
Planning Committee MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Thursday, 20 November 2025 from 7.30 - 9.55 pm

Present: Councillors Chris Whately-Smith (Chair), Elinor Gazzard, Oliver Cooper, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Philip Hearn, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, Abbas Merali, Chris Mitchell and Debbie Morris

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE and Parish Councillor Jon Tankard (Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Officers in Attendance:

Matthew Barnes, Principal Lawyer - Planning
Alex Laurie, Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer
Emma Lund, Senior Committee Officer
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services
Scott Volker, Principal Planning Officer
Claire Westwood, Development Management Team Leader
Claire Wilson, Principal Planning Officer

PC57/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

PC58/25 MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23 October 2025 were confirmed as a correct record subject to amendment to the second bullet point on the 5th page to replace the word 'against' with the word 'of' so that the final sentence reads: 'along with an analysis of the legal opinion of Lord Banner'.

The amendment having been made, the minutes were signed by the Chair.

PC59/25 NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

PC60/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mitchell declared, in relation to agenda item 7 (15/1330/RSP – 10 Gade Bank, Croxley Green), that he had been involved in discussions relating to HMO licensing issues at 10 Gade Bank including proposing a motion at Full Council which sought a review of the oversight and accountability of Houses in Multiple Occupation within the District. Councillor Mitchell declared that in speaking with residents about the licensing issues he had not

commented on any matters relating to planning considerations. He was coming to the planning application with an open mind, and on that basis would participate in determining it.

A Committee Member highlighted, for the purpose of clarity, that most Councillors had participated in discussion items which had come before the Council in relation to licensing matters at 10 Gade Bank. However, these licensing matters were separate and distinct from the planning application which was before the Committee.

PC61/25 CONFIRMATION OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 934 (156 THE DRIVE, RICKMANSWORTH) 2025

The Committee was invited to consider confirmation of Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 934 (156 The Drive, Rickmansworth). The Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer reported that the Order had been served on 26 June 2025 in response to concerns from residents following a pre-application submission for the site. One objection to the draft Order had been received on the grounds that (i) it mis-classified the garden land as woodland; (ii) the procedural conduct of the Local Planning Authority raised public interest concerns and (iii) the Order exhibited legal and procedural deficiencies making it incapable of lawful confirmation. The Officer response was that the site comprised a detached dwelling surrounded by land managed as residential garden with evidence of cultivations such as mowing of lawns and maintenance of planting beds. Beyond the cultivated area was an area of woodland which did not show any evidence of cultivation. Officers disagreed that the Council's procedural conduct had raised any public interest concerns and disagreed that there were any legal or procedural deficiencies which would prevent the TPO from being legally confirmed. Since publication of the agenda the Council had received an email which expressed support for confirming the TPO.

In response to a question from a Committee Member, the Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer reported that whilst there was no legal definition of woodland, the tree cover on the site was considered to be woodland in that there was a variety of tree species of varying ages and sizes, as well as a shrub layer and a ground flora layer, and there was natural regeneration within the woodland. Officers were therefore confident that the description of woodland was accurate.

A local resident spoke in favour of the confirmation of TPO 934.

Councillor Lloyd proposed, and Councillor King seconded, that the Order be confirmed and Tree Preservation Order 934 made permanent. On being put to the vote this was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the Order be confirmed, and Tree Preservation Order 934 made permanent.

PC62/25 25/0896/FUL – CONSTRUCTION OF 192 NO OF DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3), PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING, NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESSES AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT LAND AT WOODSIDE ROAD, WOODSIDE ROAD, ABBOTS Langley, HERTS

The application was for construction of 192 no of dwellings (Use Class C3), public open space, landscaping, new vehicular access and pedestrian accesses and associated infrastructure at Land at Woodside Road, Woodside Road, Abbots Langley.

The Planning Officer reported that with regard to managing the bridleway/footpaths which would cross the site during the construction works, Herts Highways had suggested that a further point was added to condition 3 for the Construction management plan to include the following:

'provisions for protecting the safe use of public rights of way though the site and/or any mitigation required'.

In addition, Herts Highways had suggested a further informative reminding that the public rights of way should remain unobstructed and that safe passage should be maintained across the site. If safe passage cannot be reasonably achieved, then a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) would be required to close the affected route for any periods necessary. Officers noted that the TTRO would be a matter for County Council.

The Planning Officer also reported that comments had been received from Hertfordshire County Council's Rights of Way Officer, who had suggested that a contribution of £172,425,000 be sought for surface improvements to Footpath 34 (Abbots Langley) from Jacketts Field to Footpath 64 leading to the junction at Woodside Road as this links the village to the local secondary school and amenities. In addition, the contribution would allow for surfacing improvements to footpath 60 (Abbots Langley) to the north of the site.

