PRESENT: Councillors: Jane Gray (Chairman), Mrs F.R. Hill (Vice-Chairman), D.J. Barnard, Clare Body, David Billing, Paul Clark, Melissa Davey, A.F. Hunter, Arthur Jarman, David Levett and Ian Mantle.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Caldwell (Planning Control and Conservation Manager), Simon Ellis (Principal Planning Officer), Tom Rea (Area Planning Officer), Anne Osborn (Senior Planning Officer), Katie White (Senior Lawyer) and Nigel Schofield (Committee & Member Services Officer).

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs R. Clarke, Mr W. Cherry, Ms L. Kellard, Mr C. Knight, Mrs Betty Lee, Mr P. Phillips, Ms W. Gale and Mr J. Swain (registered speakers).

Approximately 20 Members of the public (who arrived at commencement, during the meeting and left at various times).

58. WELCOME AND CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS
The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and to those who had registered to speak.

59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Allison Ashley, Liz Beardwell, Julian Cunningham, Allison Dear, Michael Muir and R. Shakespeare – Smith.

60. MINUTES – 19 JULY 2007
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2007 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

61. SUBSTITUTION
Having given due notice in accordance with the agreed procedures for North Herts District Council, Councillor Clare Body advised the Chairman that she would be a substitute for Councillor Liz Beardwell at this meeting.

Having given due notice in accordance with the agreed procedures for North Herts District Council, Councillor David Levett advised the Chairman that he would be a substitute for Councillor Allison Ashley at this meeting.

62. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS
There had been no notification of any other business.

63. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
Agenda Item 9 – 07/01341/1: Land adjacent Letchworth Golf Club
Councillor Melissa Davey declared a personal interest in that a member of her immediate family was resident in the property adjacent to the application site and advised that she would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

Agenda Item 14 – 07/01260/1LB: 26-28 High Street, Graveley
Councillors Clare Body and Paul Clark both declared a personal interest in that they were friends of the applicant and advised that they would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.
64. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
The Chairman confirmed that all members of the public who had registered to speak at the meeting were in attendance.

65. **07/01120/1 – NEWSSELLS PARK STUD, NEWSSELLS PARK, BARKWAY, SG8 9NB:**
**ERECTION OF STAFF ACCOMMODATION COMPRISING A 4 BEDROOM DETACHED DWELLING HOUSE WITH DETACHED GARAGE; A 3 BEDROOM DETACHED DWELLING HOUSE WITH 2 PARKING SPACES AND 3 TWO BEDROOM TERRACED DWELLING HOUSES WITH 3 CAR PARKING SPACES; LANDSCAPING SCHEME AND FORMATION OF NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS FROM A10; AS REPLACEMENT FOR 2 TWO STOREY HOSTEL BUILDINGS PROVIDING 8 X 1 BEDROOM STAFF UNITS GRANTED UNDER PLANNING PERMISSION REFERENCE 04/01438/1 ON 06/10/2005.**

Mr C. Knight thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee and confirmed that he would not speak on this item.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission and confirmed that the Environment agency had withdrawn its objection. The Area Planning Officer was also able to advise the Committee that two other late representations had been received, one from the Applicant’s Agents addressing the concern of Reed Parish Council and one letter from Mr and Mrs Moss of Fox Cottage, London Road.

During the debate, the Area Planning officer reassured Members that the occupancy condition would be restricted to existing or former employees of the Stud and occupancy further restricted by contract between the employee and the Stud owners.

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01120/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report including the Planning Informative of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

66. **07/01121/1 – NEWSSELLS PARK STUD, NEWSSELLS PARK, BARKWAY, SG8 9NB:**
**ERECTION OF BUILDING TO PROVIDE COVERING BARN AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES. SINGLE STOREY BARN COMPRISING 6 STABLES AND TACK ROOM WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING FACILITIES. CONVERSION AND TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO EXISTING DWELLING TO FORM 2 X 3 BEDROOM FLATS AND 1 X 2 BEDROOM FLATS; LANDSCAPING SCHEME.**

Mr C. Knight thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee and confirmed that he would not speak on this item.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That, subject to the receipt of a signed Unilateral Undertaking from the applicant to provide a financial contribution towards local infrastructure costs, and subject to the agreement of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services application 07/01121/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, as per the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.
67. 07/01562/1 – CROWN HOUSE, SHAFTENHOE END ROAD, BARLEY, SG8 8LE: ALTERATIONS TO PROVIDE FIRST FLOOR ANCILLARY BEDROOM ACCOMMODATION IN ROOF SPACE OVER EXISTING DETACHED GARAGE.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01562/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

