
Planning Committee MINUTES

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on
Thursday, 22 May 2025 from 7.30 – 9.17 pm**

Present: Councillors Chris Whately-Smith, Elinor Gazzard, Oliver Cooper, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Andrea Fraser, Philip Hearn, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, Chris Mitchell and Debbie Morris

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Narinder Sian

Officers in Attendance:

Matthew Barnes, Planning Solicitor
Lauren Edwards, Senior Planning Officer
Emma Lund, Senior Committee Officer
Adam Ralton, Development Management Team Leader
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

PC139/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Merali. Councillor Fraser substituted for Councillor Merali.

PC140/25 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17 April 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PC141/25 NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

PC142/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Liberal Democrat Group declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 (25/0658/FUL – 10 Oak Green, Abbots Langley) as the agent is a member of the Council and a member of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Councillor Fraser declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 (24/1401/FUL: Christ Church C of E School, Rickmansworth Road, Rickmansworth) as a governor of St Mary's School which is part of the same academic Trust. Councillor Fraser declared that she would leave the meeting whilst the application was discussed and would not participate in determining it.

Councillor Fraser declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 (25/0651/ADV: Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Riverside Drive, Rickmansworth) as the Chair of Batchworth

Community Council. Councillor Fraser declared that she had not been involved in any discussions at the Parish Council in relation to the application and therefore remained in the meeting for the item and participated in the debate and vote.

PC143/25 24/1401/FUL – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING FRONT BOUNDARY WALL AND ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT WALL AND RAILINGS INCLUDING VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN GATES; FENCING AND ASSOCIATED ALTERATIONS TO PARKING LAYOUT AT CHRIST CHURCH C OF E SCHOOL, RICKMANSWORTH ROAD, CHORLEYWOOD, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE WD3 5SG

Councillor Fraser left the meeting room.

The application was for demolition of existing front boundary wall and erection of a replacement wall and railings including vehicle and pedestrian gates; fencing and associated alterations to parking layout at Christ Church C OF E School, Rickmansworth Road, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth.

The Planning Officer reported that since the previous meeting at which the application had been deferred the applicant had supplied additional information as set out at section 7.1 of the report. A letter from the Head Teacher and a copy of a report from Hertfordshire Constabulary's Designing Out Crime Officer had also been provided earlier in the day and circulated to Members.

Committee Members asked questions about the detail of the application which were responded to by officers. The Committee's discussions included the following:

- The lower part of the wall was to be flint finished to match the existing walls, with brick piers and railings of black powder-coated metal. The railings would be 1.1m high from the top of the brick wall; the maximum height from the ground to the railings was 2m. Condition 4 required samples and details of proposed materials and finishes to be submitted and approved in writing prior to the commencement of works.
- Several committee members expressed reservations about the design of the wall and its impact on the heritage asset. However, the committee's decision involved balancing this against other considerations such as the security and safeguarding concerns which had been raised.
- Members expressed differing views over the need for and wording of condition 3 but following debate no amendment was proposed.

A speaker on behalf of the applicant spoke in favour of the application.

Councillor Lloyd moved, and Councillor Mitchell seconded, approval of the application subject to conditions. On being put to the vote this was agreed, the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED: that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

Councillor Fraser re-joined the meeting.

PC144/25 24/1670/FUL – PART SINGLE, PART TWO-STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS, FRONT PORCH ALTERATIONS; ALTERATIONS TO ROOF TO ALLOW HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION INCLUDING REMOVAL OF CHIMNEY AND INCREASE IN RIDGE HEIGHT, REAR DORMERS AND ROOF LIGHTS; ALTERATIONS TO FENESTRATION AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS; CONSTRUCTION OF TWO-STEPPED REAR PATIO AREA; CONSTRUCTION OF BASEMENT; ALTERATION OF EXISTING GARAGE TO ALLOW USE AS PART GARAGE, PART ANNEXE, INCLUDING EXTENSION TO EXISTING GARAGE AND ROOF ALTERATIONS TO ALLOW FOR HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION INCLUDING INCREASE IN RIDGE HEIGHT, DORMERS AND ROOF

LIGHTS; ERECTION OF AN OUTBUILDING TO THE REAR AT BANSTEAD DOWN, OLD CHORLEYWOOD ROAD, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE WD3 4EH

The application was for part single, part two-storey rear extensions, front porch alterations; alterations to roof to allow habitable accommodation including removal of chimney and increase in ridge height, rear dormers and roof lights; alterations to fenestration and internal alterations; construction of two-stepped rear patio area; construction of basement; alteration of existing garage to allow use as part garage, part annexe, including extension to existing garage and roof alterations to allow for habitable accommodation including increase in ridge height, dormers and roof lights; erection of an outbuilding to the rear at Banstead Down, Old Chorleywood Road, Rickmansworth.

The application had been deferred from the last meeting to allow for a site visit. Two additional drawings had subsequently been supplied by the applicant's agent which aimed to clarify the change in built form between the existing and proposed development.

