

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY**

ON THURSDAY, 12TH OCTOBER, 2023 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Val Bryant (Chair), Tom Tyson (Vice-Chair), Daniel Allen, Simon Bloxham, Mick Debenham, David Levett, Nigel Mason, Ian Moody, Sean Nolan, Louise Peace and Phil Weeder*

In Attendance: *Ian Fullstone (Service Director - Regulatory), Sam Dicocco (Principle Planning Officer), Eleanor Hopcraft (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Thomas Howe (Planning Officer), Sarah Kasparian (Senior Planning Officer), Oliver Sowerby (Senior Development Officer - Development Management Herts County Council Highways), Roger Flowerday (Group Manager Local Development Plans and Strategic Development Herts County Council Highways), Justin Price-Jones (Legal Advisor) and Sjanet Wickenden (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 32 members of the public, including registered speakers and Member Advocates.*

Councillors Alistair Willoughby and Elizabeth Dennis were also in attendance.

113 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 59 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry Tyler.

114 MINUTES - 14 SEPTEMBER 2023

Audio Recording – 2 minutes 15 seconds

Councillor Val Bryant, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 14 September 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

115 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 58 seconds

There was no other business notified.

116 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 2 seconds

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (3) The Chair clarified matters for the registered speakers.
- (4) The Chair advised that Section 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution applied to the meeting.

117 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 4 minutes 23 seconds

N.B Councillor Philip Weeder entered the Council Chamber at 19:34.

The Chair confirmed the registered speakers were in attendance.

118 18/01154/OP LAND NORTH OF HIGHOVER FARM TO STOTFOLD ROAD, HIGHOVER WAY, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE

Audio recording – 5 minutes 18 seconds

The Senior Planning Officer provided an update that four local residents had submitted late representations, however there were no new points raised.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report in respect of application 18/01154/OP supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

The following Members asked points of clarification:

- Councillor Simon Bloxham
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Sean Nolan
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Louise Peace
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Daniel Allen

In response to the points of clarification the Senior Planning Officer stated that:

- The applicant used manual and automatic traffic counts to update the traffic assessment and found that the original assessment was robust, and the traffic assessment mitigation was detailed in the report.
- There were specific transport projects detailed under strand 1 of the S106 money and Highways have highlighted projects to allocate any remaining S106 money.
- The signalised 'shuttle system' under the Woolgrove Road bridge had been earmarked, along with ongoing work on other Hitchin transport projects.
- The widening the footpath under the Woolgrove Road bridge would allow users to pass each other safely, along with a shuttle traffic light system.
- There would be a one-way system under the Bridge with a height restriction, this would make it clearer to drivers and decrease bridge strikes. The cost for the bridge work was estimated at £500K.
- Projects and their feasibility had been highlighted on page 32 of the report.

- The money would be sent to HCC Highways who would then allocate the funding to the right projects according to feasibility and stage of the project.
- The footpath under the bridge would be increased from one metre wide to about 2 metres.

In response to the points of clarification the Senior Development Officer for Development Management at Hertfordshire County Council Highways stated that:

- The widening of the footpath would increase user safety, as vehicles going under the bridge would then use the middle of the road, this scheme was workable and deliverable.
- The 2017 traffic assessment had been quantified and the transport assessment trip data was robust, the trip data should show an industry standard of point 05.
- The speed limit on the Stotfold Road would be reduced to 30 miles per hour.

In response to the points of clarification the Group Manager for Local Development Plans and Strategic Development at Hertfordshire County Council Highways stated that:

- The shuttle system used traffic lights, and only allowed the one way flow of traffic at any given time, consideration had been given to any impact on congestion.
- The strand 1 works identified as S278 were usually required to develop the site and were usually carried out by a third party or the developer.
- Strand 2 works were normally identified as S106 with a contribution from the applicant. A number of schemes would be identified, and the work would usually be carried out by HCC and could take place over a number of years.
- The road speed would be 30 miles per hour from the site to the A505.

The Chair invited Mr Neil Dodds and Mr Richard Wilcox to speak in objection of the application.

Mr Dodds thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation including that:

- There were concerns regarding the amount of traffic congestion, air pollution and safe routes for cyclist, pedestrians and the disabled going into Hitchin.
- The matter had been deferred for a review of the air quality and traffic management.
- A new report was received, commented on, and returned on the 13 September 2023.
- A further report dated 18 September 2023 was received, with crossed out changes which concluded that the previous traffic assessment was robust, but with all the conflicting reports the conclusion did not appear robust.
- The estate habitants would need to use a vehicle to go into Hitchin town, despite the public transport mitigation measures and the estimate of £3.42M of funding.
- The proposed cycle routes were very aspirational, but it was difficult to understand how a cycle lane could be added to the A505 and the Woolgrove crossover.
- The cycle routes from the east would be a very expensive project and had no costings or timescales.
- There were concerns that the Woolgrove Road bridge works would cause traffic congestion.
- The mitigation measures would not lead to a sustainable development.

