

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 5 March 2024

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Michael Downing (Chair), Claire Parris (Vice-Chair), Julie Ashley-Wren, Rob Broom, Forhad Chowdhury, Nazmin Chowdhury, Chris Howells, Graham Lawrence CC, Maureen McKay, Adam Mitchell CC, Graham Snell, Carolina Veres and Anne Wells.

Start / End Start Time: 6.30pm
Time: End Time: 8.00pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Ellie Plater. Councillor Conor McGrath was substituting for Councillor Plater.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES - 8 FEBRUARY 2024

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 8 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 23/00890/RMM - LAND TO THE NORTH OF STEVENAGE, OFF NORTH ROAD AND WESTON ROAD

The Committee considered a report on planning application 23/00890/RMM seeking permission for the approval of reserved matters (layout, landscaping, scale, and appearance) for residential development of 442 no. residential units comprising Phase 2 of the land to the North of Stevenage development, pursuant to Outline permission 17/00862/OPM.

The Principal Planning Officer gave an update to the Committee. In regard to Local Plan Policy HO11, which related to accessible and adaptable housing requirements, there was an error in paragraph 9.10.4.3 of the report where the total percentage of accessible and adaptable housing being provided should read 47%.

She advised that since the report was published there had been discussions with the agents that had resulted in the need for minor alterations to some of the conditions to allow for discharge through sub-phase and sub-parcels of the area. A further condition was being imposed relating to the custom, self-build plots, that would allow for further details to come forward should there be a take-up of the self-build

allowance. The wording of conditions was to be agreed by the Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory), in consultation with the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Committee.

The application being considered was the final instalment of reserved matters in respect of the site. There had been several reserved matters applications considered including the infrastructure which included the main highway network, all foot and cycleway provision, landscaping provision within the main non-residential areas of the site, Phase 1A-C of 243 residential units, Phase 1D of 115 residential units, and the Country Park application.

Photos of the site plan and location were presented which included the spine road which formed part of the infrastructure plan along with bus connection through into the North Herts Council's NS1 site. Footpath and cycleway connections to NS1 were under negotiation with North Herts Council who had asked for additional connectivity. This had been agreed, in part, with the developers and would be a non-material amendment to the infrastructure reserved matters.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that Phase 2 was most directly accessed from the northern vehicular access off North Road. The spine road approved under the Infrastructure RM provided a tree-lined avenue throughout the development. Phase 2 had several secondary and tertiary roads leading off the spine road to form cul-de-sacs and shared driveways, as well as the main connection through to NS1 and leading to the Country Park car park and entrance.

The proposed apartment blocks formed gateway buildings into the first two roads off the western end of the spine road. The spine road itself was fronted by predominantly semi-detached dwellings, with some detached dwellings on corner plots. The rest of the site was largely made up of semi-detached dwellings and rows of terraces, with policy compliant levels of affordable housing located across the whole site.

The 'Custom-build Strategy' submitted detailed that the plots would be marketed for up to two years. However, if they were not taken up by the public within this two-year window they would revert to conventional build plots and would be built out by the developers in accordance with the plans submitted.

A Member asked a question in relation to the proximity of the North Herts Council NS1 development, connections between the two developments and the potential of congestion. In response, the Principal Planning Officer advised that there would be a single access road that would connect through to NS1 that would also serve as a bus route. There were numerous footpaths and cycleways highlighted on a plan of the development and discussion had been had with North Herts Council regarding increasing the quantity of connections. In terms of the roadway and the footpaths, these had been designed in conjunction with Herts Highways to take account of the potential for additional traffic from the NS1 development.

A Member asked how many letters were sent to individual residents for the consultation. The Principal Planning Officer responded that all of the third party representees from the original outline permission were written to for each of the

reserved matter applications.

Some Members asked questions in relation to the proposed school. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) advised that the outline permission secured the land and the contributions towards the school and that it would be for the County Council as Education Authority to design it and, if they used their powers to do so, the Borough Council would be consulted and would bring the proposal before the Committee. The Council would be unable to restrict the admissions for Stevenage residents, but the North Herts NS1 development had its own allocation for a school site within it. The trigger point for the school build was agreed between the developer and County Council and the Principal Planning Officer recalled that the trigger point was approximately once 400 dwellings had been completed.

