

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday, 9 September 2025

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Claire Parris (Chair), Carolina Veres (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Robert Boyle, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi and Lynda Guy

Start / End Start Time: 6.30pm
Time: End Time: 8.50pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ellie Plater, Anne Wells and Nigel Williams.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 21 JULY 2025

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 21 July 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 25/00413/FPM - FORMER KODAK SITE, BESSEMER DRIVE

The Committee received a presentation from the Team Leader for the application of the Former Kodak Site along Bessemer Drive. The application was for the erection of industrial building with flexible uses along with office space, car/cycling parking, landscaping and service yards.

The officer presented the site plans, access arrangements, landscaping and biodiversity and design and policy considerations.

Site plans and existing photos of the area were presented to the Committee, and it was noted that the main road running through the site was subject to a right of way covenant requiring access to the Mercedes dealership. This had therefore influenced the layout of the proposed development.

Access from Bessemer Drive was shown and it was noted that the footpath and cycle way would be upgraded as well as improved access for HGV.

It was noted that the Section 106 obligations relating to Hertfordshire County

Council Highways were yet to be agreed, and that authority was delegated to the Assistant Director to secure these as part of the finalised Section 106 agreement.

The Committee acknowledged that the site was currently allocated for research and development/office use in the adopted Local Plan. However, as part of the Local Plan review, the policy designation for the site had been updated to include light industry and warehousing.

It was noted that the required 10% biodiversity net gain would not be provided on-site. However, this would be secured off-site through credits in line with national legislation, with conditions to ensure compliance.

An objection had been received from the Lead Local Flood Authority, requesting further information on surface water drainage. Officers confirmed that this matter was being resolved with the applicants and consultants, and that delegated powers would be used to ensure the objection was addressed before any decision was issued.

A question was raised regarding site access and officers confirmed rights of access would be retained.

Members commented on the acronyms used in the report and it was noted that officers would make sure they were explained in future reports.

A question was raised regarding access to the site, and officers confirmed that routes into the site would be redesigned in agreement with Hertfordshire County Council to ensure priority for pedestrians and cyclists. Caxton Way access would be gated for emergency use only and would not be in frequent use.

A member noted that the development would greatly improve the appearance of the site and asked about the displacement of vehicles shown. Officers explained that the buses no longer operated there, and confirmed that their displacement was not a planning consideration. A further question on swift and bat boxes was raised, and officers advised that while their installation would be secured by condition, monitoring of occupation was outside the planning process, though local groups often checked provision.

A member questioned contaminated land risks and officers advised no issues had been identified, but conditions would require investigation and remediation if any were found to ensure the site remained safe.

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the applicant having first entered into a S106 Agreement to secure/provide contributions towards:

- S278 Agreement (covering access works)
- Strand 2 Highway works (TBC)
- £6000 Travel Plan evaluation and support fee
- Local Employment and Apprenticeships
- Monitoring fee

- Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP) for on-site BNG
2. The detail of which would 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.
3. Authority would 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:
24059-HAL-PL003-O; 418.063138.00001_AT_A01; 24059-HAL-PL001-A; BEA 25-007-01; 418.063138.00001_AT_A02-REV A; BEA 25-007-02; 0527-ESS-00-ZZ-DR-E-2100 P1; BEA 25-007-04 P07; BEA 25-007-05 P02; BEA 25-007-06 P02; 24-029- IANDL-D00 P2; HAL-PL002-A; 24059-HAL-PL005-A; 24059-HAL-PL006-B; HAL-PL010-C; HAL-PL011-B; HAL-PL012-C; HAL-PL013; HAL-PL020-C; HAL-PL021-B; HAL-PL022-D; HAL-PL023-A; BEA 25-007-03 P02.
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 3. No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan 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 Plan shall include details of:
 - Construction vehicle numbers, type and routing.
 - 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.

- Phasing plan.
- Hours of working (including deliveries and waste removal).
- All plant necessary for construction and demolition.
- Noise and vibration mitigation measures with particular attention paid to piling, power floating, and vacuum excavation activities where these activities are to be undertaken.
- Dust and smoke mitigation measures.
- Site lighting and off-site mitigation measures.