Committee members asked questions about the detail of the application which were responded to by officers. The Committee's discussions included:

- The proposal would involve the removal of some trees, including one Western Red Cedar which was not subject to a Tree Protection Order.
- The outbuilding exceeded the tolerances for permitted development. Therefore, external alterations to it would not be permissible without planning permission.
- For the reasons set out in section 7.2.7 of the report, officers did not consider that there would be any demonstrable harmful overlooking or overshadowing to neighbours. Whilst there would be some impact on neighbouring amenity arising from overlooking or overshadowing, the level was judged by officers to be acceptable.
- Permitted development rights for further outbuildings at the site could be removed if Members considered this to be reasonable and necessary for the development.

Councillor Hearn moved, and Councillor Gazzard seconded, approval of the application subject to conditions including the removal of permitted development rights under Class E of the General Permitted Development Order. On being put to the vote this was agreed, the voting being 7 for, 0 against, 4 abstentions.

RESOLVED: that the application be approved subject to conditions including the removal of permitted development rights under Class E of the General Permitted Development Order.

PC145/25 25/0154/FUL AND 25/0155/LBC – DEMOLITION OF CONCRETE SHED AND PART DEMOLITION OF CART SHED ADJOINING THE BLACK BARN; CONSTRUCTION OF FRONT/SIDE EXTENSION; ALTERATIONS TO DOORS AND MATERIALS; ALTERATION OF FRONT ACCESS PATH AND COURTYARD; CREATION OF DROP OFF ZONE AND PARKING AREA; CHANGE OF USE FROM AGRICULTURE TO A MIXED COMMERCIAL USE AND COMMUNITY USES, PROVISION OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC HALL, EXHIBITION HALL AND AS A PUBLIC MEETING PLACE; WIDENING OF ACCESS OFF DENHAM WAY AT WOODOAKS FARM, DENHAM WAY, MAPLE CROSS, RICKMANSWORTH WD3 9XQ

The applications were a full application and associated listed building consent application for demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path and courtyard; creation of drop off zone and parking area; change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses including indoor sport and recreation, provision of education, public hall, exhibition hall and as

a public meeting place (Use Classes E(d), F.1(a), F.1(e), F.2(b)); widening of access off Denham Way at Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth.

The Planning Officer provided an update to the Committee, outlining that whilst officers were satisfied with the conclusions set out in the committee report (i.e. that the proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the heritage asset and harm to the openness of the Green Belt but that there were other considerations that existed to outweigh that harm) officers were not satisfied that the mechanisms proposed within the report to secure the very special circumstances met the necessary tests. Those mechanisms included a number of the recommended planning conditions, and the draft Heads of Terms for a legal agreement which were detailed at section 7.7 of the report.

As a result, officers had been working with the applicant and the Council's Planning Solicitor to produce a revised set of Heads of Terms which were considered to better secure what would be necessary to make the application acceptable in planning terms. These had been circulated to Members of the Committee prior to the meeting as a supplementary item and were available to view on the committee agenda online. It was considered that these would secure the public benefits proposed by the scheme, and they therefore replaced what had been set out in section 7.7 of the report. The Planning Officer summarised the revised draft Heads of Terms for the benefit of the Committee.

In terms of the proposed use of the building, the Planning Officer reported that the description of the development, the report, and condition 4 referred to a number of uses. It was subsequently agreed by the Committee that as the permitted uses were secured by the conditions and Heads of Terms, the description of the development in both the full application and the listed building consent application should be revised to omit the references to the use classes as follows:

'Demolition of the concrete shed and part demolition of the cart shed adjoining The Black Barn and construction of front/side extension including solar panels; alterations to doors and materials; alteration of front access path and courtyard; creation of drop off zone and parking area; change of use from agriculture to a mixed commercial use and community uses; widening of access off Denham Way at Woodoaks Farm Denham Way Maple Cross Rickmansworth WD3 9XQ.'

The Planning Officer also reported that as the refined Heads of Terms addressed a number of elements which were usually covered by recommended planning conditions, the following conditions which had been included in the report could be deleted: Conditions 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13. Condition 12 was not considered necessary. Condition 5 should be kept, but the hours of operation revised to allow use between 6:00 and 23:30 with all persons attending in connection with a Function required to leave the site by midnight.

Following these changes, the recommendation on the full application was proposed to be amended as follows:

That authority is delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services, following the completion of a S106 agreement securing the Heads of Terms set out in the addendum heads of terms document circulated prior to the meeting (and subject to any minor alterations to those terms as agreed between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Planning Committee Chairman), to grant planning permission subject to conditions (subject to any minor alterations to those conditions as agreed between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Planning Committee Chairman).

In terms of the listed building consent application, the only necessary change would be to the description of the proposed development.

A speaker on behalf of the applicant spoke in favour of the application.