A Member asked a question in relation to the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) report and the risk of flooding to Basin 4, pathways, and gardens. The Principal Planning Officer responded that further information had been provided to the LLFA that cover the points raised in their report, but no response had been received. In light of this, the decision notice, if granted, would not be issued until full sign off from the LLFA had been received. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) added that for the outline permission, extensive flood modelling and remediation work had been agreed, but the LLFA wanted more detail and that detail was provided in compliance with what had already been submitted.

A Member asked a question relating to the total number of parking spaces and the ratio of parking spaces for affordable housing and flats. The Principal Planning Officer responded that across Phase 2, and the development as a whole, there was a slight over provision of parking spaces. The Council's standard required 1 space for 1 bedroom dwellings, 1.5 spaces for 2 bedroom dwellings, 2 spaces for 3 bedroom flats and 2.5 spaces for 4+ bedroom houses. Where the figures included a decimal place, the provision should be rounded up to the nearest whole number. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) confirmed the total parking provision for Phase 2 was 1,602 spaces.

It was **RESOLVED** that application 23/00890/RMM be granted planning permission, subject to the conditions set out below, and that authority be given to the Assistant Director (Planning and Regulation), in consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Development Committee, to amend or add to those conditions 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 and Development Committee has resolved to approve.

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P1708.P2.GAR.104; P1708.P2.GAR.105; P1708.P2.GAR.106; P1708.P2.GAR.107; P1708.P2.GAR.108; P1708.P2.SS.101-A; P1708.P2.SS.102-A; P1708.P2.SS.103-A; P1708.SRL.0008-A; P1708.SUB.201; P1708.B2.P2.103; P1708.B2.P2.104; P1708.B2.P2.105; P1708.B2.P2.106; P1708.B2.P2.107; P1708.B3A.P2.101; P1708.B3A.P2.102; P1708.B3A.P2.103; P1708.B3A.P2.104; P1708.B3B.P2.101; P1708.B3B.P2.102; P1708.B4.P2.101; P1708.B4.P2.102; P1708.B4.P2.103; P1708.BLK10.201; P1708.BLK10.202; P1708.BLK10.203; P1708.BLK10.204; P1708.BLK10.205; P1708.BLK10.206;

P1708.BLK10.207; P1708.BLK10.208; P1708.BLK11.201; P1708.BLK11.202;
P1708.BLK11.203; P1708.BLK11.204; P1708.BLK11.205; P1708.BLK11.206;
P1708.BLK11.207; P1708.BLK11.208; P1708.BLK12.201; P1708.BLK12.202;
P1708.BLK12.203; P1708.BLK12.204; P1708.BLK12.205; P1708.BLK12.206;
P1708.BLK12.207; P1708.BLK12.208; P1708.BLK8.201; P1708.BLK8.202;
P1708.BLK8.203; P1708.BLK8.204; P1708.BLK8.205; P1708.BM.P2.101;
P1708.BM.P2.102; P1708.BM.P2.103; P1708.BN1.P2.104; P1708.BN.P2.101A;
P1708.BN.P2.102A; P1708.BN1.P2.101; P1708.BN1.P2.102; P1708.BN1.P2.103;
P1708.BN1.P2.106; P1708.BN1.P2.108; P1708.BN1.P2.109; P1708.BN1.P2.110;
P1708.BO.P2.103; P1708.BO.P2.104; P1708.BO.P2.105; P1708.BR.P2.101;
P1708.BR.P2.102; P1708.BW.P2.102; P1708.CL.P2.101; P1708.CL.P2.102;
P1708.CL.P2.103; P1708.CL.P2.104; P1708.CL.P2.105; P1708.CL.P2.106;
P1708.CL.P2.107; P1708.CH.P2.101; P1708.CH.P2.102; P1708.CN.P2.101;
P1708.CN.P2.102; P1708.CN.P2.103; P1708.CN.P2.104; P1708.CN.P2.105;
P1708.CO.P2.101; P1708.CO.P2.102; P1708.CU.P2.101; P1708.CU.P2.102;
P1708.DN.P2.101; P1708.DN.P2.102; P1708.DN.P2.103; P1708.FR.P2.101;
P1708.FR.P2.102; P1708.FR.P2.103; P1708.FR.P2.104; P1708.FR.P2.105;
P1708.FR.P2.106; P1708.FR.P2.107; P1708.GN.P2.101; P1708.GN.P2.102;
P1708.GN1.P2.101; P1708.GN1.P2.102; P1708.GN1.P2.103A;
P1708.GN1.P2.104A; P1708.GW.P2.101; P1708.GW.P2.102; P1708.GW.P2.103;
P1708.GW.P2.104; P1708.HP.P2.101; P1708.HP.P2.102; P1708.HP.P2.103;
P1708.HP.P2.104; P1708.HT1.P2.101A; P1708.HT1.P2.102; P1708.KP.P2.101;
P1708.KP.P2.102; P1708.LA.P2.101; P1708.LA.P2.102; P1708.LA.P2.103;
P1708.LA.P2.104; P1708.LA.P2.105; P1708.M2.P2.101; P1708.M2.P2.102;
P1708.M2A.P2.101; P1708.M2A.P2.102; P1708.M2A.P2.103; P1708.M2A.P2.104;
P1708.M3.P2.101; P1708.M3A.P2.101; P1708.M3B.P2.101; P1708.M4.P2.101;
P1708.M4.P2.102; P1708.MA.P2.101; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6031-02; BM1-NPA-
P2-ZZ-DR-Y-3203-A-C02; BM1-NPA-V1-ZZ-M2-L-5008-S4-C03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-
DR-C-6030-02; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6302-02; BM1-OC-RMA-XX-DR-C-2026-
R07; P1708.022-M; P1708.23-M; P1708.24-I; P1708.25-K; P1708.26-K; P1708.27-
K; P1708.200-Q; P1708.201-N; P1708.202-Q; P1708.BN1.P2 - REV A;
P1708.BN1.P2.107 - REV A; P1708.BO.P2.101 - REV A; P1708.BO.P2.102 - REV
A; P1708.BO2.P2.101; P1708.BO2.P2.102; P1708.BR.P2.103 - REV A;
P1708.BR.P2.104 - REV A; P1708.BR.P2.105; P1708.BR.P2.106;
P1708.BW.P2.101 - REV A; P1708.BW.P2.103 - REV A; P1708.BW.P2.104;
P1708.BW.P2.105; P1708.GW.P2.105 - REV A; P1708.GW.P2.106 - REV A;
P1708.P2.SS.107-D; P1708.P2.SS.108-C; P1708.P2.SS.109-C; P1708.MA.P2.102;
P1708.MA.P2.103; P1708.MA.P2.104; P1708.PH.P2.101; P1708.PH.P2.102;
P1708.PH.P2.103; P1708.PH.P2.104; P1708.PH.P2.105; P1708.RE.P2.101;
P1708.RE.P2.102; P1708.RE.P2.103; P1708.RE.P2.104; P1708.RT.P2.101;
P1708.RT.P2.102; P1708.RT.P2.103; P1708.RT.P2.104; P1708.RT.P2.105;
P1708.RT.P2.106; P1708.RT.P2.107; P1708.RT.P2.108; P1708.SA.P2.101;
P1708.SA.P2.102; P1708.TH.P2.101; P1708.TH.P2.102; P1708.TH.P2.103;
P1708.TH.P2.104; P1708.WB.P2.101A; P1708.WB.P2.102A; P1708.WN.P2.101;
P1708.WN.P2.102; P1708.WW.P2.101; P1708.WW.P2.102; P1708.WW.P2.103;
P1708.WW.P2.104; P1708.BLK8.206; P1708.BLK8.207; P1708.BLK8.208;
P1708.BLK9.201; P1708.BLK9.202; P1708.BLK9.203; P1708.BLK9.204;
P1708.BLK9.205; P1708.BLK9.206; P1708.BLK9.207; P1708.BLK9.208;
P1708.BM.P2.105; P1708.HT1.P2.101; P1708.M4A.P2.101; P1708.M4A.P2.102;
P1708.P2.GAR.102; P1708.P2.SS.104-A; P1708.P2.SS.105-A; P1708.P2.SS.106-

