NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF
ON THURSDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2026 AT 7.00 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Nigel Mason (Chair), Emma Fernandes (Vice-Chair), Val Bryant, Ian Mantle, Caroline McDonnell, Louise Peace, Martin Prescott, Tom Tyson, Claire Winchester, Dave Winstanley and Steve Jarvis (In place of Ruth Brown).*

In Attendance: *Luca Benedito (Trainee Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Faith Churchill (PA - Director Governance), Sarah Kasparian (Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects)), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Anne McDonald (Principal Planning Officer (Development Management)) and Harry Symes (Temporary Electoral Services Officer).*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately* 3 *members of the public, including registered speakers.*

Matt Armstrong, as the Hertfordshire County Council Highways Officer.

88 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 03 minutes 03 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ruth Brown.

Having given due notice, Councillor Steve Jarvis substituted for Councillor Brown.

89 MINUTES - 1 OCTOBER 2026

Audio Recording – 03 minutes 15 seconds

Councillor Nigel Mason, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Clare Billing seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 1 October 2026 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

90 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 04 minutes 08 seconds

There was no other business notified.

91 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 04 minutes 13 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 clarified matters for the registered speakers.

(4) The Chair confirmed the procedure for moving a debate on an item.

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

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

(7) The Chair confirmed the meetings on 19 November 2026 and 17 December 2026 had been cancelled and that the final meeting of the year would therefore take place on 3 December 2026.

92 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 07 minutes 06 seconds

The Chair confirmed that the registered speakers were in attendance.

93 26/01224/S73 LAND WEST OF ASHWELL ROAD, BYGRAVE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG7 5EB

Audio recording – 07 minutes 15 seconds

N.B. Councillor Tom Tyson declared an interest in the item due to the proximity of his residence to the site. Therefore, he moved to the public gallery and did not participate in the debate or discussion on the item.

The Principal Planning Officer (Major Sites) provided a verbal update on matters relating to Application 26/01224/S73 and advised that:

- A supplementary update had been published, which clarified matters relating to referral to Committee under the National Scheme of Delegation.
- Further comments had been received from Hertfordshire County Council Highways.
- Clarification had been provided regarding an ongoing enforcement investigation associated with the original permission.
- Amendments had been made to the wording of Conditions 5 and 24.
- The application sought to amend Condition 26 of the original permission and the associated delivery arrangements for articulated HGVs serving the approved solar farm development.
- The proposed changes would increase articulated HGV deliveries from two to three arrivals per day and extend delivery hours from 09:00 until 15:00.
- Hertfordshire County Council Highways had raised no objection to the proposal.

The Principal Planning Officer (Major Sites) then presented the report in respect of Application 26/01224/S73 accompanied by a visual presentation consisting of plans and photographs.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Louise Peace
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Claire Winchester

In response to questions, the Principal Planning Officer (Major Sites) advised that:

- The current enforcement investigation was separate to the Section 73 application, and the application was not seeking to regularise any breach of planning control.
- Monitoring logs would be maintained by the Applicant and could be inspected by enforcement officers.
- Enforcement officers were able to undertake site visits as part of their investigation and monitoring activities.

In response to questions, the Hertfordshire County Council Highways Officer advised that:

- The distinction between articulated HGV deliveries and other HGV deliveries reflected the specific focus of the application.
- The proposed extended delivery window would allow articulated vehicle movements to be spread more evenly throughout the day.
- The exceptional circumstances provision was intended to be used rarely, and appropriate evidence would be required.
- Delivery logs would record exceptional circumstances and any associated vehicle movements.

The Chair invited the Representatives of the Appllicant, Mr Callum Wright and Mr Luke Shackleton to speak in support of the application. Mr Wright and Mr Shackleton thanked the Chair for the opportunity and provided the Committee with a verbal presentation, and highlighted the following:

- The proposal would reduce the overall duration of the construction period through a modest increase in daily articulated HGV deliveries.
- Additional traffic management measures, holding arrangements and monitoring procedures had been agreed.
- Advance notification would be provided to local residents, Parish Councils and the Council before implementation.
- A dedicated contact point would be available for residents throughout the construction period.

In response to a point of clarification from Councillor Louise Peace, Mr Wright and Mr Shackleton advised that notifications would be issued via post and via email to the relevant Parish Councils.

N.B. Councillor Tom Tyson left the Council Chamber at 19:28

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

As part of the debate, Councillor Caroline McDonnell highlighted that she supported the Officer recommendation and requested that construction traffic and delivery contractors strictly adhere to approved routeing arrangements in order to minimise impact on local residents.

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

RESOLVED: That application 26/01224/S73 be ***GRANTED*** planning permission subject to:

A) The submission of a further revised CTMP addendum that commits to amending the matters set out in paragraphs 4.4.19 to 4.4.24 inclusive.

B) The conditions set out in the report with delegated powers provided to the Development and Conservation Manager to update conditions and informatives with minor amendments as required.

C) The following amendments to Conditions 5 and 24.

'Condition 5

Articulated vehicle deliveries shall be restricted to between 09.00hrs and 15.00 hrs and other HGV vehicle deliveries shall be restricted to between 09.30 and 14.30 hours Monday to Friday and no articulated or HGV vehicles at any time on Saturdays, Sundays or bank holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances as defined through the CTMP and any associated addendum and as secured by condition 26 of this permission.

Reason: In the interest of minimising noise and disturbance for the occupiers of nearby residential properties and in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies D3 and T1 in the Local Plan.

Condition 24

(a) The construction and operational phases shall be carried out in complete accordance with the Soil Management Plan as approved under reference 26/00313/DOC unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority. (S73)

(b) Prior to the decommissioning of the solar farm, a Soil Management Plan shall be submitted to approved in writing by the local planning authority. The decommissioning shall thereafter be carried out in complete accordance with the approved Plan.

Reason: To protect soil quality and so enable the reinstatement of its agricultural land quality following the cessation of the solar farm use of the land in accordance with the NPPF, Defra guidance and policy NE12 in the Local Plan.'

N.B. Councillor Tom Tyson returned to the Council Chamber at 19:32.

94 APPEALS

Audio recording – 30 minutes 59 seconds

The Principal Planning Officer (Development Management) provided an update on Planning Appeals and advised that:

- One new written representation appeal had been received relating to a household extension.
- Two appeal decisions had been received since the previous meeting; both appeals had been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

The Chair thanked the Principal Planning Officer (Development Management) for their presentation of the information note.

The meeting closed at 7.33 pm

Chair