4. Prior to the first occupation / use of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access shall be completed and thereafter retained as shown on drawing number (418-063138-00001-PD02 Rev A) in accordance with details/specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority. Prior to use appropriate arrangements shall be made for surface water to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

5. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, arrangement shall be made for surface water from the proposed development to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge onto the highway carriageway.

6. Prior to the first occupation / use of the development hereby permitted a visibility splays measuring 31metres shall be provided to each side of the access where it meets the Cycle Track on Bessemer Drive and such splays shall thereafter be retained at all times free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

7. Prior to first occupation / use details of the secure and covered cycle parking storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The cycle parking shall thereafter 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.

8. 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 and maintained at all times at the position shown.

9. Prior to the commencement of the development to which this permission relates (excluding site clearance and demolition), the results of a phase 2 site investigation and full written details of any necessary remediation works or controls shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

10. In the event that any previously unidentified ground contamination is discovered on the site, no further construction work may be carried out in the affected area until full written details of any necessary remediation works or controls has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation strategy.

11. Where any development to which this permission relates is required to be carried out in accordance with a remediation scheme approved by the local planning authority, a verification report (setting out the remedial measures actually undertaken on the site) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the beneficial occupation of the development.

12. The development hereby permitted shall not come into operational use until a verification report containing evidence of compliance with the maximum off-site artificial lighting levels and temporal controls as set out in External Lighting Report by Engineering Services Consultancy Limited (reference 0527/ESS/00/ZZ/RP/Z/0016, dated 27/2/2025) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The luminaires and associated lighting equipment authorised shall thereafter be retained, operated, and maintained in accordance with the above report and manufacturers' specifications.

13. The development hereby permitted shall not come into operational use until a verification report containing evidence that noise levels do not exceed those set out in Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7 of the Noise Impact Assessment report by Hoare Lea Acoustics LLP (10-16004, Rev. 01, dated 30/04/2025) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All external plant shall thereafter be retained, operated, and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' specifications.

14. The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with the external materials specified on drawing numbers HAL-PL012-C and HAL-PL022-D submitted as approved or any alternative to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

15. All soft landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details as shown in drawing number BEA 25-007-04 P07 to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice.

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. 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.

19. The measures to address adaptation to climate change as set out within the Energy and Sustainability Strategy and BREEAM Pre-Assessment by Engineering Services Consultancy Ltd shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

20. Prior to the first occupation / use of the approved development a Species Enhancement Plan/Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Plan/Report from an appropriately qualified ecologist shall confirm that all the proposed species enhancement features as identified and approved in the Ecological Appraisal and Ecological Enhancement Strategy produced by FPCR Environment and Design (specifications and locations), have been installed, together with photographic evidence, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The species enhancement features once completed shall be permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

21. At least 3 months prior to the first occupation / use 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.

INFORMATIVES

1. Extent of Highway: Information on obtaining the extent of public highway around the site can be obtained from the HCC website:
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/extent-of-highways.aspx
2. Storage of materials: 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>

3. Obstruction of highway: 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 County Council website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>
4. Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. 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 and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300 1234047.
5. 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.
6. Works within the highway (section 278): The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the County Council website at: [https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-i nformation/development-](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-)

[management/highways-development-management.aspx](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx) or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

7. Construction Management Plan (CMP): The purpose of the CMP is to help developers minimise construction impacts and relates to all construction activity both on and off site that impacts on the wider environment. It is intended to be a live document whereby different stages will be completed and submitted for application as the development progresses. A completed and signed CMP must address the way in which any impacts associated with the proposed works, and any cumulative impacts of other nearby construction sites will be mitigated and managed. The level of detail required in a CMP will depend on the scale and nature of development. The CMP would need to include elements of the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standards as set out in our Construction Management template, a copy of which is available on the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>
8. Abnormal loads and importation of construction equipment (i.e. large loads with: a width greater than 2.9m; rigid length of more than 18.65m or weight of 44,000kg - commonly applicable to cranes, piling machines etc.): The applicant is directed to ensure that operators conform to the provisions of The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003 in ensuring that the Highway Authority is provided with notice of such movements, and that appropriate indemnity is offered to the Highway Authority. Further information is available via the Government website www.gov.uk/government/publications/abnormal-load-movements-application-and-notification-forms or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
9. Travel Plan (TP): A TP, in accordance with the provisions as laid out in Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan Guidance, would be required to be in place from the first occupation/use until 5 years post occupation/use. A £1,200 per annum (overall sum of £6000 and index-linked RPI March 2014) Evaluation and Support Fee would need to be secured via a Section 106 agreement towards supporting the implementation, processing and monitoring of the full travel plan including any engagement that may be needed. Further information is available via the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> OR by emailing travelplans@hertfordshire.gov.uk
10. 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 on line via www.thameswater.co.uk.

Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

11. 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.

12. The proposed development is located within 15 metres of Thames Waters underground assets and as such, the development could cause the assets to fail if appropriate measures are not taken. Please read our guide 'working near our assets' to ensure your workings are in line with the necessary processes you need to follow if you're considering working above or near our pipes or other structures. <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/developers/larger-scale-developments/planning-your-development/working-near-our-pipes>. Should you require further information please contact Thames Water. Email: developer.services@thameswater.co.uk Phone: 0800 009 3921 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm) Write to: Thames Water Developer Services, Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 8DB
13. The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to prohibit nuisances arising from noise, artificial light, and a range of other pollutants that may arise from commercial premises.
14. 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).

15. 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>.

16. If European Protected Species (EPS), including bats and great crested newts, or evidence of them, are discovered during the course of works, work must stop immediately, and advice sought on how to proceed lawfully from an appropriately qualified and experienced Ecologist or Natural England to avoid an offence being committed.

To avoid the killing or injuring of wildlife during development, best practice should keep any areas of grass as short as possible and any longer, ruderal vegetation should be cleared by hand. To avoid creating refugia that may be utilised by wildlife, materials should be carefully stored on-site on raised pallets and away from the boundary habitats. Any trenches on site should be covered at night or have ramps to ensure that any animals that enter can safely escape, and this is particularly important if excavations fill with water. Any open pipework with an outside diameter greater than 120mm must be covered at the end of each working day to prevent animals entering / becoming trapped.

In order to protect breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young, demolition or vegetation clearance should only be carried out during the period October to February inclusive. If this is not possible then a pre-development (i.e. no greater than 48 hours before clearance begins) search of the area should be made by a suitably experienced ecologist. If active nests are found, then works must be delayed until the birds have left the nest or professional ecological advice taken on how best to proceed.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Stephen Booth, Robert Boyle, Kamal Choudhury, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris, Carolina Veres.

Against – 0

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Ellie Plater, Anne Wells and Nigel Williams

25/00424/FPM - STEVENAGE SWIMMING CENTRE, ST GEORGES WAY

The Committee received a presentation from the Team Leader on the application for the demolition of the existing swimming centre and erection of a new sports and leisure centre. Members were shown photographs of the existing site along with site maps.

The Chair invited Tom Brennan, the Chairman and volunteer coach of Aqualina Artistic Swimming Club to address the Committee.

It was noted that the club had a 50-year history in Stevenage and had a role in producing national level athletes. He expressed that the proposed pool depth of 1.8 metres was insufficient for artistic swimming and risked the club's continuity. It was requested that the Committee considered the adjustment to preserve the club and its future participation in artistic swimming in the area.

The Chair invited Trevor Knott, a user of the leisure centre to address the Committee.

Trevor Knott spoke in opposition to the application, highlighting the reduction in sporting facilities and activities in the proposed centre. Comments were raised regarding limited access for elderly users and suggested that the consultation surveys were framed in a way that influenced responses.

The Chair invited Dave Wells, Assistant Director for Regeneration from Stevenage Borough Council to address the Committee.

The Assistant Director for Regeneration spoke in support of the new sports and leisure centre, noting that existing facilities were outdated and no longer met community needs. It was noted that proposals formed a key part of the town's regeneration, supporting health, wellbeing, sustainability, and inclusivity, while addressing design, safety, and biodiversity. He acknowledged not all sports could be accommodated but explained that alternative provisions and support would be offered.

The chair thanked all speakers for their contributions and invited the Team Leader to respond.