68. 07/01491/1HH – PEARTREE COTTAGE, SMITHS END LANE, BARLEY, SG9 8LY: TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION, SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01491/1HH be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

69. 07/01351/1HH – CEDAR HOUSE, GREEN END, SANDON SG9 0RL: PROPOSED DORMER WINDOW TO SIDE ELEVATION

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That, application 07/01351/1HH be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

70. 07/01638/1LB – CEDAR HOUSE, GREEN END, SANDON SG9 0RL: PROPOSED DORMER WINDOW, AND 2 NEW CONSERVATION ROOF LIGHTS TO SIDE ELEVATION. REPLACE PANTILE ROOF WITH HAND MADE CLAY PLAIN TILES TO REAR, SINGLE STOREY ADDITION. INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND REPOSITION BOILER AND FLUE.

The Area Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01638/1LB be **GRANTED** Listed Building Consent subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

71. 07/01690/1 – LAND AT SPORTS CENTRE, WHITETHORN LANE, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 2DN: 15.6 METRE HIGH TELECOMMUNICATIONS COLUMN WITH FLOOD LIGHT ATTACHMENT TO REPLACE EXISTING FLOOD LIGHT, EQUIPMENT CABINET AND ANCILLARY WORKS.

Mrs R. Clarke thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee and confirmed that she was the representative of all the objectors to this planning application. Mrs Clarke advised the Committee that the applicant had four other telecommunication columns in Letchworth Garden City rated 2G whilst one other provider had just one 3G telecommunication column that provided mobile phone coverage for all of Letchworth Garden City and suggested that the applicant could utilise one of its existing columns with an upgrade to 3G. Mrs Clark also argued that the visual amenity for her home and many of the local residents would be marred by the conversion of the floodlight to a
telecommunications column. Also, that two local schools and many users of the sports facilities had not been consulted on this proposed development.

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application.

The Committee discussed at length the issues raised by Mrs Clarke and acknowledged that objections on health grounds from local residents could not be considered as the applicant had met the International Commission on Non-ionising Radiation Protection guidelines for public exposure to radio waves as defined within PPG8. The Committee discussed the apparent lack of consultation with local school and sports clubs and that whilst two schools were outside 360 metres from the site many school children and sports club members used facilities that were well inside the limit of 360 metres. The Committee also agreed that the applicant should be invited to provide accurate technical evidence why the need for additional coverage could not be attained by the expanded use of a current telecommunications column in Letchworth Garden City. Comment was also made as to the potential for additional antennae and receiving dishes once approval for a telecommunications mast was determined. A Member cited an example at a local football club where the floodlighting column (converted to a telecommunications column) had become a mass of small antennae and dishes which apparently did not require planning permission. The Committee agreed that more investigation and consultation was necessary before a decision could be made and consequently:

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01690/1 be DEFERRED for the following reasons:

1. That officers be requested to seek clarification from the applicant as to the future use of the column should planning permission be granted and clarification as to the precise nature of what equipment could be accommodated on the new column, and if appropriate that officers recommend whether or not to place restrictive conditions that would prevent further additions to the mast.

3. That officers be requested to contact Orange plc as to the effectiveness provided by an existing single telecommunications column at G3 capacity adjacent to the A1(M) which provided coverage for all of Letchworth Garden City and if appropriate officers be requested to discuss these matters with the applicant;

4. That officers be requested to consult by letter all users of the Whitethorn Lane Sports Centre, Lordship School and St. Christophers School as to the planning application including reference to PPG8 which reflects the Government’s view on health issues in relation to telecommunications masts.

Following the outcomes of the above resolutions officers be requested to report back to a future meeting of the Planning Control Committee with an officer recommendation and any conditions that could be appropriate to restrict future alterations to the mast.

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72. **07/01416/1 – LAND AT LONGABOUT OPPOSITE LETCHWORTH GATE SERVICE STATION, LETCHWORTH GATE, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 2AZ: NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS ONTO LETCHWORTH GATE AND ADDITION OF GRASS CONCRETE AREA TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO PROPOSED T-MOBILE SITE.**

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application and advised the Committee that he had spoken with a representative from the Ambulance Service who had confirmed that no objection would be made to the proposed access and ground works on the Longabout roundabout.

During the debate it was revealed by a member of the Committee that he had undertaken a review of the applicant's Design and Access Statement, The Letchworth and Baldock Urban Transport Plan (a HCC document dated 1 February 2007) and an email communication from a highways officer at HCC. The Member advised the Committee that he had deduced from the review several contra opinions expressed by transport officers from HCC on the traffic conditions at the Longabout to that as provided by Hertfordshire Highways (Paragraphs 4.3.1, 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 to the report refer). The Committee expressed concern at the evidence and
requested that officers take note of this new information and attempt to reconcile the apparent opposite views expressed by different highway departments and officers at HCC.

