

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

Date: Tuesday, 2 December 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, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Lynda Guy, Ellie Plater and Nigel Williams

Start / End Start Time: 6.30pm
Time: End Time: 7.50pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Clark and Forhad Chowdhury.

2 MINUTES - 28 OCTOBER 2025

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Development Committee held on 28 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 25/00400/FPM - MAXWELL ROAD, STEVENAGE, SG1 2EW

The Chair of the Committee welcomed and introduced the public speakers. It was noted that in agreement with the Chair and Vice Chair, there would be one speaker in favour of the application and two speakers against the application.

It was noted that the Council had received a late representation from MRPP on behalf of Tesco Stores Limited, and in consultation with the Chair it was agreed that the representation was referred to the Committee.

The Chair introduced Lady Norma Somers to address the Committee.

Lady Somers, the owner of the Grade II listed Broomin Green Farm, raised concerns about the proposed Lidl development. The speaker highlighted unclear land ownership and leasing arrangements, and questioned Lidl's legal position. She explained that the store had long operating hours, overnight lighting, noise from trolleys and HGV deliveries which would impact her home life and wellbeing. The traffic data was challenged, stating that it did not reflect real congestion at Maxwell Road and Gunnels Wood Road junction.

The Chair introduced Jill Borchers from Cycling UK to address the Committee.

It was noted that Cycling UK raised concerns about the lack of clear cycle access routes into the site. It was noted that the plans did not show how cyclists would directly access the store from surrounding cycleways. It was further noted that Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) had agreed with Cycling UK to recommend a planning condition to require a safe cycle route into the site to be agreed before the development began. The speaker discussed that without this condition, the development would fail to support the wider cycle network or enable people to cycle safely to and within the site.

The Chair introduced Katie Russell-Smith, the planning agent representing the applicant.

The planning agent spoke in favour of the application, highlighting a new Lidl store located on an underused site, which would bring local jobs, investment and affordable shopping to the area. It was noted that the relationship with the nearby listed farmhouse had been considered, with officers judging any impact to be limited and manageable. Noise, lighting and delivery impacts had been assessed as acceptable with conditions proposed. She concluded that officers consider the benefits outweighed any harm and therefore recommended approval.

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

The Committee adjourned for officers to consider some of the issues raised from the speakers.

The Team Leader then presented the Lidl application and outlined the proposal to demolish existing buildings and construct a new discount food store with parking, landscaping and associated works.

The Committee were shown images of the site, proposed layout and landscaping plans. Officers noted the late representations from Cycling UK and presented the committee with the relevant local plan policy, which explained how the proposed routes, crossings and connections met policy requirements.

Officers then responded to the late representation sent from MRPP on behalf of Tesco Stores Limited. Officers confirmed that allocated retail land outside of a town centre was not considered equivalent to town centre sites for the purpose of the retail sequential test, which had been supported by legal advice.

MRPP had also suggested a cumulative impact assessment should have been carried out in relation to the site allocated under Policy TC11. Officers stated they did not agree that such an assessment was required.

Officers also confirmed that the 40 full-time jobs created by the proposal were a genuine public benefit, though it was noted that Members should also consider any greater benefits that could arise from a policy compliant use of the site.

Officers noted that heritage impacts were addressed under Section 7.7 of the report,

and any ownership issues would be followed up separately. Concerns regarding light impact and delivery hours were controlled through recommended Conditions 9 and 10.

A question was raised regarding whether any artefacts had been found in the area or how likely this would be in the future. Officers confirmed they were not aware of any discoveries and advised that the matter would be addressed through a planning condition.

Members asked for clarification about the term “limited assortment discount food retail store” and officers explained that it was the applicant’s description and a legal term for a retailer with a narrower range of products.

In response to a question regarding the number of disabled parking spaces, officers confirmed that the parking levels were set in accordance with the Council’s adopted Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document, with the ratio detailed in Section 7.11 of the report.

Members raised a question regarding the location and hours of deliveries. Officers confirmed that the servicing bay would be on Maxwell Road, and that all deliveries and waste collection would be restricted to 7:00-23:00 daily in Condition 10.

Members discussed the cycling provision and questioned whether routes were practical given the steep gradients. Officers acknowledged this, and noted a suggested condition could be imposed to confirm gradient levels.

Members questioned the access from the site onto Maxwell Road, particularly for large vehicles, noting the dual carriageway was usually busy, and that HGVs may struggle to turn without encroaching on the opposite lane. In response, it was confirmed that the swept path drawings submitted with the application had been reviewed by HCC Highways, and subject to a car park management condition, they were satisfied that the access arrangements would not have an adverse impact.

A question was raised regarding the household survey undertaken to inform the retail impact assessment, and officers noted that this information was sought from a consultant.

Discussions took place in support of the application, with Members noting Tesco’s late representation. The Borough Solicitor clarified to the Committee that they were required to approach the application without bias or predetermination and to consider the report and all representations considered. The Committee noted and agreed.

Members asked officers about the effectiveness of the proposed two metre fence in reducing noise. Officers explained that Environmental Health had assessed the proposal and that noise mitigation would be achieved through the high-density fencing material, which was designed to provide effective sound reduction. Officers further confirmed that the boundary was screened off by trees, which were all being retained.

Discussions took place regarding a proposed condition requiring clarification of the levels and gradients of the cycle ways along the South-West access from Gunnels Wood Road. The Committee were reminded that the conditions could not be used to redesign the scheme.

Members voted in favour of adding this as a condition, and then voted on the Officers recommendations.

A recorded vote* was taken on the application and it was **RESOLVED** that planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out below and the completion of a section 106 agreement to provide for:

- Off-site highway works
- Employment and skills plan
- Travel plan monitoring

1.1. That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director for Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the council's appointed solicitor, to agree the wording of the s106 agreement.

1.2. That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director for Planning and Regulation, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to the conditions subject to which permission would be granted, where such amendments or additions would satisfy the relevant national policy tests and would most effectively deliver the development which the Committee has resolved to approve.

Conditions

General

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority:

PL-01 rev. E
PL-03 rev. N
PL-04 rev. A

PL-05

PL-06 rev. B
PL-07 rev. H
PL-08 rev. D

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

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Part 3 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the development shall only be

used as a limited assortment discount retail store and shall not at any time whatsoever be subdivided or used for any other purpose, including any other purpose falling within Class E(a) of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

4. The floor area of the store used for the display and sale of comparison goods shall not at any time exceed 20% of the net sales floor area.

5. The materials used in the external surfaces of the development shall be those listed on the application form, drawing PL-06 rev. B and *Design and Access Statement* reference 240235 dated May 2025.

6. No demolition or construction activities (including any associated collections or deliveries) shall be carried out except between the hours of 07:30 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.

7. The development shall not be open to the public except between the hours of 08:00 to 23:00 Monday to Saturday and 10:00 to 18:00 on Sundays and bank holidays.

8. No external plant shall be installed or operated at the site other than in accordance with *Noise Impact Assessment* rev. 1 dated 12/05/2025.

9. No external lighting shall be installed or operated at the site other than in accordance with *External Lighting Statement* rev. A dated 06/05/2025.

10. No store collections or deliveries (including waste collections) shall take place other than between the hours of 07:00 to 23:00 on any given day.

11. The door labelled "04" on drawing reference PL-06 rev. B shall remain closed at all times except in cases of emergency.

12. The bakery oven extraction system shall discharge all exhaust air into the sales area of the store for recirculation.

13. In the event that any previously unidentified contamination is found when carrying out the development, work to implement the development must cease immediately and the contamination must be reported in writing to the local planning authority as soon as reasonably practicable. Work shall not resume until the results of an investigation and where necessary, a remediation scheme, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with any approved remediation scheme.

14. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the measures recommended in sections 4.3 and 4.4 of *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* reference BIOC24-218 V2 dated 13/05/2025.

15. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the methods

specified in sections 7 and 8 of *Arboricultural Impact Assessment* reference JSL5278_770 rev. P06 dated 12/05/2025, together with the accompanying *Tree Removal & Protection Plan* reference 710 rev. P06.

16. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the design strategies detailed in section 8 of *Energy Usage and Sustainability Statement* Issue 01 dated 06/05/2025.

Prior to Commencement

17. Prior to the commencement of the development (including site clearance and demolition), a construction management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan shall include details of all of the following:

- a) Phasing of the development (including highway works)
- b) Hours of working (including timing of collections and deliveries)
- c) All plant and vehicles required for construction and demolition
- d) Vehicle routing and parking
- e) Traffic and pedestrian management (including any necessary footway closures)
- f) Construction and storage compounds
- g) Site enclosure
- h) Measures to keep the highway clear of dirt and debris (including wheel washing facilities)
- i) Site lighting (including any necessary off-site light spill mitigation)
- j) Noise, vibration, dust and smoke mitigation measures
- k) Vermin control

The development shall then at all times be carried out in accordance with the approved construction management plan.

This condition must be a pre-commencement condition in order to be effective.

18. Prior to the commencement of the development (including site clearance and demolition), a site waste management plan 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 site waste management plan.

This condition must be a pre-commencement condition in order to be effective.

19. Prior to the commencement of the development (including site clearance and demolition), a scheme of historic recording for the FIRA building (including details of archiving) 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 historic recording scheme.

This condition must be a pre-commencement condition in order to be effective.

20. Prior to the commencement of the development (including site clearance and

demolition), a written scheme of archaeological investigation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include:

- a) An assessment of archaeological significance and research questions
- b) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- c) The programme for post-investigation assessment
- d) Provision for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- e) Provision for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f) Provision for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- g) Provision for public engagement and interpretation
- h) Nomination of a competent person or persons to undertake the works

The approved written scheme of archaeological investigation shall then be completed prior to the first operational use of the development.

21. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and demolition), details of a heritage interpretation board relating to the FIRA building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved heritage interpretation board shall be provided prior to the first operational use of the development and permanently retained thereafter.

22. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and demolition), a flood mitigation and drainage strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall provide for all of the following:

- a) Details of freeboard to drainage infrastructure and finished ground floor levels
- b) Details of any other necessary flood mitigation measures
- c) The results of infiltration testing on the site
- d) Details of surface water treatment before discharge
- e) A surface water drainage plan, showing all proposed discharge points, SuDS features and pipe runs (with sizes)
- f) Drawings of the proposed SuDS features including their size, volume, depth and any inlet and outlet features, including any connecting pipe runs, along with all corresponding detailed calculations/modelling

The approved drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first operational use of the development.

23. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and demolition), the results of a phase 2 site contamination investigation and where necessary, a remediation scheme, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with any approved remediation scheme.

24. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and demolition), details of cycle parking facilities, including a total of 28 cycle parking

spaces, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved cycle parking facilities shall be provided prior to the first operational use of the development and permanently retained thereafter.

25. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and demolition), details of bird and bat boxes to be provided within the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved bird and bat boxes shall be installed prior to the first operational use of the development and permanently retained thereafter.

26. Prior to the commencement of the development (excluding site clearance and demolition), a soft landscaping scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved soft landscaping scheme shall be implemented in the first planting season following practical completion of the development.

Prior to Use

27. Where any part of the development is required to be carried out in accordance with a remediation scheme, 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 first operational use of the development.

28. Prior to the first operational use of the development, a parking management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The aims of the plan shall be to ensure the safety of users of the site and to prevent vehicles queueing on the public highway. It shall consider customer parking, staff parking, deliveries, collections, and service vehicles, and shall provide for all of the following:

- a) Entry and exit routing
- b) Signage
- c) Real-time vehicle monitoring
- d) Marshalling
- e) Limits on the duration of customer car parking
- f) Customer car parking fees
- g) Car parking enforcement
- h) A plan review and monitoring framework

The development shall thereafter be operated in accordance with the agreed parking management plan at all times.

29. Prior to the first operational use of the development, all accesses, roads, and parking, servicing and manoeuvring areas shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plans. Those areas shall thereafter be permanently maintained in a manner fit for their intended purpose.

30. Prior to the first operational use of the development, a SuDS maintenance and management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local

planning authority. The development shall thereafter be operated at all times in accordance with the approved SuDS maintenance and management plan.

31. Prior to the first operational use of the development, acoustic fencing with a superficial mass of at least 10kg/m² shall be erected as shown on drawing reference PL-07 rev. H. The fencing shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

32. Prior to the first operational use of the development, a plant noise verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The report shall demonstrate that the plant installed at the site complies with the noise levels set out in section 7.1 of *Noise Impact Assessment* rev. 1 dated 12/05/2025.

33. Prior to the first operational use of the development, a lighting verification report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The report shall demonstrate that the lighting installed at the site complies with the maximum off-site artificial lighting levels and temporal controls set out in *External Lighting Statement* rev. A dated 06/05/2025.

34. Prior to the first operational use of the development, low- and zero-carbon technologies shall be installed in accordance with section 10 of *Energy Usage and Sustainability Statement* Issue 01 dated 06/05/2025. The low- and zero-carbon technologies shall be permanently retained as such thereafter.

Post-Completion

36. Any trees or other plants comprised in the landscaping works for the development, which within a period of five years from the first operational use of the development are removed, become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

INFORMATIVES

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 County Council website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

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/business-licences/business-licences.aspx>

licences.aspx or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

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.

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, 4th Floor, Campus West, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6BX.

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; and completion.

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

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

The construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be done in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices, thereby significantly reducing the groundwater pollution risk. It should be noted that the construction works may exacerbate any existing pollution. If any pollution is found at the site then the appropriate monitoring and remediation methods will need to be undertaken. For further information we refer you to CIRIA Publication C532 "Control of water pollution from construction - guidance for consultants and contractors".

Being within a water stressed area, we expect that the development includes water efficient fixtures and fittings. Measures such as rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling help the environment by reducing pressure for abstractions. They also minimise potable water use by reducing the amount of potable water used for washing, cleaning and watering gardens. This in turn reduces the carbon emissions associated with treating this water to a standard suitable for drinking and will help in our efforts to get emissions down in the borough.

The developer is strongly encouraged to achieve Secured by Design (SBD) accreditation for the development. The Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor can be contracted by telephone on 01707 355227.

***Recorded Vote**

For – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Robert Boyle, Kamal Choudhury, Coleen De Freitas, Akin Elekolusi, Lynda Guy, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, Carolina Veres and Nigel Williams

Against – Councillor Stephen Booth

Abstentions – 0

Absent – Councillors Forhad Chowdhury, Peter Clark

4 INFORMATION REPORT - DELEGATED DECISIONS

Members raised a question regarding an application which was granted planning permission.

The Assistant Director advised that planning applications could be determined under delegated powers, and that members were able to make representations or request a call-in only during the statutory consultation period, if required, determine with officers whether the reasons provided justified committee consideration.

Members were advised to review the weekly planning applications list to ensure they were aware of relevant submissions.

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

5 **INFORMATION REPORT - APPEALS/CALLED IN APPLICATIONS**

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

6 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part I Business.

7 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve 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 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.

8 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Part II Business.

CHAIR