In response, officers had regard to the Regulation 22 tests which set out that planning obligations must be necessary, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Officers did not consider the contributions above would meet these tests. Footpath 34 is located away from the application site and its resurfacing is not necessary to make the development acceptable. In addition, Footpath 60 is a rural pathway and its resurfacing would not be required to make the development acceptable.

The application includes other improvements to improve access as well as a £1.3million pound contribution to HCC towards enhanced local pedestrian/cycle crossings alongside active travel schemes in the vicinity of the area that help connect to key local facilities and transport hubs.

The Rights of Way Officer had also commented that the definitive line of Footpath 61 would be accommodated away from the private estate carriageways/footways within the landscaped area. This would reduce the risk of conflict between non-motorized path users and private motorized traffic on the estate carriageway.

The Rights of Way Officer had also advised that there was no recorded definitive link between Footpath 61 and Bridleway 80 Abbots Langley. However, the site layout plan indicated a link between the two by the war memorial. The Rights of Way service requires that this short length of path is dedicated as a definitive right of way. Officers considered that a condition could be attached requiring that this is dedicated prior to occupation of the development.

The Rights of Way Officer had also noted that upgrading Footpath 61 to a definitive bridleway would move towards achieving the aims of active travel. Whilst these comments are acknowledged, it was not considered necessary to require the upgrading of footpath 61 to a bridleway. There is an existing bridleway which already runs through the site and provides a safe means of access on to High Elms Lane and Fraser Crescent. In addition, it was not considered that as currently indicated footpath 61 would meet the standard width for a bridleway.

The Planning Officer also provided the following updates in relation to the report:

- Paragraph 7.1.2 set out that officers are of the view that the site is Grey Belt as it does not strongly contribute to purposes (a), (b) or (c). However, this paragraph should state that the site does not strongly contribute to purposes (a), (b) or (d).
- Paragraph 7.6.5 of the officer report refers to a first-floor bay flank window on Plot 12 facing Orchard Cottage. Whilst there is an ensuite bathroom window, this is not a bay window, and the window is flush with the flank wall. However, given the relationship, a condition is suggested requiring this window to be obscure glazed'.

- Condition 33 secures details of play equipment, in addition to details of its management and maintenance. Officers note that the second part of the condition does not specifically refer to the 'play on the way' equipment and therefore would suggest that, for the avoidance of any doubt, the condition is updated to require details of future management and maintenance of the 'play on the way' equipment to be provided to the LPA.
- Paragraph 7.5.10 of the officer report suggests that a Conservation Management Plan in relation to the management and conservation of the retained Pill Box both during construction and after the completion of the development is required. Therefore, a further condition should be added requiring a Conservation Management Plan to be submitted.

Parish Councillor Jon Tankard of Abbots Langley Parish Council spoke on the application.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, speaking as both a County and District Councillor, spoke on the application.

A local resident spoke against the application.

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 following:

- Following points raised at the September Planning Committee meeting and discussions between the Parish Council and the applicant, the application before the Committee represented an improvement on previous proposals, with better access having been secured from Woodside Road and an access across the site which would link Leavesden Country Park to High Elms Lane. This would provide an active travel route from the north of Abbots Langley to Garston / Parmiter's School. Crossing points had also been included which would assist with safe access to St Michael's and Parmiter's schools. The scale and size of the development had been reduced from over 300 houses as provisionally indicated in the emerging Local Plan to less than 200, resulting in an improved amount of amenity space and benefits for the area. The proposal would also include a permanent war memorial to replace the existing informal memorial located close to High Elms Lane.
- The amount of affordable housing units to be provided represented 50% of the total housing units on the site. Since the September Planning Committee meeting the applicant had revised the tenure mix, and 40 units at social rent were now proposed, representing an improved contribution towards local need. The proportion of smaller dwellings was considered acceptable in the context of the significant housing shortfall in the area and sought to optimise efficient use of the site. Whilst the tenure mix deviated from what would normally be required, it was considered by the Council's Housing Officer to provide a mix of housing across all tenures and therefore be acceptable. Notwithstanding this, some Committee Members remained dis-satisfied with the tenure mix.
- As set out at paragraph 7.8.12 of the report, officers had confirmed that the timing of the traffic surveys was acceptable. Hertfordshire County Council had raised no objections on either highways matters, flood risk or drainage, or any other technical matters.
- In response to a question from a Committee Member as to whether the use of Chequers Lane by construction vehicles could be prevented, the Planning Officer reported that a Construction Management Plan (CMP) was conditioned and details of routing of construction vehicles could be added to the condition.
- In response to a point raised by a Committee Member about the wording of Condition 3, it was noted that point (g) required amendment to clarify that delivery times and removal of waste from the site should avoid school pick-up/drop-off times; however, construction activities could continue during these times. Another Committee Member recommended

that the wording of point (e) should be strengthened to require details of the siting and installation wheel washing facilities to be provided.

- In response to a point raised by a Committee Member that the amount of parking provision was below parking standards and may result in obstructive parking, officers responded that each dwelling would benefit from at least one car parking space. The site was in an edge of settlement location, and a balance was needed between providing policy compliant parking and taking account of the location of the site and proximity of local services. It was proposed that permitted development rights should be removed in order to prevent the conversion of garages into living accommodation, thereby preserving parking.
- Some Committee Members questioned the sustainability of the site location, and also its classification by officers as Grey Belt. In response to the latter point, officers responded that their view was that the site did not strongly contribute to the purposes of the Green Belt for the reasons set out in the report.

Councillor Whately-Smith moved, and Councillor King seconded, that authority be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services and following completion of a S106 Agreement (securing the Heads of Terms set out at 7.20 including affordable housing provision, contributions to highways improvements and monitoring of the travel plan, contributions to infrastructure including education and waste infrastructure and a monitoring fee in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain) to grant planning permission subject to conditions and with the following amendments to conditions:

- Amendment to Condition C3 under part (b) to clarify that details of routing are required, under part (g) to clarify that it relates to delivery times and removal of waste from the site and under part (e) to include details of the installation of wheel washing facilities.
- An additional bullet point under Condition 3 to include 'provisions for protecting the safe use of public rights of way though the site and/or any mitigation required'.
- An additional informative reminding the applicant that the public rights of way should remain unobstructed and that safe passage should be maintained across the site. If safe passage cannot be reasonably achieved, then a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) would be required to close the affected route for any periods necessary.
- An additional condition requiring the dedication of the short length of path between Footpath 61 and Bridleway 80 Abbots Langley prior to occupation of the development.
- An additional condition requiring the first-floor flank window on Plot 12 facing Orchard Cottage to be obscure glazed.
- Amendment to Condition 33 to require details of the future management and maintenance of the 'play on the way' equipment to be provided to the Local Planning Authority.
- Addition of a condition to require a Conservation Management Plan to be submitted in relation to the management and conservation of the retained Pill Box.

On being put to the vote this was carried, the voting being 8 in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: that authority be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services and following completion of a S106 Agreement (securing the Heads of Terms set out at 7.20 including affordable housing provision, contributions to highways improvements and monitoring of the travel plan, contributions to infrastructure including education and waste infrastructure and a monitoring fee in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain) to grant planning permission subject to conditions and with the following amendments to conditions:

- Amendment to Condition C3 under part (b) to clarify that details of routing are required, under part (g) to clarify that it relates to delivery times and removal of waste from the site and under part (e) to include details of the installation of wheel washing facilities.
- An additional bullet point under Condition 3 to include 'provisions for protecting the safe use of public rights of way though the site and/or any mitigation required'.
- An additional informative reminding the applicant that the public rights of way should remain unobstructed and that safe passage should be maintained across the site. If safe passage cannot be reasonably achieved, then a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) would be required to close the affected route for any periods necessary.
- An additional condition requiring the dedication of the short length of path between Footpath 61 and Bridleway 80 Abbots Langley prior to occupation of the development.
- An additional condition requiring the first-floor flank window on Plot 12 facing Orchard Cottage to be obscure glazed.
- Amendment to Condition 33 to require details of the future management and maintenance of the 'play on the way' equipment to be provided to the Local Planning Authority.
- Addition of a condition to require a Conservation Management Plan to be submitted in relation to the management and conservation of the retained Pill Box.

PC63/25 25/1330/RSP – CONSTRUCTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AT 10 GADE BANK, CROXLEY GREEN, RICKMANSWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE WD3 3GD

The application was for construction of single storey rear extension at 10 Gade Bank, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth.

Committee Members and members of the public in attendance were reminded that the use of the property as a House in Multiple Occupation did not form part of the assessment of the acceptability of the planning application, as outlined at paragraphs 8.1.5 and 8.1.6 of the report.

A local resident spoke against 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:

- The public speaker drew attention to the unfinished flank wall of the building. Officers responded that this could be raised with the property owner as part of the enforcement case; however, access may be required from the neighbouring side to allow rendering and re-pointing to be undertaken.
- A Committee Member drew attention to an email from a local resident setting out examples of anti-social behaviour and environmental degradation at the property and its impact on neighbours. It was queried whether the site history and community impact had been considered in the assessment of the application. Officers responded that as set out in the report the extension was not in itself considered to have a community impact: there was a slight deviation in the rendering between the extension and the main property but the character in general was considered acceptable, the extension was not readily visible, there was limited impact on neighbouring properties given its height and depth, and it was not considered to impact on the Green Belt. It was acknowledged that there was a shortfall in parking; however, officers considered that there was justification for this and that it did not give sufficient reason to refuse the application. There was no biodiversity net gain requirement, nor any impact on trees.

- A Committee Member expressed the view that the proposal did not meet the design code for extensions to properties within the Local Plan, specifically in relation to the following criteria that extensions to properties should (i) not be excessively prominent in relation to adjacent properties; (ii) have the appropriate number of car parking spaces and garages; and (iii) respect the character of the property / street scene particularly with regards to roof form, positioning and style of windows, door and materials.
- A Committee Member commented that Policy CA2 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan set out that domestic extensions requiring planning consent should seek to conserve and enhance the character area, and also that in the event of the sub-division of a house the impact of additional parking demand and shared use of the garden should be considered, as well as the social impact on the wider community. The Committee Member expressed the view that the design of the proposal, with two doors facing on to the rear garden, was out of character with neighbouring properties and contrary to Policy CA2. Other Committee Members agreed that the proposal was out of character.
- A Committee Member commented that as Gade Bank was accessed by a narrow, single track road the lack of parking was a concern and could result in emergency vehicles being unable to access the site. Another Committee Member noted that the plans indicated use of the extension as two bedrooms, resulting in a six-bedroomed property. Given its use as an HMO, the Committee Member expressed the view that the parking shortfall was therefore even more significant given the intensification of use. It was also noted that use of the extension as two bedrooms would mean that the amenity space could not be accessed by other residents of the property and that this would not be acceptable.
- In response to a question as to whether anti-social behaviour was a material planning consideration, officers responded that impact on amenity (which could include noise or disturbance) was a material planning consideration; however, the issues with anti-social behaviour at the property were a separate matter. Additionally, the use of the extension as bedrooms was not relevant in terms of the assessment of the application on its planning merits.

Councillor Cooper moved, and Councillor Drury seconded, that the application be refused on the grounds of character, amenity and parking and being contrary to policies DM1 and DM2 of the Local Plan and policies CA2 and CA3 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan. The final wording to be circulated to the committee before the decision is issued.

On being put to the vote this was carried, the voting being 9 in favour, 0 against and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: that that the application be refused on the grounds of character, amenity and parking and being contrary to policies DM1 and DM2 of the Local Plan and policies CA2 and CA3 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan. The final wording to be circulated to the committee before the decision is issued.

Note: subsequent to the meeting, and with the agreement of Committee Members, reference to policy CA3 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan was removed from the reasons for refusal as being not relevant to the application.

PC64/25 25/1619/ADV – ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT: ERECTION OF INTERNAL FACING NON ILLUMINATED WEATHER BOARD ADVERT PANELS TO PERIMETER OF ARTIFICIAL PITCH AT EVERGREEN FOOTBALL CLUB, SOUTH WAY, ABBOTS Langley, HERTFORDSHIRE WD5 0JL

The application was for advertisement consent for erection of internal facing non-illuminated weather board advert panels to perimeter of artificial pitch at Evergreen Football Club, South Way, Abbots Langley.

The Planning Officer reported that since publication of the agenda the applicant had confirmed that the advertisements would be secured on the outside of the fence panels, facing into the astroturf. Additionally, the applicant was happy for the advertisements to be coloured green to the rear rather than white as originally suggested. Officers were therefore proposing an additional condition to require this change in colour. The Crime Prevention Design Adviser had reviewed the application and had no concerns regarding the design or the height of the boards, and the height was not considered to be detrimental to natural surveillance.

Parish Councillor Jon Tankard, of Abbots Langley Parish Council, spoke on the application.

In response to a question about controls to ensure that the advertisements used on the boards were appropriate for a youth football club, the Planning Officer reported the applicant's intention was understood to be for the advertisements to relate to club sponsors. It was noted that Condition C1(2) specified that no advertisement was to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission. There was therefore scope for advertisements to be refused should the need arise.

Councillor Lloyd moved, and Councillor Gazzard seconded, that the application be approved with an additional condition regarding the colour of the rear of the signage. On being put to the vote this was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the application be approved with an additional condition regarding the colour of the rear of the signage.

CHAIR