Mr Wilcox thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation including that:

- The traffic report produced by WSP was basically a resubmission of the 2017 report and based on the same trip data and skewed by a region with low car ownership.
- No new, evidence based, justification had been given in the report it merely repeated that in 2018 NHDC accepted the 2017 report.

- There were assertions in the report that the traffic issues on the Cambridge Road had declined, but this was obviously caused by the pandemic and should not be used as mitigation.
- The report highlighted that traffic had been rising by 9% each year and will soon pass pre pandemic levels.
- WSP were a consultant of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and carried out the traffic assessment.
- The association of WSP to HCC, suggested a conflict of interest, and little weight could be attributed to the report.
- A truly independent traffic assessment should be produced.

N.B Councillor Sean Nolan declared a conflict of interest as an employee of WSP, although had not been involved in the development of these reports, and, following advice from the Legal Advisor, he left the Chamber at 20:02.

The Chair thanked Mr Dodds and Mr Wilcox for their presentations and invited Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason to speak against the application. Councillor Wright-Mason thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation, including that:

- The proposal would have a serious impact on the highways network.
- More than 1800 people had signed a petition opposing this scheme, with many of those signing being unaware of the scheme until recently and had not been consulted.
- A number of documents produced by Highways had been circulated after the public consultation had ended.
- Cambridge Road was currently overloaded and had today been gridlocked for 1.5 miles into Letchworth, leaving drivers stranded in their driveways.
- The addition of 700 car dependant homes would add to this congestion and was mitigated only by out-of-date reports.
- An independent transport assessment would confirm this taking into account the impact of these homes on the wider road networks.
- Recent developments in Bedfordshire between Arlesey and Fairfield indicated the true traffic picture after a large development.
- A traffic survey commenced on Stotfold Road, Cambridge Road, Woolgrove Road and High Dane on the 14 September for 1 week.
- The locations of this traffic survey suggested it was related to the proposed development and would have required authorisation from Herts Highways Authority.
- The majority of local residents felt that they had not been adequately consulted on the matter, and that the developers had no meaningful relationship with the local community.

The Chair thanked Councillor Wright-Mason for his presentation and invited Mr Martin Wright and Mr Tim Parker representatives of the applicant to speak in support of the application.

Mr Wright thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation, including that:

- The transport assessment was reviewed and remained robust and fit for purpose with extra mitigation details.
- The forecasted traffic flow was now lower than presented in the 2018 report and the predicted traffic impact of this development was deemed as low and not severe as outlined in the NPPF guidance.
- Further, on reviewing the traffic impact assessment and considering this development and other local developments including the North Herts College site, the cumulative traffic impact was deemed as low and not severe.
- The trip generation data had been compared to the industry standard trip database and was considered by Officers as acceptable.

- A number of potential mitigation schemes had been costed and considered and were contained in the report, the precise schemes to be delivered would be at the discretion of HCC but would be funded by the S106 money.
- They acknowledged that like other towns, Hitchin had existing Highways and mobility challenges and were committed to helping to improve this situation.
- This development would generate £28M of S106 money, deliver 40% of affordable housing, contribute a biodiversity net gain of 133% and a two-form entry primary school.
- The Highways contribution would be £4.7M of which £3.3M would be attributed to HCC for highway improvement projects.
- The counsel for the applicant had advised that if the development was not approved there would be grounds for an appeal, which could lead to reviewing elements of the proposed S106 agreement.
- Should this application go to appeal it could pave the way for planning by appeal, and not through planned developments.
- The application site was allocated on the Local Plan and the application was policy compliant with no objections from Highways.
- The application came with a substantial amount of S106 money.
- The application was justified, and the applicant was committed to a public consultation.

Mr Parker thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation, including that he had produced the transport assessment, the transport assessment addendum, and the technical notes.

The Chair thanked Mr Wright and Mr Parker for their presentations and advised Members that they should not consider comments made regarding any potential appeal when making their decision on this application.

The HCC Senior Planning Officer summarised that:

- Projects that been identified that would prioritise transport into Hitchin town.
- The developer was not solely responsible for mitigating the transport issues, these would be considered for feasibility and scope and would be managed by the Highways Authority.

The HCC Senior Development Officer summarised that:

- Further details were initially requested on traffic flows and considered additional areas, on balance the traffic flows on all sites were lower than in 2017.
- A discrepancy was corrected by WSP in their follow up note and still showed that the report data was robust.
- Written information regarding the traffic survey Councillor Wright-Mason mentioned could be provided.

The Group Manager summarised that:

- Traffic monitoring had been ongoing throughout the pandemic and up to the end of 2022.
- The traffic flow was shown to be 5% lower than pre pandemic, with traffic peaks lower and more spread.
- Overall traffic volume was down by 5%.

In response to a question from Councillor Nigel Mason the Senior Development Officer stated that they had no knowledge of a traffic survey from August 2023 and that traffic surveys generally occurred in neutral months.

The following Members took part in Debate:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Simon Bloxham
- Councillor Mick Debenham
- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Louise Peace

Points raised during the debate included:

- The applicant had complied with all of the requests in the deferment.
- The current trip data occurred when the school had 29 pupils, this would change once the site was built.
- Questions remained regarding public transport for the site.
- Whilst the impact on traffic of 700 dwellings was unknown the outcome of the application needed to be formed from the traffic report data provided.
- A planning authority required a legal reason to decline an application and there were no legal reasons to decline this application.

The Senior Planning Officer advised during the debate that £807K of strand 1 money would be invested in the Number 81 bus going through the site for a period of 5 years and was detailed in the report.

Councillor David Levett proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That application 18/01154/OP be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the reasons and conditions set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

119 22/00303/FP LAND FOR FOOTPATH BETWEEN THE GREENWAY AND STOTFOLD ROAD, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE

Audio recording – 59 minutes 47 seconds

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report in respect of Application 22/00303/FP supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

Councillor Mick Debenham proposed and Councillor David Levett seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That application 22/00303/FP be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the reasons and conditions set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

N.B Following the conclusion of this item there was a short break in proceedings until 20:44.

120 22/03092/FP LAND TO THE EAST OF FOXHOLES AND GAINSFORD HOUSE AND ON THE WEST SIDE OF, CROW FURLONG, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE

Audio recording – 1 hour 14 minutes 1 second

N.B Councillor Sean Nolan returned to the Council Chamber at 20:44.

Councillor Nigel Mason advised that, following discussions with the Legal Advisor, as he had previously made comments publicly on this application and was therefore predetermined, he would leave the Chamber for the duration of this item.

N.B Councillor Nigel Mason left the Council Chamber at 20:45.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the report in respect of Application 22/03092/FP supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

The following Members asked points of clarification:

- Councillor Louise Peace
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Daniel Allen

In response to the points of clarification the Senior Planning Officer stated that:

- The applicant and Officers were aware that technology moved quickly and had proposed rather than confirmed, the solar panel and air source heat pump measures in section 7.1, which had been updated in condition 25 of the report, that these would be an enhancement of the measures outlined in section 7.1.
- The biodiversity net gain (BNG) metric had demonstrated a net gain from the development and was policy compliant.
- Herts Ecology had requested a Management Plan, and this has formed part of a condition for a BNG Management Plan and will later be adopted by the Council.

In response to the points of clarification the Principal Planning Officer stated that there was no current condition regarding low level lighting.

The Chair invited Mr Neil Dodds to speak in objection of the application. Mr Dodds thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation including that:

- They had made criticisms of the transport assessment and air quality reports in January and that recently the air quality report had been revised.
- There was an under estimation of the evening rush hour traffic at the intersection of Grays Lane and Upper Tilehouse Street as shown in table 5.7 of the report.
- This application along with the HG5 site would increase traffic by 40% in the morning and 53% in the evening rush hour, which would exasperate congestion especially with pedestrians crossing the road.
- The S106 money to improve pedestrian crossings, bus stops, and traffic light scheme will not elevate the traffic congestion or mitigate the congestion.
- The air quality at the foot of Grays Lane would be affected by increased queuing traffic, this junction is on the edge of an air quality management area.
- The air quality capsule in Upper Tilehouse Street is already showing nitrogen dioxide level close to, and in excess of, the air quality objectives and these are predicted to increase.
- The application should be deferred to allow a decision to be made from clear, complete, and correct information.
- The site contravenes the Local Plan as no site should overlook the Chilterns and changes to the boundary should not mitigate this.
- The loss of meadowland, trees and hedgerows would result in a loss of wildlife and protected species of bats and badgers.
- The 10% BNG was incorrect, due to the classification of grassland used in the metric calculation.
- Should the site be approved, low level lighting would mitigate some of the harm to nearby wildlife and the proximity to the Chilterns.

The following Members asked points of clarification:

- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Daniel Allen

In response to the points of clarification Mr Dodds stated that:

- There would be an increase of 36 extra cars in the morning and 32 extra cars in the evening.
- The traffic survey was conducted on a Thursday by the Martin Andrew Consulting Agency.

The Chair thanked Mr Dodds for his presentation and invited Councillor Chris Lucas to speak against the application. Councillor Lucas thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation, including that:

- There were many concerns regarding this application including Highways, biodiversity net gain, transport and air pollution.
- The Highways concerns related to traffic volume, noise, safety and air quality.
- Highways initially refused this application and stated that the junctions at Pirton Road and at Grays Lane were over capacity, particularly in rush hours.
- Applications should be refused when there is an impact on highways safety or a severe impact on the road networks as stated in the NPPF paragraph 111.
- Highways refused this application in their first report highlighting the numerous intersecting access points for user groups and requested a new stage one road safety audit, which has not been completed.
- Highways second report did not adequately address the intersecting access points and there was no evidence of a statutory consultant request from the Rights of Way Officer.
- Little consideration had been made regarding the creation of a road junction on an existing bridleway, on an unadopted road.
- There was no consideration for the hierarchy of road users at the access point of the site.
- There had been little consideration made for off street parking and emergency vehicle access, especially when used as a shortcut.
- There was no regard to the quality of life for existing residents.
- Should the application be approved, it would be erroneous to suggest that there would not be a severe impact on the local highways.
- There would be an impact on local services, transport and congestion should this application be approved affecting the quality of life of existing residents.
- The application should be refused or deferred pending a proper stage one road safety audit.

The Chair thanked Councillor Lucas for his presentation and invited Mr Geoff Armstrong to speak in support of the application. Mr Armstrong thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation, including that:

- The applicant had work closely with Officers and Highways to ensure they had fully complied with all requests.
- The development provided open spaces and play areas, with a mix of affordable housing.
- They would be a 12 metre buffer strip around the development due to the sensitivity of the hedgerows.
- The development was now for 47 dwellings instead of the 53 in the Local Plan and the development met all aspects of HT6 and the Local Plan.
- None of the statutory consultants had objected to the application.
- An air quality report was submitted to the environmental Health Officer (EHO) who had no objection, and it was noted that the air quality was improving in the area.

- The applicant had worked through the comments from Highways and there were now no objections from Highways to this application.
- The bridleway issue had been dealt with in the application for site HT5 in the Local Plan, which was considered on 15 June 2023.
- The metrics for the biodiversity net gain (BNG) were completed several times and showed a net gain of 10%, responses had been supplied to all BNG queries.
- They were committed to delivering the highest level of sustainability.
- They were happy to accept a condition on low level lighting.
- The scheme was policy compliant and the applicant had addressed all the report concerns.

The Chair thanked Mr Armstrong for his presentation and invited the Senior Planning officer to respond to any points of clarification.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that:

- The previous air quality data was 5 years old, and the new report found that the air quality had improved.
- The EHO had confirmed that the air quality had improved and believed that the air quality management areas may soon be revoked due to this improvement.
- Due to the change in air quality, there had been a recalculation of the mitigation S106 funding.
- There had been no road safety audit as there were now no Highways objections on this application, and Highways had stated that they were satisfied on road safety subject to the conditions of the report.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that they were happy to formulate and add a condition on a sensitive lighting scheme.

Councillor Daniel Allen stated that this application was in the wrong place and the traffic would not work properly, but there was no legal objection or legal reason to refuse the application.

Councillor David Levett proposed, with the addition of a condition on low level lighting, and this was seconded by Councillor Tom Tyson and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That application 22/03092/FP be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the reasons and conditions set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager as amended by the Supplementary agenda, with the following additional condition:

“Condition 28:

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a scheme of sensitively designed lighting strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting scheme shall include and consider temporary construction lighting as well as more permanent lighting associated with the development hereby approved. Light-spill (including from temporary construction lighting) onto retained and newly created habitat, in particular the retained woodland habitat forming the south of the site, should be minimised in accordance with good practice guidance, as set out in footnote 15 of the approved Updated Ecological Report by Aspect Ecology referenced 1005083 UEcoAp vf12 CL dated 15/11/2022. The sensitively designed lighting strategy shall consider the following key factors:

- *Light exclusion zones*
- *Variable Lighting Regimes*
- *Light barriers*
- *Spacing and height of lighting units*
- *Light intensity*
- *Directionality*

Reason: *To ensure the protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity, and to comply with Policy NE4 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031."*

121 **23/01198/FP 55 HARKNESS COURT, FRANKLIN GARDENS, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG4 0BS**

Audio recording – 1 hour 54 minutes 30 seconds

N.B Councillor Nigel Mason returned to Chamber at 21:24

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report in respect of application 23/01198/FP supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

The following Members asked points of clarification:

- Councillor Sean Nolan
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Daniel Allen

In response to the points of clarification the Principal Planning Officer stated that:

- The application was a requirement of the properties building control condition, that required a place for a fire engine to park at a point that was within 45 metres of the furthest point of the building, and the application did not conflict with any planning policies.
- They had attended the site and made a visual inspection and believed there were potential areas available to house the benches and washing lines.
- North Herts District Council were the applicant in this matter and as the application had objections the application be decided at a Planning Control Committee meeting, as outlined in the Constitution.

In response to a point of clarification, Councillor David Levett stated that the matter had been discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The building had been a block of flats and then the offices of Careline and now it had been converted back to flats and, as building regulations had been updated, they now required fire brigade access.

The Chair invited Mr John Bentick and Ms Susanna Casserly to speak against the application. Mr Bentick thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation including that:

- Removing the parking bays and building was not an improvement for tenants and would remove a substantial part of the communal area.
- Three trees would need to be removed for this application and this would hinder the safe passageway of tenants with mobility issues.
- Parking for a fire engine had always been available from the existing car park area.
- The proposed fire brigade parking bay would be closer to an tenant that suffered with asthma.
- The changes to the 2019 building regulations required access from 45 metres from the building, which should have been considered in the original conversion planning application approved in August 2020.
- It was absurd to move the tenant facilities when this error was down to a lack of due diligence.
- There were other suitable alternatives to this scheme, and access sites for a fire engine including on the road at the back of Harkness Court.
- The item should be deferred for a site visit to view the limited space and to explore alternative solutions.

Ms Casserly thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation including that:

- There had been very little communication concerning the change of use from Careline to four flats and the requirement of two parking spaces for four flats.
- The tenants pay a service charge for the communal gardens which is regularly used and cared for.
- There were no alternative sites for the washing lines and the parking space were all used and allocated.
- They were informed that four new allocated spaces would be added to the St Faith Church car park.
- Overall, the tenants felt that they had not been fully consulted regarding this application.

In response to a point of clarification from Councillor David Levett, Ms Casserly stated that the communal garden formed part of their service charge.

The Chair thanked Mr Bentick and Ms Casserly for their presentations.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed the application and Councillor David Levett seconded the application and requested a reinforcement of recommendation 3 and to add “in consultation with the residents”.

In response to the requested recommendation from Councillor David Levett, the Principal Planning Officer stated:

- Adding a condition to consult with the residents would be unique and there was no legal reason as to why this could not be added.
- A condition could be added that the applicant undertakes a consultation exercise with the residents and submits the results as part of the condition.
- The additional suggestion would be formed from the results of communicating with the residents.

In response to the requested recommendation from Councillor David Levett, the Legal Advisor stated:

- Any planning condition would need to be precise and enforceable, to avoid any planning obligation being overridden by public rights.
- This may be a tenancy matter and not a planning matter, which were separate issues.
- The applicant was lacking in communication, which had generated the concerns of the tenants.
- An appropriate condition would need to be precise and enforceable, and an appropriate mechanism would need to be in place.

Councillor Val Bryant commented that it was clear from the comments from the objectors on the Planning Portal that the tenants had been consulted.

Councillor Allen did not accept the proposed amendment and Councillor Levett seconded the recommendations as included in the report.

The following Members took part in debate:

- Councillor Sean Nolan
- Councillor Louise Peace
- Councillor Val Bryant

Points raised in the debate included that:

- The parking space would be empty for majority of the time.
- Queries remained regarding alternative sites and whether these should be investigated.
- The application was policy compliant.

The Principal Planning Officer clarified that there was no planning reason to object to this application or for any tests for potential other sites required under the planning policies for this matter.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed and Councillor David Levett seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That application 23/01198/FP be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the reasons and conditions set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

122 TPO/00208 (2023) 4 COACH DRIVE, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE

Audio recording – 2 hour 22 minutes 6 seconds

The Planning Officer presented the report in respect of TPO/00208 (2023) supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

In response to a point of clarification from Councillor David Levett the Planning Officer stated that they believed that the homeowner would be responsible for the tree management, and when works were required on the tree it would be reasonable to state that the Council would be unlikely to object to any application.

Councillor Sean Nolan proposed and Councillor Nigel Mason seconded and following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the provisional Tree Preservation Order (TPO/00208) be **CONFIRMED**.

The meeting closed at 9.58 pm

Chair