The officer outlined the proposed development to replace the existing swimming centre. This included a new 10 lane swimming pool, teaching pool, splash pad, sports hall, gym, studios, café, and supporting facilities. The scheme provided improved access to the town centre gardens and enhanced landscaping to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain. The design was said to reflect local character and modern influences and would meet Local Plan policies.

A net loss of 38 parking spaces was acknowledged, but was judged acceptable given the site's central location, access to other car parks and sustainable transport links.

Comments from Cycling UK regarding connectivity and cycling access had been

noted, however officers considered these were not sufficient to outweigh the significant public benefits of the scheme.

Highway access would be improved through reinstating the entrance and exit along Fairlands Way and would enhance pedestrian and cycle connections, with no objections from the local highway authority.

It was noted that drainage would be managed through swales, rain gardens, and discharge into the existing culvert, with ongoing discussions with the Lead Local Flood Authorities.

The scheme would incorporate sustainable construction measures, including air source heat pumps which would comply with current building regulations.

Sport England supported the proposal, noting the improved facilities to meet demand despite a reduction in space.

Concerns regarding crime and changing facilities were addressed, with the design incorporating natural surveillance, secured by design principles, and Sport England guidance.

Members raised concerns regarding the reduction in the pool depth and parking spaces alongside the provision for coach parking. A further question was raised regarding parking charges for leisure users.

Officers advised that parking management and charges were operational matters and not a planning consideration. It was noted that the project budget was fixed and decisions on design changes including the pool depth would sit with the Council's Regeneration team. This would therefore fall outside of planning considerations.

Officers also confirmed that coach parking would be made available in the planned proposals.

Further questions were raised regarding the concern for the reduction in parking provision due to the ageing population identified in the Local Plan. It was noted that 53 were proposed of which 5 were for disabled parking and 11 for electric vehicles.

Officers noted that the parking provision was policy compliant and constrained by the site, and members were asked to consider parking in the wider planning balance. Members were informed that the scheme would increase leisure provision from meeting 50% to 80% of residents by 2031.

Members raised a question regarding accessibility and safety of nearby underpasses to the new proposed site.

Officers noted that improvements to underpasses were part of the regeneration scheme and that they laid outside of the boundary for this application. It was noted that the underpass with the William Mitchell artwork was Grade II listed and was subject to restrictions on alterations.

A further question was raised to review the indoor provisions and the reduction in sporting facilities.

Officers noted that the application was for a wet and dry facility with significant improvements compared to current provision and was confirmed that the scheme met relevant policy requirements.

A question was raised regarding the timeframe for the pedestrian crossing and the relocation of the outdoor gym equipment affected by the proposed plans.

Officers confirmed that the crossing was planned to be delivered before the new facility opened and that the gym equipment would be relocated within the Town Centre Gardens Park.

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

- £6000 Travel Plan evaluation and support fee
- Local Employment and Apprenticeships
- Monitoring fee

The detail of which would 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 would 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:

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0163 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0164 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0140 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0142 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0141 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0143 Rev P01; FB-SK-4036-250519-AS-001; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0110 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0111 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0112 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0113 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0119 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0114 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0150 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0151 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0152 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0153 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0170 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0183 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0171 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0172 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0173 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-A-0174 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0180 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0181 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-

A-0182 Rev P01; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0400 Rev P01; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0501 Rev P02; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0502 Rev P02; SSLH-SWH-ZZ-XX-D-C-0910 Rev P02; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0160 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0161 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0162 Rev P01; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0100 Rev 02; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0101 REV 02; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0102 REV 02; SSLH-FBA-01-ZZ-D-A-0103 REV 02; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0101-S3 REV 13; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0102-S3 REV 09; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0103-S3 REV 09; SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0300-S3 REV 05;

2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

3. No development shall take place (including demolition and site clearance) until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan: The Construction Management Plan shall include details of:

