
Planning Committee MINUTES

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on
Thursday, 19 June 2025 from 7.30 - 9.47 pm**

Present: Councillors Chris Whately-Smith, Elinor Gazzard, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Steve Drury, Andrea Fraser, Chris Lloyd, Abbas Merali, Chris Mitchell, Reena Ranger and Keith Martin

Also in Attendance:

Parish Councillor Diana Barber, County Councillor Paula Hiscocks, Councillor Louise Price, 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

PC1/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephen King, Harry Davies, Debbie Morris and Philip Hearn.

The substitutes were Councillors Stephen Cox, Keith Martin, Andrea Fraser and Reena Ranger respectively.

PC2/25 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 May 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PC3/25 NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

PC4/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Reena Ranger declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 (24/0532/FUL: Overbury, Woodside Walk, Northwood). Councillor Ranger stated that she would leave the room whilst the application was considered and would not participate in the debate or vote.

PC5/25 24/0532/FUL: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS; SUBDIVISION OF SITE AND CONSTRUCTION OF TWO SELF-BUILD TWO-STOREY DETACHED DWELLINGS WITH ACCOMMODATION IN THE ROOFSpace SERVED BY FRONT/REAR DORMERS AND SIDE ROOFLIGHTS; WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING WORKS, AT OVERBURY, WOODSIDE WALK, NORTHWOOD, HA6 3ET

Councillor Ranger left the meeting room.

The application was for demolition of existing buildings; subdivision of site and construction of two self-build two-storey detached dwellings with accommodation in the roofspace served by front/rear dormers and side rooflights; with associated access, parking and landscaping works, at Overbury, Woodside Walk, Northwood.

The Planning Officer reported that since publication of the agenda three letters of support had been received, all of which were from people who had not previously made a representation on the application.

The Committee received a presentation showing the differences between the amended application which was before the committee, and a previous application which had been refused and had been subject to appeal in 2020. The presentation also included floor plans and roof plans and the wider aerial context for the amended application.

A member of the public spoke against the application.

The agent spoke in favour of the application.

Parish Councillor Diana Barber of Batchworth Community Council spoke on the application.

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

- For the reasons set out in the report, and by virtue of the separation distances between the proposed dwellings and the boundary with Dell Lodge, officers considered that the previous concerns about overlooking had been addressed (or would be addressed by planning conditions). It was not considered by officers that there would be any demonstrable harm arising from the amended application in relation to overlooking or loss of light: the impact of the development on neighbouring properties had not been upheld by the Planning Inspector in the appeal decision. In respect of protected trees, the application, by virtue of the re-sizing and re-siting of the proposed buildings, resulted in a reduction in the loss of trees compared with the appealed application, and allowed for greater space for those trees being retained and for newly planted trees to grow and develop. Officers also considered that the amended application would preserve the character and appearance of Woodside Walk, overcoming the concern identified in the appeal decision.
- Although the existing property on the site was an Arts and Crafts style house dating to c1900 it was neither nationally nor locally listed, and there had not been any assessment as to whether its listing was possible or desirable. No concern in respect of harm to a heritage asset had been identified in the appeal decision.
- Whilst acknowledging that the proposal represented an improvement on the previous scheme, several Committee Members remained concerned about the loss of trees and the maturity and siting of the proposed replacements, noting that trees planted close to boundaries can cause issues to neighbouring properties. Officers responded that a landscape plan had been conditioned (Condition 6), which required details of landscaping to be provided in accordance with the Proposed Landscape Plan. However, the wording of Condition 6 could be amended if considered necessary by Members, to require a new landscape plan to be provided. Once submitted, this would be considered by planning

officers and the Council's Trees and Landscape Officer to determine if the proposed species and siting were appropriate (including that the proposed species would not outgrow its allotted space) and in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

Councillor Cox proposed, and Councillor Whately-Smith seconded, approval of the application subject to conditions and amendment to Condition 6 to require further details of landscaping to be provided, with the wording of the amended condition 6 to be circulated to Committee Members for approval.

On being put to the vote this was approved, the voting being 9 for, 0 against, 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: that the application be approved subject to conditions and amendment to Condition 6 to require further details of landscaping to be provided.

Councillor Ranger re-joined the meeting.

PC6/25 24/1963/FUL: CONSTRUCTION OF WAREHOUSE UNITS (USE CLASSES E(G)(III), B2 AND B8) INCLUDING ACCESS AND SERVICING ARRANGEMENTS, CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT MAPLE CROSS HOUSE, DENHAM WAY AND KIER OFFICES OFF MAPLE LODGE CLOSE, MAPLE CROSS, WD3 9SW

The application was for construction of warehouse units (Use Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) including access and servicing arrangements, car parking, landscaping and associated works at Maple Cross House, Denham Way and Kier Offices off Maple Lodge Close, Maple Cross.

The Planning Officer reported that since the agenda had been published, an updated Landscape Masterplan drawing and site plan had been received. These provided further detail on the tree planting (which was also contained on another drawing). Reference to plan/drawing numbers in conditions 2 and 21 therefore required updating to reflect the revision. Condition 39 also required updating to reference a later revision of the landscape maintenance strategy document, which had been updated to provide clarity on the provision of replacement planting should any of the existing boundary trees fail. The Planning Officer also reported that officers would like to add an informative note to any approval to remind the applicant of the acceptable hours for noisy construction works in Three Rivers i.e. 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm on Saturday: this was a standard informative for most planning permissions. Finally, the Planning Officer also reported that the applicant had provided further clarification on noise levels around the site and the predicted operational noise, and on this basis had requested that the hours for deliveries and collections at units 5 and 6 be amended to allow a 6am start on Monday to Friday. This request had been reviewed by the Environmental Health Officer (EHO), who had not been able to agree the 6am start time. However, the EHO had commented that based on the information provided, they considered that condition 36 could be amended to allow collections and deliveries from 7am on Saturdays and from 8am to 11pm on Sundays. If Members considered this acceptable, condition 36 could be updated on this basis.

The Planning Committee noted that the application was a major development which proposed the redevelopment of the entire site to provide 6 warehouse units within 2 buildings (one containing 4 units (units 1-4), and the other 2 units (units 5 and 6)). The Planning Officer clarified that condition 36 which restricted the hours of use, applied only to units 5 and 6. This was due to concerns about the potential noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents from loading and unloading of vehicles to those units. Restriction on the hours for collections and deliveries were not proposed for the other units as the buildings themselves were considered to provide noise mitigation due to their location between the residential dwellings at Franklins and the loading bays and the attenuation provided by the construction quality, which would be to BREEAM standards. Access to the site would be solely from Denham Way; the access from Maple Lodge Close would be conditioned to only be used in connection with maintenance of the grounds. A 6m high timber acoustic barrier was proposed along the

bottom boundary of the site to mitigate noise from units 5 and 6; this would be softened by planting on the residents' side.

A local resident spoke against the application.

The agent spoke in favour of the application.

County Councillor Paula Hiscocks spoke on the application.

District Councillor Louise Price spoke on the application.

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

- Committee Members expressed significant concern about the potential for noise disturbance to nearby residents, particularly arising from the 24-hour proposed operational hours for units 1-4, and the siting of units 5 and 6. Officers clarified that there was no legal maximum noise limit: any noise nuisance reported would require investigation by Environmental Health under the Control of Pollution Act. An operational noise management plan had been conditioned in order to secure other details of how the site would operate (such as refuse collection arrangements). This would enable refuse collections to be limited to specific hours in order to minimise the disturbance to nearby residents. In relation to the 24-hour operation of units 1-4, the planning officer reported that the Environmental Health Officer had reviewed the noise impact assessment and was satisfied that operations could take place 24/7 without causing significant adverse impacts: Committee Members would therefore need to be satisfied that any condition restricting the operation hours for units 1 – 4 was reasonable and evidence based and could be justified if appealed. It was noted that there were a number of other potential sources of noise, such as shutters and reversing vehicle alarms, which could cause nuisance to nearby residents: officers advised that these were mostly covered by the operational noise management plan: aside from refuse collection which was site-wide, the matters captured by the operational noise management plan related solely to units 5 and 6.
- The application was for Use Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8; however, as the application was speculative the precise use of the units, and whether or not the nature of their businesses would require 24/7 operation, was not yet known. Several Committee Members expressed concern about the potential impact on neighbouring residences arising from 24/7 operations at units 1-4, and also the operating hours proposed for units 5 and 6. It was noted that the applicant would be entitled to appeal any condition, and there was potential for costs to be awarded against the Council if an appealed condition was found to be unreasonable.
- A Committee Member noted that the report set out that the parking provision was at the lower end of compliance with the parking standard and commented that those working at the site were probably more likely to travel to the site by private rather than public transport, particularly if they were working unsocial hours. It was recommended that officers should seek further information from the applicant as to what would happen in the event of parking pressures at the site, and how parking arrangements would be managed. Officers commented that to some extent the parking was expected to be self-managing, as employees would not wish to restrict their employer's business by parking in such a way as to affect operations. If overspill parking took place this would not in itself be considered harmful; refusal on the grounds of parking provision would require it to be demonstrated that there would be an adverse impact on highway safety arising from overspill parking. A car parking management plan could be conditioned if considered appropriate by Members. A travel plan was already conditioned, with a financial contribution to be secured to improve the cycle route between Denham Station and

Rickmansworth Station, so that there were other ways to reach the site aside from by car and bus.

- Several Committee Members suggested that a change to the orientation of units 5 and 6 may help further mitigate the potential noise issues which were causing concern.

Councillor Whately-Smith proposed, and Councillor Mitchell seconded, deferral of the application to seek further information in respect of noise impacts, noise mitigations, building orientation, and on-site car parking management. On being put to the vote this was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the application be deferred in order for officers to seek further information in respect of noise impacts, noise mitigations, building orientation, and on-site car parking management.

PC7/25 25/0153/FUL – CHANGE OF USE FROM BUILDER'S MERCHANT (SUI GENERIS) TO CLASS B8 (STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION) USE WITH ANCILLARY TRADE COUNTER AT UNITS A & B, VALLEY PARK, OLDS APPROACH, RICKMANSWORTH, WATFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE WD18 9TL

The application was for change of use from builder's merchant (Sui Generis) to Class B8 (Storage and Distribution) use with ancillary trade counter at Units A & B, Valley Park, Olds Approach, Rickmansworth.

The Planning Officer reported that since publication of the agenda, the Environmental Health Officer had provided their comments and it was proposed to update Condition 5 as follows:

"The level of noise emitted from the site as a result of the development hereby permitted, including all noise associated with deliveries and vehicle movements including parking within the car parking areas and service yards, shall not exceed 30 LAeq between the hours of 18:00 to 07:30 Monday to Friday inclusive and 13:00 on Saturdays to 07:30 the following working day as measured by the relevant person instructed by the Local Planning Authority using a suitably calibrated and certified device 1m from the façade of any residential property in Moor Lane Crossing."

Councillor Diana Barber of Batchworth Community Council spoke on the application.

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

- The proposal included 24/7 operations for a limited number of deliveries. Officers were of the view that, given the location of the site, the proposed use on that basis was acceptable, and that on the basis of the submitted and revised noise impact assessment the impact both in terms of the transport and noise was acceptable.
- The site was located in Moor Park and Eastbury (not Rickmansworth Town).
- Committee Members expressed the view that a small part of the site which was located closest to housing should not be subject to 24/7 use, in order to avoid disturbance to residents. Officers responded that a Car Parking Management Plan could be conditioned, requiring that part of the site to be closed off during night-time hours. Committee Members agreed that this condition should be added.

Councillor Whately-Smith moved, and Councillor Cooper seconded, that the application be approved subject to conditions, amendment to Condition 5 as outlined above, and addition of a further condition requiring a Car Parking Management Plan to be submitted. On being put to the vote this was agreed, the voting being 9 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: that the application be approved subject to conditions, amendment to Condition 5 as outlined above, and addition of a further condition requiring a Car Parking Management Plan to be submitted.

CHAIR