Committee Members asked questions about the detail of the application which were responded to by officers. The Committee's discussions included:

- The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) monitoring fee and the S106 monitoring fee were one-off fees. The BNG monitoring was a legislative requirement and the fee would cover periodic monitoring over 30 years. It took account of inflation over that period and was calculated on a cost-recovery basis. The S106 monitoring fee was also calculated on a cost-recovery basis. Members sought clarification on the need for the BNG monitoring fee and the services it covered and debated the appropriateness of the fee level.
- The development would cause some harm but was balanced by significant public benefits. On balance, these were considered to represent very special circumstances which justified the development.
- The restriction on use of the Temporary Open Air Use Land to 28 days per calendar year was considered by officers to achieve a balance between minimising harm and not curtailing the existing uses of other parts of the site. It covered all temporary use of the land and not solely car parking.

In relation to application 25/0154/FUL, Councillor Gazzard moved and Councillor Mitchell seconded that the description of the development should be amended to remove reference to use classes, and that authority be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services, following the completion of a S106 agreement securing the Heads of Terms set out in the addendum Heads of Terms document (and subject to any minor alterations to those terms as agreed between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Planning Committee Chairman), to grant planning permission subject to conditions (subject to any minor alterations to those conditions as agreed between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Planning Committee Chairman). On being put to the vote this was agreed, the voting being 10 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention.

In relation to application 25/0155/LBC Councillor Lloyd proposed, and Councillor Whately-Smith seconded that the description of the development be amended to remove reference to use classes and that Listed Building Consent is granted subject to conditions. On being put to the vote this was agreed, the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

25/0154/FUL

That the description of the development be amended to remove reference to use classes, and that authority be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services, following the completion of a S106 agreement securing the Heads of Terms set out in the addendum Heads of Terms document (and subject to any minor alterations to those terms as agreed between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Planning Committee Chairman), to grant planning permission subject to conditions (subject to any minor alterations to those conditions as agreed between the Head of Regulatory Services and the Planning Committee Chairman).

25/0155/LBC

That the description of the development be amended to remove reference to use classes and that Listed Building Consent is granted, subject to conditions.

PC146/25 25/0651/ADV - ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT: INSTALLATION OF A WELCOME SIGN AT RICKMANSWORTH AQUADROME (RIVERSIDE DRIVE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE ENTRANCE) AT RICKMANSWORTH AQUADROME, RIVERSIDE DRIVE, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE WD3 1NB

The application was for advertisement consent for installation of a welcome sign at Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Riverside Drive, Rickmansworth.

The application was before the Committee as the applicant was Three Rivers District Council.

There were no officer updates.

Committee Members asked questions about the detail of the application which were responded to by officers.

The size of the sign was considered by some Committee Members to be overly large and its placement in the centre of the bridge was questioned. Officers responded that for the reasons set out in the report it was considered that the sign had an acceptable impact by virtue of its size and location. Its size and location was designed to form a barrier to prevent vehicles from going over the bridge, instead of having bollards. The gaps to the side would allow cyclists, pedestrians and those using mobility aids to continue to use the bridge.

Some Committee Members considered that sign would cause harm to the view of the Aquadrome, that it represented blocking of the highway and that it would be better placed in a different location. Other Committee Members did not agree.

Councillor Lloyd proposed and Councillor Mitchell seconded that subject to no new material planning considerations being raised during the open consultation period, advertisement consent be granted subject to conditions. On being put to the vote this was agreed, the voting being 7 for, 3 against, 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: that subject to no new material planning considerations being raised during the open consultation period, advertisement consent be granted subject to conditions.

PC147/25 25/0658/FUL - CONVERSION OF EXISTING GARAGE TO HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION INCLUDING ALTERATIONS TO FENESTRATION AND EXTENSION TO EXISTING HARDSTANDING TO FRONTAGE AT 10 OAK GREEN, ABBOTS LANGLEY, HERTFORDSHIRE WD5 OPG

The application was for conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation including alterations to fenestration and extension to existing hardstanding to frontage at 10 Oak Green, Abbots Langley.

The application was before the Committee as the agent is a Three Rivers District Councillor.

The Planning Officer reported that amendment to condition 4 was proposed as follows:

Prior to the first use of the converted garage hereby permitted, the driveway shall be extended as shown on [the plan number as approved] in order that it can accommodate two vehicles. The driveway extension shall be undertaken in a permeable material or provision made for direct water run-off to a permeable or porous area of the surface within the site. The driveway shall be retained as such thereafter.

In response to a question as to whether any consultee responses had been received since the publication of the officer report, the Committee heard that only one written comment had been received, from Abbots Langley Parish Council. The Parish Council had confirmed that it had no objection to the proposal, but requested the substitution of semi-permeable surface to replace the loss of the grassed area in order to manage rain water run-off and reduce the risk of flooding. This had been addressed in the proposed amendment to condition 4 noted above.

Councillor Lloyd proposed and Councillor Whately-Smith seconded that subject to no new material planning considerations being raised during the open consultation period, planning

permission be granted subject to conditions with amendment to condition 4 as outlined above. On being put to the vote this was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that subject to no new material planning considerations being raised during the open consultation period, planning permission be granted subject to conditions with the tabled amendment to condition 4.

CHAIR