Nigel Williams.

Against – 0

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Robert Boyle, Akin Elekolusi, Lynda Guy, Ellie Plater and Anne Wells

4 25/00194/FP - INDOOR MARKET, MARKET SQUARE

The Committee received a presentation from the Planning and Enforcement on an application for change of use of the existing indoor market to educational facilities for North Hertfordshire College (Use Class F1a), together with associated internal and external alterations.

It was explained that the proposals included workshops for construction and engineering trades, with ventilation equipment and external louvres. The relocation of the indoor market to Boston House was noted.

The Chair invited Jill Borchers (Cycling UK) to address the Committee. Ms Borchers raised concerns regarding the loss of secure public cycle parking within the market, insufficient cycle spaces for students, and poor cycle access routes due to prohibitions through the town centre. She argued that the proposals risked encouraging unsafe cycling behaviour.

The Chair then invited Mr. Richard Grenfell, representing the applicant North

Hertfordshire College, to address the Committee. Mr Grenfell emphasised the urgent need to relocate the College's construction and engineering curriculum to a viable site, highlighting benefits to local skills provision. He noted that cycle parking was incorporated internally and that the site was highly accessible by public transport.

Members commented that proposed cycle provision remained inadequate. Officers confirmed that additional details could be secured by condition requiring further information on cycle storage prior to occupation.

A Member also raised queries regarding existing disabled parking bays, and Officers confirmed these would remain unaffected as they fell outside the red line boundary.

A motion was moved by Councillor Booth to add an additional condition requiring further details of secure cycle parking provision to be submitted and approved prior to occupation. The motion was seconded by Councillor Ashley-Wren.

The Committee then voted on the Officer's recommendation, subject to the inclusion of this additional condition the final wording of which to be agreed between the Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) and the Chair.

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions and informatives:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
8935_P001; 8935_P002; 8935_P003; 8935_P004; 8935_P005;
8935_P006; 8935_P101; 8935_P201; 8935_P301; 8935_P302;
8935_P401;
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. The use hereby permitted shall be carried on only by North Hertfordshire College. When the premises cease to be occupied by North Hertfordshire College, the use hereby permitted shall cease.
4. At least 3 months prior to the first occupation of the approved development, a detailed Travel Plan for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highways Authority. The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable and target contained therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied subject to approved modifications agreed by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority as part of the annual review.
5. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no demolition or construction activities audible at the site boundary shall be carried out except between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. For the avoidance of doubt, no such work shall

be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

6. *Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted details of secure cycle parking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The secure cycle parking scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development. The secure cycle parking shall be maintained and remain in perpetuity during the lifetime of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

INFORMATIVE

1 Public Information on Planning Applications

Warning: all information provided on your planning application is now publicly available. Individuals and organisations offering their services may contact you. The Council does not endorse or approve any builders, surveyors, trades persons or other supplier, and advises householders to obtain quotes/references, and check the legitimacy of any contractor who contacts them before making payment.

2 Community Infrastructure Levy

Stevenage Borough Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule at Full Council on 27 January 2020 and started implementing CIL on 01 April 2020.

This application may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Team for clarification with regard to this. If your development is CIL liable, even if you are granted an exemption from the levy, please be advised that it is a requirement under Regulation 67 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) that CIL Form 6 (Commencement Notice) must be completed, returned and acknowledged by Stevenage Borough Council before building works start. Failure to do so will mean you risk losing the right to payment by instalments and a surcharge will be imposed. NB, please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions if relief has been granted.

Stevenage's adopted CIL Charging Schedule and further details of CIL can be found on the Council's webpages at www.stevenage.gov.uk/CIL or by contacting the Council's CIL Team at CIL@Stevenage.gov.uk.

3 Building Regulations

To obtain advice regarding current Building Regulations please contact Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd. by emailing us at building.control@hertfordshirebc.co.uk or phoning us on 01438 879990.

To make a building regulations application please apply through our website portal at <https://www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk/contact-us/> payment can be made online or by phoning the above number after the application has been uploaded. Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control for fees guidance on 01438 879990.

Hertfordshire Building Control can also be contacted by post at Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd, Campus East, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6AE.

Once a building regulations application has been deposited with relevant drawings and fee building work may commence. You will be advised in their acknowledgement letter of the work stages we need to inspect but in most instances these are usually:

- Excavation for foundations
- Damp proof course
- Concrete oversite
- Insulation
- Drains (when laid or tested)
- Floor and Roof construction
- Work relating to fire safety
- Work affecting access and facilities for disabled people
- Completion

Please phone Hertfordshire Building Control on 01438 879990 before 10.00am to ensure a same day inspection (Mon - Fri).

4 Party Wall etc. Act 1996

Any work that affects a party wall, including foundations dug within 3.0m of a neighbouring building, may be controllable under the Act and may require approval from the adjoining owner(s). Party Wall Act matters are always civil matters and it is neither Stevenage Borough Council's nor Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd's remit to control or enforce Party Wall act matters. Please refer to the Government's explanatory booklet The Party Wall etc. Act 1996, a copy of which is available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-party-wall-etc-act-1996-revised-explanatory-booklet>

5 Biodiversity Net Gain

Applications where Biodiversity Net Gain is not required as development is considered De Minimis

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Stevenage Borough Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will

not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

1. Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:
 - a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
 - b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

6 Hertfordshire County Council: Travel Plans

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) hold a licence with Modeshift STARS, a travel plan accreditation platform (DfT approved). Modeshift STARS offers a platform to build a travel plan and manage it, awarding developments for their efforts to encourage sustainable modes of travel. Prior to occupation, the travel plan coordinator should attend a meeting with an HCC officer for an introduction and set up to the platform. For more information please contact travelplans@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Claire Parris, Carolina Veres and Nigel Williams.

Against – Councillor Kamal Choudhury

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Robert Boyle, Akin Elekolusi, Lynda Guy, Ellie Plater and Anne Wells.

5 INFORMATION REPORT - DELEGATED DECISIONS

The Committee noted the Information Report – Delegated Decisions.

6 INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS

The Committee noted the Information Report – Appeals/Called In Applications.

7 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required.

9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR