

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3JF
ON THURSDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 2025 AT 7.00 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Nigel Mason (Chair), Emma Fernandes (Vice-Chair), Clare Billing, Val Bryant, Ian Mantle, Bryony May, Caroline McDonnell, Louise Peace, Martin Prescott, Tom Tyson and Dave Winstanley.*

In Attendance: *Amy Cantrill (Trainee Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Anne McDonald (Principal Planning Officer (Development Management)), Tom Rea (Senior Planning Officer) and Stephen Reid (Locum Planning Lawyer).*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting there were no members of the public.*

62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 38 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ruth Brown.

63 MINUTES - 4 SEPTEMBER 2025

Audio Recording – 1 minute 51 seconds

Councillor Nigel Mason, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Ian Mantle seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 4 September be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

64 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 38 seconds

There was no other business notified.

65 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 46 seconds

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be 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 confirmed the procedure for moving to debate on an item.

(4) The Chair advised that Section 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution applied to the meeting.

(5) The Chair confirmed the cut off procedure should the meeting proceed at length.

66 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 4 minutes 29 seconds

The Chair confirmed that no registered speakers were in attendance.

67 TPO/00221 LAND AT CROUCHGREEN WOOD AND CHURCH WOOD, THREE HOUSES LANE, CODICOTE

Audio recording – 4 minutes 35 seconds

The Chair advised that this item has been **DEFERRED** to a future meeting of the Committee.

N.B. The Locum Planning Lawyer entered the Chamber at 19:09

68 25/01834/S73 LAND AT HEATH ROAD, BREACHWOOD GREEN, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG4 8PL

Audio recording – 5 minutes 5 seconds

The Senior Planning Officer advised this application had been brought before the Committee due to it slightly exceeding the 0.5-hectare threshold, being 0.56 hectares.

The Senior Planning Officer then presented the report in respect of Application 25/01834/S73 supported by a visual presentation consisting of plans and photographs.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Louise Peace
- Councillor Martin Prescott
- Councillor Bryony May
- Councillor Emma Fernandes

In response to questions the Senior Planning Officer advised that:

- The developer was seeking permission to make roof alterations to Plots 1 and 10.
- It would be the right of the householder once the dwellings was occupied and not the developer to install dormer windows.
- This planning application complied with policy D1 of the Local Plan and was only seeking partial relaxation of permitted development rights for two of the plots as detailed in paragraph 4.3.1 of the report.
- This application would not have any impact on the parking concerns raised by the Committee in April 2025, as outlined in paragraph 4.3.2 of the report.
- As this application had not been restricted under Class C permitted development rights internal conversion of the roof spaces into habitable dwellings could be undertaken without obtaining planning permission, as detailed to in paragraph 4.3.5 of the report.
- No reason had been provided by the developer as to why they had selected Plots 1 and 10 for this variation.
- Granting this application could set a precedent for the other householders to make similar applications for their properties, but every planning application received would be considered in its own rights.

Councillor Nigel Mason, as Chair, proposed to grant permission and this was seconded by Councillor Emma Fernandes.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Claire Billing
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Emma Fernandes
- Councillor Martin Prescott
- Councillor Louise Peace
- Councillor Ian Mantle
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Dave Winstanley

Points raised during the debate included:

- The Committee was required to support this application if there was not a suitable planning reason to reject it.
- Future occupiers of the properties would have the right to internal conversion of the roof spaces into habitable accommodation without obtaining planning permission, due to the non-restriction of Class C permitted development rights in the original application.
- There was some concern around granting this application could then set a precedent for the other properties on the development to also request a variation to their roof space.
- The conditions included by the Committee when this application was originally considered were added over concern about the undesirable housing mix of the properties being all 4-bed dwellings, affordability, roof extensions and increased cars and traffic.
- Removal of permitted development rights should only be considered when there was a concern about the development rights, which was not the case with this application.
- Members needed to accept the decision made by the previous Committee and to consider this application in its own merits.

In response to points raised during the debate, the Locum Planning Lawyer advised that Members needed clear reasons for refusal of this application, otherwise there would be a prospect of an appeal.

In response to points raised during the debate, the Chair advised that if the motion was lost, he would ask for a further proposer and seconder on a motion to defer or refuse the application.

In response to points raised during the debate, the Principal Planning Officer (Development Management) advised that if Members declined the recommendation, then the item would have to be deferred.

In response to points raised during the debate, the Senior Planning Officer advised that the applicant had considered the conditions set by the previous Committee and had made this case for a variation to only two of the dwellings.

Having been proposed and seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That application 25/01834/S73 be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

69 **APPEALS**

Audio recording – 43 minutes 16 seconds

The Principal Planning Officer (Development Management) presented the report entitled 'Planning Appeals' and advised that:

- There had been one appeal withdrawn which had been submitted alongside a planning application. The planning application would be brought before the Committee at a future meeting.
- There had been three appeal decisions all of which had been dismissed.
- It was interesting to note that the hearing for the agricultural workers dwelling was dismissed due to there being no evidence that a property of this type was justified in that location. However, the Inspector did conclude that if the proposal had been for a market house under the grey belt, it would have been approved.

In response to a question from Councillor Louise Peace, the Principal Planning Officer advised that details of appeals could only be publicised once a start date had been given and this could sometimes take up to 18 months.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Chair