A; P1708.WN.P2.104 - REV A; P1708.P2.SS.110-A; P1708.WN.P2.103 - REV A; P1708.WN.P2.105; P1708.WN.P2.106; BM1-NPA-V1-OS-DR-L-7521-A-C01; P1708.SRL.0008-A; BM1-NPA-V1-OS-DR-L-7520-A-C01; BM1-NPA-V1-OS-M2-L-7410-A-C01; BM1-NPA-V1-ZZ-D-L-5008-A-C01; BM1-NPA-V1-ZZ-SP-L-5050-C01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6000-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6001-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6002-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6003-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6004-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6005-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6006-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6007-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6008-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6009-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6010-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6011-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6012-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6013-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6014-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6015-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6016-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6017-03; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6018; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6019; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6020; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6021; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6022; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6023; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6024-01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6025-01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6026-01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6027-01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6028-01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6029-01; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6033; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6034; BM1-OC-RMA-2-DR-C-6035; P1708.BC.205; P1708.BIN.201; P1708.BIN.202; P1708.BIN.203; P1708.P2.CP.101; P1708.P2.CYC.101; P1708.P2.GAR.101; P1708.P2.GAR.103;

2 No development above slab level hereby permitted shall be carried out until full details of the soft and hard landscaping details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented and completed in accordance with those details, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

3 All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the landscaping details to be approved under condition 2 of this approval shall be carried out for each phase of the development hereby consented in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the development hereby permitted or, the completion of the approved development whichever is the sooner.

4 All hard surfacing comprised in the landscaping details to be approved under condition 2 of this approval shall be carried out for each phase of the development hereby consented prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted or, the completion of the approved development, whichever is the sooner.

5 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.

6 No tree shown 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.

7 No development above slab level of any building in this phase, shall take place until details of the proposed swift and bat boxes, their construction and

integration into the respective buildings/dwellings has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boxes shall thereafter be installed/integrated on the building/dwelling elevations as identified on Drawing number BM1-NPA-P2-ZZ-DR-Y-3202-A-CO2 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt

8 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings and development hereby permitted, the approved refuse/recycle stores and bin collection points shall be constructed in accordance with the details submitted with this planning application and shall be permanently retained in that form unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

9 Prior to the first occupation of the apartment blocks hereby permitted the approved cycle parking stores shall be constructed in accordance with the details submitted with this planning application and shall be permanently retained in that form unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

10 No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until the respective cycle parking has been provided on site by way of garage or garden shed as shown on Drawing number: P1708.22.G.

11 Notwithstanding the provisions of Classes A, B and C of Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revising, revoking or re-enactive that Order with or without modification) no internal or external alterations shall take place to any garage, which would preclude its use for housing motor vehicles and/or bicycles, no loft conversions including dormer windows / roof extensions, or roof lights and openings shall be constructed on the dwellinghouse(s) hereby permitted unless permission is granted on an application made to the Local Planning Authority.

12 Before any above-ground work is commenced on any individual phase or sub-phase of the development hereby permitted, samples of all external finishing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include:

- i. Facing and roof materials;
- ii. Juliette balcony and/or dormer window treatment;
- iii. Window material details;
- iv. External rainwater goods where permitted.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.

13 The play areas approved for the development shall be provided within each respective phase in accordance with the Phasing plan P1708.PhaseP.02-A hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

14 Prior to first occupation of the development details of any external lighting (excluding private residential curtilages) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented and completed in accordance with the approved details.

15 No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until the parking spaces and/or garages shown on the approved plans have been constructed, hardsurfaced and made ready for use. The parking facilities shall be retained in that form and thereafter be used only for the parking and garaging of vehicles.

INFORMATIVES

1 Hertfordshire Highways

AN1) 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 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.

AN2) 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/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) 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.

AN4) 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.

AN5) 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-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN6) 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>

AN7) 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.

AN8) 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.

AN9) 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

4 **INFORMATION REPORT - DELEGATED DECISIONS**

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

6 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

Planning application 21/00256/FPM - Land to the West of Stevenage

The Chair announced that he had accepted as an urgent item of business an information update that had been circulated to Members of the Committee in respect of the Land to the West of Stevenage planning application, which had been approved by the Committee in December 2021, subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement.

For the benefit of newer Members and as a reminder to longer-standing Members of the Committee, the Development Manager reprised the presentation he had given to the December 2021 meeting. He advised that the development would comprise 1,500 new homes in two phases (390 units in Phase 1 (Detailed) and 1,110 units in Phases 2 – 4 (Outline)), as well as a Neighbourhood Centre, Primary School, Cricket pavilion/pitch, employment units and a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), together with a variety of green and open spaces throughout the site. He described the access and egress arrangements for the site and explained that a new bus route through the development would be funded by the developer.

The Development Manager advised that, since 2021, there had been significant changes in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Housing Delivery Test. Application 21/00256/FPM, together with the associated Section 106 Agreement, had been tested against these changes, and legal advice had been sought.

The Development Manager reported that it had been concluded that the application was still acceptable when measured against current policies and therefore did not need to be re-determined by the Committee. In view of the scale of the application, the Chair and Vice-Chair had agreed that the matter be placed before the Committee for information.

A Member asked a question relating to the location of the development in relation to the Franklin Park development. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) advised that there was protected space for a potential road that would separate the two developments in addition to a green space.

Some Members asked questions regarding the proposed landscaping and acoustic barrier. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) responded that the current proposal was for a landscaped mound, as shown in the presentation. The Development Manager added that there was a proposed fence running along the top of the mound which would act as an acoustic barrier for the upper levels of dwellings and flat blocks that otherwise would be subject to noise from the A1(M). The fence was unlikely to be visible from the properties once the vegetation had grown out due to heavy landscaping of the mound.

A Member asked a question relating to the status of the application. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) advised that permission had not yet been issued as the Section 106 agreement had not yet been signed. The resolution of the Committee in December 2021 was to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 agreement. Once the permission was issued following the signing of the Section 106 agreement, the condition requiring the development to be commenced within three years would take effect.

A Member asked a question regarding affordable housing. The Development Manager advised that the developed site as a whole, would deliver a policy compliant provision of 30%. Further details were not available as this would be delivered across different phases, each of which would come through to the Committee for decision. It would be at that time that a decision would be made as to whether the level of affordable housing was compliant with Council policy.

A Member asked a question in relation to Dye's Lane Gypsy & Traveller site and the Council's consideration of a further Gypsy & Traveller site. The Development Manager responded that the Dyes Lane site was managed by the County Council and that there was a provision in the Local Plan for a Gypsy & Traveller site further north in the Borough that was unaffected by this development.

A Member asked a question relating to biodiversity net gain. The Development Manager responded that the development was unable to achieve the required 10% biodiversity net gain. This was, in part, because the development encompassed a former landfill site which had a mosaic habitat. The Development Manager recalled that the site included approximately 141 habitat units. The Section 106 agreement would secure a contribution of approximately £2M towards biodiversity net gain. The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulatory) advised that the Section 106 contribution would be received in stages and would be directed to biodiversity net gain across the Borough, including supporting the delivery of the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan.

A Member asked a question relating to the potential of further developments in the area and subsequent access points. The Development Manager advised that the Council's Local Plan safeguarded an area of land to allow access to a North Herts Council development were it to come forward. Any future developments would be

subject to a detailed transport assessment to demonstrate that the development did not cause harm to the highway network and to provide suitable mitigation.

A Member asked a question relating to an existing underpass. The Development Manager responded that Herts County Council would provide enhanced lighting to this underpass under their Section 38 powers. The underpass would still be maintained by Highways England.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update on application 21/00256/FPM be noted, and that the approach outlined by the Development Manager be supported.

7 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

8 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR