

Planning Committee

Supplemental Agenda

Meeting date	2 December 2025
Officer	Thomas Frankland
Agenda Item	Maxwell Road, Stevenage SG1 2EW
Proposal	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of Class E discount food store with associated car parking, landscaping, engineering and drainage works.
Reference	25/00400/FPM
ADDENDUM INFORMATION	

1. REPRESENTATIONS

- 1.1. Since the publication of the main report, a further objection has been received from Cycle UK Stevenage. A copy of the objection is included as appendix 1 to this addendum.

2. CONSULTATIONS

2.1. SBC Arboriculture Officer

- 2.1.1. Following publication of the main report, further consultations have taken place with the council's arboriculture officer.
- 2.1.2. They have confirmed that the proposed building will not be impacted by the existing, publicly owned trees.
- 2.1.3. However, they consider that replacement planting should be provided at a rate of three new trees for every tree felled as part of the proposal. The current proposal, which is for replacement planting at a rate of approximately 1:1, is not appropriate considering that the existing mature trees would be replaced by saplings without any guarantee of their survival beyond five years.
- 2.1.4. They have explained that an average mature tree would provide canopy cover of 50m² to 100m² (some even over 200m²). In contrast, a newly-planted standard tree, provided that it is well maintained and survives after five years, would have a canopy of less than 1m². In that context, even a replacement ratio of 50:1 wouldn't be enough to compensate the loss of mature trees. In broad terms, the current proposal would result in the loss of 900m² of canopy cover.

3. MAIN ISSUES

3.1. Arboricultural Impacts

- 3.1.1. Policy NH5 of the local plan requires that existing trees be protected, retained and sensitively incorporated into developments. Where loss of existing trees is demonstrably

unavoidable, planning permission will be granted where sufficient land is reserved for landscaping and appropriate replacement planting is provided.

- 3.1.2. In the main report, at paragraph 7.13.6, it is stated that the proposed level of replacement tree planting is appropriate in view of the space that would be available on the site following the development. Having received further advice from the council's Arboriculture Officer, that is no longer considered to be the case.
- 3.1.3. Whilst it is still recognised that the site is physically constrained and that there would be limited, if any, opportunity to provide replacement planting beyond the nine trees currently proposed, the resultant net loss of tree canopy cover would be such that the proposed replacement planting is not considered to be appropriate, as required by Policy NH5. In this respect, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy NH5.
- 3.1.4. The main report, at paragraph 7.13.8, also deals with concerns raised by the council's Arboriculture Officer regarding the protection of retained trees during and after the development. These concerns have been resolved, as the Arboriculture Officer is now satisfied that the submitted arboricultural impact assessment provides the details previously requested.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1. The proposed loss of a total of 12 trees, with only nine replacements, is not considered to be appropriate and this represents a conflict with Policy NH5 of the local plan. Having regard to the extent of the loss, including the net loss in canopy cover, this carries moderate weight against granting permission.
- 4.2. However, it is considered that the significant benefits of the proposal, as set out in the main report, continue to outweigh the identified harms of the proposal, including the harms set out in the main report and the newly-identified harm to trees set out in this addendum. As such, the overall conclusion of officers remains unchanged i.e. that the proposal is contrary to the development plan but the benefits of the proposal, which are a material consideration, warrant the granting of permission.