- a. Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing.
- b. Access arrangements to the site for traffic associated with the construction works.
- c. Measure to minimise dust, noise machinery and traffic noise impacts during construction.
- d. Screening and hoarding details to protect neighbouring residents.
- e. Traffic management requirements, including the location of routes and from the site, details of their signing monitoring and enforcement measures.
- f. Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking, loading /unloading and turning areas);
- g. Siting and details of wheel washing facilities.
- h. Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway including end of day tidying procedures to ensure protection of the site out the hours of construction. The construction activities shall be designed and undertake in accordance with the code of best practice set out in BS 5228 1997 and the agreed details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA and Highways.
- i. Timing of construction activities (including delivery times and removal of waste) and to avoid school pick up/drop off times.
- j. Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities.
- k. Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway.
- l. 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.
 - m. hours of working (including deliveries and waste removal);
 - n. all plant necessary for construction and demolition;
 - o. noise and vibration mitigation measures with particular attention paid to piling, power floating, and vacuum excavation activities where these activities are to be undertaken;
 - p. dust and smoke mitigation measures;
 - q. site lighting and off-site mitigation measures;
 - r. vermin control.

4.No development shall take place until a detailed Phasing Plan for the development hereby approved has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Plan shall include details of car park closures, access arrangements to the existing Swimming Centre during construction, access arrangements to the new Leisure Centre during demolition of the existing Swimming Centre and during construction of the car park following demolition.

5.The Biodiversity Gain Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Net Gain Report dated May 2025 and prepared by Richard Graves Associates.

6.No development shall take place until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;
- (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
- (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and
- (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP.

7.Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the:

- (a) HMMP has been implemented; and
- (b) Habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP have been completed.

8.No development shall take place above slab level until a full schedule and samples (where applicable) of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the approved Leisure Centre hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

9.Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the existing entrance only access off St. Georges Way shall be closed off permanently and reinstate all footways/ green verge in accordance with the technical approval issued by the HCC's Development Management Implementation (DMI) team and thereafter retained at the position as indicated on the approved plan drawing number (Ref-SSLH-SWH-01-XX-D-C-5510, P06).

10. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted a visibility splay shall be provided in full accordance with the details indicated on the approved plan number (SSLH-SWH-01-XX-D-C-5510, P06). The splay shall always thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction between 600mm and 2m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

11. Within six months of the first use of the new leisure facility hereby permitted all proposed onsite car, coach & cycle parking, and turning areas including shared cycle path as shown on the landscape masterplan (Ref- SSLH-WWA-ZZ-ZZ-D-L-0101 Rev-P13) shall be laid out, demarcated, levelled, surfaced, and drained in accordance with the approved plan and retained thereafter available for that specific use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

12. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, arrangement shall be made for surface water from the proposed development to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge onto the highway carriageway.

13. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, full details of the proposed secure covered / cycle lockers shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the development and permanently maintained and retained.

14. Prior to first use of the development hereby approved, full details of the proposed bin store shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the development and permanently maintained and retained.

15. Prior to first use of the development hereby permitted, full details of all soft landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details shall take account of the comments made by the Council's Green Spaces Officer and Tree Officer. The soft landscaping shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice.

16. Prior to the first use of the approved development the details for the provision of swift boxes and bat boxes within the site, on the buildings or on the trees respectively, as identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat Roosting Features Report produced by Richard Graves Associates dated May 2025 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The bird and bat boxes shall be installed prior to first use of the development and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

17. Prior to the first use of the development, details of protection measures against the access of unauthorised vehicles within the proposed public realm areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

18. Prior to demolition of the existing swimming centre, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The SWMP should aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on site and should contain information including estimated types and quantities of waste to arise from construction and waste management actions for each waste type, plus mechanisms to deal with environmental impacts such as air quality and dust control measures, noise and vibration restriction measures, light and odour. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved SWMP.

19. Prior to the installation of any external plant, an Operational Noise Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan shall detail siting of the plant and demonstrate its conformity with the plant noise objective set out on section 5 of the Noise Impact Assessment report by Anderson Acoustics Limited (reference 6816, dated 3/9/2024) (plant noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors should not exceed 55 dB LAeq,Tr during the day and 52 dB LAeq,Tr during the night, when assessed in accordance with BS 4142) and how noise from non-plant sources will be mitigated. The approved plan shall then be implemented prior to the beneficial occupation of the development and permanently retained as such thereafter.