Members also considered that the applicant should be invited to submit alternative proposals for the hard standing should this application be granted as the use of ‘grass crete’ had not been very successful when used elsewhere in North Hertfordshire to alleviate damage to grassed areas. Members also cited examples of traffic control measures used when there was routine maintenance of lighting columns on the Longabout and that this may well be the best course for maintenance of the telecommunications column. The Committee agreed that any encroachment onto the Longabout would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the site and whilst accepting that there might only be a few maintenance visits per annum all efforts should be made to avoid heavy vehicles moving onto the grassed area.

RESOLVED: That application 07/01416/1 be DEFERRED for the following reasons:

1. That officers be requested to enter into discussions with the applicant in order to consider the use of other less obtrusive surfaces than grass crete, whether a dropped kerb would be appropriate and to seek clarification as to the future management of access onto the Longabout for routine maintenance works;

2. That officers be requested to enter into discussions with Hertfordshire County Council (Highways) in order to seek clarification of their reasons having regard to information concerning this scheme as provided by a Committee Member.

Following the outcomes of the above resolutions officers be requested to report back to a future meeting of the Planning Control Committee with an officer recommendation and any conditions that could be appropriate to this application.

RESOLVED: That application 07/01341/1 be GRANTED planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control and the following: amended Reason to Condition 1, an additional sub section ‘e’ to Condition 4 plus an additional Condition 6:

Condition 1.

Reason: Temporary permission is granted for the use of the land as a picnic site and associated installation of picnic tables only to enable the highway implications of this aspect of the proposal to be monitored. This condition does not apply to the associated public open space.

Condition 4.

(e) A management plan including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedule.

Reason: In the interest of the appearance of the completed development.
Condition 6. Prior to the commencement of development, details of appropriately designed gates to be installed at the junction of the Greenway and Willian road (adjoining the application site) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such works shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details or particulars prior to the commencement of the use and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent unauthorised vehicles entering the picnic area in the interests of highway safety and amenity.

74. 07/01035/1 – NATWEST, STATION PLACE, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3AL: CONVERSION OF FIRST FLOOR OFFICE SPACE INTO 3 BEDROOM FLATS. EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AT SECOND FLOOR INVOLVING CHANGES TO OPENINGS.

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was agreed that the applicant should make a financial contribution under a Section 106 obligation to waste collection and recycling and:

**RESOLVED**: That, subject to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services being satisfied with the Unilateral Undertaking/Section 106 obligation submitted by the applicant to enable financial contributions towards Community Centres, informal open space, leisure services, waste collection and recycling, application 07/01035/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

75. 06/00832/1 – FORMER SKILL CENTRE, PIXMORE AVENUE, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3AL: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 250 NO. DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS. VEHICULAR ACCESS OFF PIXMORE AVENUE (OUTLINE APPLICATION; SITING, DESIGN, EXTERNAL APPEARANCE AND THE LANDSCAPING OF THE SITE RESERVED).

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, during which the Principal Planning Officer confirmed that further detailed road engineering design proposals are required to be agreed for the junction of Pixmore Avenue and the Baldock Road (A505) it was:

**RESOLVED**: That, subject to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services being satisfied with the Section106 Obligation submitted by the applicant to ensure the following: 25 per cent affordable housing as part of any residential development, the provision of two Local Area of Plays (LAPs) on the site and payment for one Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) off site, financial contributions towards the management and maintenance of these facilities and transfer to Council control of all amenity and play space land, financial contributions towards Secondary Education, Youth and Childcare Provision, Library Services, sustainable transport measures and bus stop improvements, fire hydrant provision across the site and residential green travel plan, application 06/00832/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

76. 07/01647/1HH – 16 WAYSBROOK, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 2DT: TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION, REAR CONSERVATORY AND SINGLE STOREY FRONT EXTENSION.

Mr W. Cherry thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee as an objector representing residents at 14 and 18 Waysbrook to this planning application.
The main objections raised by adjacent neighbours were against the rear extensions with loss of daylight and sunlight in the rear garden at no. 16 and the extension would be close to the boundary of No. 18 Waysbrook. Mr Cherry advised the Committee that some 1.6 metres of hedgerow would be lost and that drainage issues from the proposed development was of concern to both sets of neighbours.

Ms Wendy Gale thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee as the applicant and confirmed that discussions had and would take place with immediate neighbours in order to mitigate as much as possible the concerns of neighbours to the proposed development.

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, during which the Committee requested that details of guttering should be included as part of Condition 3 it was:

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01647/1HH be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control with Condition 3 amended to read as follows:

**Condition 3.** Details and/or samples of materials to be used on all external elevations, the roof and guttering of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is commenced. The approved materials shall be implemented on site.

**Reason:** To ensure that the development will have an acceptable appearance which does not detract from the appearance and character of the surrounding area.

77. 07/01411/1 – WYMONDLEY NURSING HOME, STEVENAGE ROAD, WYMONDLEY, SG4 7HT: SECTION 73 APPLICATION: REMOVAL OF CONDITION 3 OF PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 05/01295/1 GRANTED PERMISSION ON 05/12/05 (RESTRICTION OF THE NUMBER OF RESIDENTS TO 59).

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01411/1 be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

78. 07/01260/1LB – 26-28 HIGH STREET, GRAVELEY, SG4 7LA: RE-INSTATE DOOR TO FRONT OF NO. 28 HIGH STREET, INTERNAL BLOCKING OF DOOR TO REAR OF NO.28 AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW DOORWAY (REAR OF NO. 28) TO UTILITY ROOM.

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01260/1LB be **GRANTED** Listed Building Consent, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.
Mr J. Swain thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee. Mr Swain advised the Committee that he had three points of objection: 1. Noise, 2. Visual amenity (trees) and 3. Bats. Despite a curfew of night operation Mr Swain contended that the noise from the wind turbine would be unacceptable to local residents, and research had shown that the large trees adjacent to the proposed site would affect the turbulence to the rear of the blades and create unacceptable noise levels for local residents. There were several large trees in the grounds of Hitchin Boys School with some close to the development site and Mr Swain requested that if these trees were not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) then every effort should be made to include the trees under a TPO. Mr Swain contended that bats (species unknown) possibly roosted within the grounds of Hitchin Boys School or had flight paths that crossed many parts of the grounds. Mr Swain requested that it was imperative to conduct a complete bat survey within the school grounds and nearby roosting sites. Mr Swain concluded his presentation with concerns over the size and depth of concrete footings that would required for the wind turbine column and damage that could be caused to tree roots.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was agreed that a condition should be included that would ensure that a bat survey should take place, and a further condition where the applicant must provide details of concrete footings for the wind turbine column before commencement of any development.

The Committee also agreed that a tree survey at Hitchin Boys School should be undertaken in the vicinity of application site and if appropriate a Tree Preservation Order be prepared to include the trees concerned.

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/00907/1 be GRANTED planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control and two additional conditions 9 and 10 as follows:

**Condition 9** Before any development starts on site, a survey shall be carried out, in accordance with a methodology that has been agreed with the Local Planning Authority, to ascertain whether any bats are present on the site. The results of the survey shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority, together with details of the measures proposed to mitigate the effect of the development on any such species, including the timing of development works. The development hereby permitted shall not start until the mitigation measures have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the development shall thereafter be carried out and retained in accordance with the agreed measures.

Reason: For bat protection.

**Condition 10.** Before development works commence, a tree survey shall be undertaken to identify if the concrete base would have any adverse impact on the tree root systems of the nearby trees. The results of the tree survey and any required mitigation measures are to be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved details are to be implemented on site.

Reason: Tree protection.
80. **0701356/1HH– 35 ROYAL OAK LANE, PIRTON, SG5 3QT: FRONT DORMER WINDOW**

Ms Kellard thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee and confirmed that she would not speak on this item.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01356/1HH be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

81. **07/01358/1HH -35 ROYAL OAK LANE, PIRTON, SG5 3QT: SINGLE STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION, REAR DORMER WINDOW AND NEW FRONT PORCH.**

Ms Kellard thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Planning Control Committee and confirmed that she would not speak on this item.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of this application for planning permission.

Following debate, it was

**RESOLVED:** That application 07/01358/1HH be **GRANTED** planning permission, subject to the conditions and reasons set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control.

82. **PLANNING APPEALS**

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of the latest situation with regard to planning appeals. The report contained details of two appeals which had been determined since the last meeting of the Planning Control Committee held on 19 July 2007. The Planning Control Committee noted that six appeals had been lodged since the date of the last meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted, and that regard be had to the Inspector’s conclusions in respect of the two planning appeal decisions.

83. **PLANNING ENFORCEMENT CASELOAD**

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control in respect of the latest situation with regard to planning enforcement cases.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted, and the actions taken be supported.

The meeting closed at 10.14 p.m.

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Chairman