20. Prior to the implementation of any public realm works, details of the proposed furniture to be used within the public realm areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Details shall include the picnic benches, concrete benches and measures to protect them against grinding by skateboards, bikes and scooters, and graffiti, and any refuse receptacles. The furniture shall be installed prior to first use of the development and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

21. Prior to the installation of any external lighting associated with the development hereby permitted, a written scheme for the provision of external lighting together with an Artificial Lighting Assessment including the design, size, and illuminance of all lighting and its impact having regard to relevant national guidance shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

22. Prior to the construction of any of the Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) swales and rain gardens proposed, details of their final design shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Details shall include engineer drawings and measures to ensure protection and maintenance. The SuDS features shall thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

23. In the event that any previously unidentified ground contamination is discovered on the site, no further construction work may be carried out in the affected area until a remediation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation strategy. Where any development to which this permission relates is required to be carried out in accordance with a remediation strategy, a verification report (setting out the remedial measures actually undertaken on the site) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the beneficial occupation of the development.

24. 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.

25. The measures to address adaptation to climate change as set out within the Energy Strategy Report by Environmental Mechanical Electrical Consultancy dated 15 May 2025 and the Planning Statement by WSP dated 2 June 2025 shall be implemented and permanently maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Pro-active Statement

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

INFORMATIVES

17. Storage of materials: 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>
18. Debris and deposits on the highway: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit compost, dung or other material for dressing land, or any rubbish on a made up carriageway, or any or other debris on a highway to the interruption of any highway user. 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 and use thereafter are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available by telephoning 0300

1234047.

19. 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.
20. Construction Management Plan (CMP): The purpose of the CMP is to help developers minimise construction impacts and relates to all construction activity both on and off site that impacts on the wider environment. It is intended to be a live document whereby different stages will be completed and submitted for application as the development progresses. A completed and signed CMP must address the way in which any impacts associated with the proposed works, and any cumulative impacts of other nearby construction sites will be mitigated and managed. The level of detail required in a CMP will depend on the scale and nature of development. The CMP would need to include elements of the Construction Logistics and Community Safety (CLOCS) standards as set out in our Construction Management template, a copy of which is available on the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>
21. Street works licence (New Roads and Street Works Act - Section 50): The applicant is advised that they are not authorised to carry out any work within the Public Highway and that to do so they will need to enter into a legal agreement with the Highway Authority (NRSW agreement). This consent is separate and additional to any planning permission that may be given. Before proceeding with the proposed development, the applicant shall obtain the requirements and permission for the associated placement of apparatus within the adjacent highway as part of the proposal via the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/permit-scheme/east-of-england-permit-scheme.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234 40047. This should be carried out prior to any new apparatus is placed within the highway.
22. Travel Plan (TP): A TP, in accordance with the provisions as laid out in Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan Guidance, would be required to be in place from the first occupation/use until 5 years post occupation/use. A £1,200 per annum (overall sum of £6000 and index-linked RPI March 2014) Evaluation and Support Fee would need to be secured via a Section 106 agreement towards supporting the implementation, processing and monitoring of the full travel plan including any engagement that may be needed. Further information is available via the County Council's website at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> OR by emailing travelplans@hertfordshire.gov.uk

23. 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.

24. The applicant is advised of the Council's powers under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to prohibit nuisances arising from noise, artificial light, and a range of other pollutants that may arise from commercial premises.

25. 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

26. 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>.

11. The applicant is advised that the design and layout of the leisure centre should comply with the relevant industry Technical Design Guidance, including guidance published by Sport England and, National Governing Bodies for Sport. Particular attention is drawn to Sport England's "Accessible and Inclusive Sports Facilities", "Sports Hall Design & Layouts" and "Swimming Pools" design guidance notes <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance>

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Robert Boyle, Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris and Carolina Veres.

Against – 0

Abstentions – Councillors Stephen Booth and Kamal Choudhury.

Absent – Councillors Ellie Plater, Anne Wells and Nigel Williams.

5 INFORMATION REPORT - DELEGATED DECISIONS

It was **RESOLVED** that the Information Report – Delegated Decisions be noted.

6 INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS

It was **RESOLVED** that the Information Report – Appeals / Called In Decisions be noted.

7 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. Under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1-7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports (if any) being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR