

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 26 February 2026

25/2120/FUL - Removal of condition 3 (Lighting Hours) pursuant to planning permission 25/1012/RSP at 57 - 59 HIGH STREET, ABBOTS LANGLEY, HERTFORDSHIRE, WD5 0AE.

Parish: Abbots Langley Parish Council
Expiry of Statutory Period: 12.01.2026
Extension of Time Agreed: to 06.03.2026

Ward: Abbots Langley And Bedmond
Case Officer: Danielle Kavanagh

Development Type: Minor development.

Recommendation: That planning permission be GRANTED.

Reason for consideration by the Committee: Called in to planning committee by Abbots Langley Parish Council for the reason set out at 4.2 below.

To view all documents forming part of this application, please go to the following website:
[25/2120/FUL - Removal of condition 3 \(Lighting Hours\) pursuant to planning permission 25/1012/RSP at 57 - 59 HIGH STREET, ABBOTS LANGLEY, HERTFORDSHIRE, WD5 0AE.](#)

1 Relevant Planning and Enforcement History

- 1.1 25/1012/RSP - Part Retrospective: Installation of parcel locker facility - 30.10.2025 - Permitted
- 1.2 24/0022/COMP – Erection of click and collect facility (in-post). Case Closed.
- 1.3 08/1644/FUL - Erection of uncovered trolley park - 26.09.2008 – Permitted
- 1.4 08/1275/FUL - Erection of covered trolley park- 22.08.2008 – Permitted

2 Description of Application Site

- 2.1 The application site contains a supermarket known as ‘Sweeney’s’ and associated areas of hard surfacing, located along Abbots Langley High Street, which is a Primary Shopping Frontage and located within the Abbots Langley Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The application site is located on a corner plot with a frontage that runs adjacent to the High Street and a side elevation that runs along The Crescent. The Crescent leads to a residential area, whilst the High Street consists of predominantly commercial units with residential units above.
- 2.3 To the northeast and west of the building there are uncovered trolley bays, while to the northwest, there is an Inpost locker (subject of this application)
- 2.4 The parcel locker structure (hereafter referred to as the “structure”) is located to the northwest of the application building. It is set back from the shop frontage by 1.5m. The structure is 2.6m wide and 0.9m deep, set off the wall by 0.1m. The main unit has a height of 2.3m. There is a canopy with a maximum height of 2.5m, which projects 0.8m forward of the lockers. The structure is metal in construction, and currently finished in dark grey vinyl wrap, with an integrated LED screen. There are two CCTV cameras on the front canopy projection, with 5 No. metal-clad downlights located above the front elevation of the structure.
- 2.5 The closest residential neighbours to the application site are occupants of the first-floor units adjacent to or on the application site, and neighbouring commercial units No.3. The

Crescent is located on the opposite side of the application site and is approximately 23m to the east.

3 Description of Proposed Development

3.1 This application seeks planning permission for the Removal of condition 3 (Lighting Hours) pursuant to planning permission 25/1012/RSP.

3.2 Condition 3 states:

The external down lighting on the structure hereby permitted may only be used between the hours of 7am and 10pm daily, while the shop within the application site is open.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Abbots Langley Conservation Area and to meet the requirements of Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), Policy DM3 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013), the Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2014) and the NPPF (2024).

3.3 This application proposes to remove the requirement for the lights on the structure to be used only during the hours of 7am and 10pm daily, while the shop within the application site is open. This time restriction would be removed. The condition requiring no additional lighting would remain.

3.4 The planning statement submitted with the application, sets out the following reasons to justify the proposed removal of Condition 3. The submitted lighting specification demonstrates that the locker's integral LED lighting will not cause harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area, as light levels beyond 2 metres are generally below typical street lighting, and the fittings comply with best practice standards (ROHS and CE). The lighting is necessary to ensure the safety and security of users, particularly during periods of low light and in winter months, addressing potential health and safety concerns.

4 Statutory Consultation

4.1 National Grid: [No response received]

4.2 Abbots Langley Parish Council: [Objection]

Members would support the use of a motion sensor for people approaching the lockers, however, we cannot accept the lights being left on all evening as this would have a negative environmental impact and disturb local residents. If the planning officer is minded to approve this application, Members request it be brought to committee for consideration.

4.3 Conservation Officer: [No objection]

The conservation officer was verbally consulted on this application and supplied the following comment:

Based on how late the illumination hours are already, removing that constraint would not have any further impacts or harm in heritage terms.

4.4 **Public/Neighbour Consultation**

4.5 **Site notice displayed**: 19.12.2025, expires 12.01.2026

4.6 **Press notice published**: 15.12.2025, expired 12.01.2026

4.7 Neighbours consulted: 19

4.8 Responses received: 1 [1 objection]

Summary of objection:

- *The lighting restriction (7am–10pm) is necessary and meets the planning tests.*
- *The officer's finding of no harm relied on the lights being switched off overnight.*
- *The site is in a conservation area near listed buildings and residential properties.*
- *Most nearby businesses close by 10pm and street lighting is reduced overnight.*
- *Removing the condition would encourage late-night use, causing noise and visual disturbance.*
- *This would harm the conservation area and residential amenity, so the application should be refused.*

5 Reason for Delay

5.1 The committee cycle

6 Relevant Planning Policy, Guidance and Legislation

6.1 Legislation

6.2 Planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise as set out within S38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and S70 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

6.3 S72 of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires LPAs to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

6.4 The Localism Act received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. The Growth and Infrastructure Act achieved Royal Assent on 25 April 2013.

6.5 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Habitat Regulations 1994 may also be relevant.

6.6 The Environment Act 2021.

6.7 National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance

In 2024 the new National Planning Policy Framework was published. This is read alongside the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The determination of planning applications is made mindful of Central Government advice and the Local Plan for the area. It is recognised that Local Planning Authorities must determine applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against another. The NPPF is clear that "existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework".

The NPPF states that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'. The NPPF retains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

6.8 The Three Rivers Local Plan

The application has been considered against the policies of the Local Plan, including the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), the Development Management Policies Local Development Document (adopted July 2013) and the Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014) as well as government guidance. The policies of Three Rivers District Council reflect the content of the NPPF.

The Core Strategy was adopted on 17 October 2011 having been through a full public participation process and Examination in Public. Relevant policies include Policies CP1, CP9, CP10 and CP12.

The Development Management Policies Local Development Document (DMLDD) was adopted on 26 July 2013 after the Inspector concluded that it was sound following Examination in Public which took place in March 2013. Relevant policies include DM3, DM6, DM9, DM13 and Appendix 5.

Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal 2014.

7 Planning Analysis

7.1 Background

7.2 This application follows the approval, subject to conditions, by the Committee of application 25/1012/RSP at the October 2025 Planning Committee meeting. This application seeks to remove condition 3 (Lighting Hours) from the grant of Planning Permission. The analysis of this application will focus on lighting and its impact, as the development's principles remain acceptable in line with the approved scheme.

7.3 Impact on the character and appearance of the host building and conservation area

7.3.1 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) seeks to promote buildings of a high enduring design quality that respect local distinctiveness and Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy relates to design and states that in seeking a high standard of design, the Council will expect development proposals to have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area.

7.3.2 Policy DM3 sets out that applications will only be supported where they sustain, conserve and where appropriate, enhance the significance, character and setting of the asset itself and the surrounding historic environment. The NPPF at paragraph 212 states when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

7.3.3 The application site is within the Abbots Langley Conservation Area. As set out in the Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal, 'The Commercial Centre' is effectively the area between Abbots Langley Police Station and St Lawrence Close. The rows of shops on both sides of the road provide an important link between St. Lawrence Close and Kitters Green and generate the busy and bustling character that is evident in this part of the conservation area. This central area is the most urban of the conservation area's three distinctive 'Character Areas'. The location of most of Abbots Langley's amenities and services here ensure that the conservation area remains the central focus of the village. The Appraisal cites that 'buildings on the eastern side of the High Street are a mix of types and ages, although most date from the 20th Century, and include a good example of a 1930's shopping parade'.

7.3.4 The structure occupies a prominent location within the conservation area on the corner of Abbots Langley High Street and The Crescent, meaning that there are clear views of the

lockers when viewed from the High Street looking to the south and east and from The Crescent.

- 7.3.5 As part of the consideration of the previous planning application, the report to committee noted: *“The structure is supported by down lights however, it is not considered that this results in any harm. A condition is attached to control existing and future lighting”*. It is also noted that the reason for the condition is *“To preserve the character and appearance of the Abbots Langley Conservation Area”*. It should be noted that since that grant of planning permission, the colour of the structure has been changed (in accordance with condition 1 attached to that planning permission) from a yellow colour scheme to a grey colour scheme. Officers have visited the site during the hours of darkness to observe the appearance of the illuminated structure.
- 7.3.6 The structure is served by 5 No. down lights mounted to the front, above the locker doors. It is considered that the operation of the lights and the directional lighting that they provide does not result in harm to the Conservation Area. The structure is sited in an urban part of the Conservation Area, as identified by the Conservation Area appraisal, and lighting associated with shops and services in the immediate local area is present without restriction on hours of use. The proposed removal of the restriction that the downlights operate only during the hours of operation of the adjacent shop (7am-10pm) is not considered to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the Conservation Area or the host building, and the character of the Conservation Area would be preserved. It is noted that the Conservation Officer has no objection to the proposal and has stated that it would not have any further impacts or harm in heritage terms. The condition restricting any further lighting from being installed on the structure would remain and is considered a sufficient control over the way the structure is lit.
- 7.3.7 In summary, it is considered that the removal of the hours of lighting restriction does not result in any adverse harm to the character or appearance of the Abbots Langley Conservation Area. The development is therefore acceptable in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (2011), Policy DM3 of the Development Management Policies LDD (2013), Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal 2014 and the NPPF (2024).
- 7.4 Impact on amenity of neighbours
- 7.4.1 Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy states that development should ‘protect residential amenities by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space’.
- 7.4.2 The closest residential neighbours to the application site are any occupants of first floor units of the building on the application site and the neighbouring commercial units, No. 3. The Crescent is located on the opposite side of the application site and is approximately 23m to the east.
- 7.4.3 The downlights present on the structure provide directional light for the structure's use. As observed on site at 9.45 – 10.15pm, the lights provide some illumination to the surrounding area during hours of darkness, however, there were many other shops and light sources contributing light to the area at this time. It is not considered that the light contributed by the downlights is in excess of the lighting already present in the area. It is noted that the structure is sited against a two-storey wall where no first-floor windows are present, with the closest neighbours located on the Crescent, and the first-floor residential units, which are separated by a road from the structure. This separation and the downward direction of the lights is considered sufficient to prevent any light from the structure harming these neighbours' amenity.
- 7.4.4 The structure is not considered to have any impact on the light or amenity of the neighbouring dwellings due to its scale and siting.

7.4.5 The development is acceptable in this regard in accordance with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (2011) and Policy DM9 of the Development Management Policies LDD (2013).

7.5 Other Matters

7.5.1 The proposed development would not impact the previously approved position on Trees, Highways & Parking, Biodiversity Net Gain, and Ecology.

8 **Recommendation**

8.1 That **PLANNING PERMISSION BE GRANTED**, subject to the following conditions:

C1 The external appearance of the lockers shall have a grey colour scheme as shown on TRDC001 (EXISTING AND PROPOSED LOCKER FINISHES) and the lockers shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Abbots Langley Conservation Area and to meet the requirements of Policies CP1, CP9, CP10 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), Policies DM3, DM9, DM13 and Appendix 5 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013), the Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2014) and the NPPF (2024).

C2 No additional external lighting shall be installed on or affixed to the structure unless the Local Planning Authority has first approved in writing details of the position, height, design and intensity. The lighting shall be retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Abbots Langley Conservation Area and to meet the requirements of Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), Policy DM3 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013), the Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2014) and the NPPF (2024).

INFORMATIVES

I1 With regard to implementing this permission, the applicant is advised as follows:

All relevant planning conditions must be discharged prior to the commencement of work. Requests to discharge conditions must be made by formal application which includes a fee.

There may be a requirement for the approved development to comply with the Building Regulations. Please contact Hertfordshire Building Control (HBC) on 01438 879990 or at buildingcontrol@hertfordshirebc.co.uk who will be happy to advise you on building control matters and will protect your interests throughout your build project by leading the compliance process. Further information is available at www.hertfordshirebc.co.uk.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Your development may be liable for CIL payments and you are advised to contact the CIL Officer for clarification with regard to this (cil@threeivers.gov.uk). If your development is CIL liable, even if you have been granted exemption from the levy, please be advised that before commencement of any works it is a requirement under Regulation 67 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (As Amended) that CIL form 6 (Commencement Notice) must be completed, returned and acknowledged by Three Rivers District Council before building works start. Failure to do so will mean you lose the right to payment by instalments (where applicable), and a surcharge will be imposed. However, please note that a Commencement Notice is not required for residential extensions IF relief has been granted.

Following the grant of planning permission by the Local Planning Authority it is accepted that new issues may arise post determination, which require modification of the approved plans. Please note that regardless of the reason for these changes, where these modifications are fundamental or substantial, a new planning application will need to be submitted. Where less substantial changes are proposed, the following options are available to applicants:

{\b (a)} Making a Non-Material Amendment

{\b (b)} Amending the conditions attached to the planning permission, including seeking to make minor material amendments (otherwise known as a section 73 application).

It is important that any modifications to a planning permission are formalised before works commence otherwise your planning permission may be unlawful and therefore could be subject to enforcement action. In addition, please be aware that changes to a development previously granted by the LPA may affect any previous Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) owed or exemption granted by the Council. If you are in any doubt whether the new/amended development is now liable for CIL you are advised to contact the Community Infrastructure Levy Officer (01923 776611) for clarification. Information regarding CIL can be found on the Three Rivers website (<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/planning/community-infrastructure-levy>).

Care should be taken during the building works hereby approved to ensure no damage occurs to the verge or footpaths during construction. Vehicles delivering materials to this development shall not override or cause damage to the public footway. Any damage will require to be made good to the satisfaction of the Council and at the applicant's expense.

Where possible, energy saving and water harvesting measures should be incorporated. Any external changes to the building which may be subsequently required should be discussed with the Council's Development Management Section prior to the commencement of work. Further information on how to incorporate changes to reduce your energy and water use is available at: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/environment-climate-emergency/home-energy-efficiency-sustainable-living#Greening%20your%20home>.

- 12 The applicant is reminded that the Control of Pollution Act 1974 allows local authorities to restrict construction activity (where work is audible at the site boundary). In Three Rivers such work audible at the site boundary, including deliveries to the site and running of equipment such as generators, should be restricted to 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0900 to 1300 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- 13 The Local Planning Authority has been positive and proactive in its consideration of this planning application, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The development maintains/improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the District.
- 14 The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:
 - a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
 - b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Three Rivers District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because the following statutory exemption or transitional arrangement is considered to apply.

Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:

- a) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- b) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Where the local planning authority considers that the permission falls within paragraph 19 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the permission which has been granted has the effect of requiring or permitting the development to proceed in phases. The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition which are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024 apply.

Biodiversity gain plans are required to be submitted to, and approved by, the planning authority before development may be begun, and, if subject to phased development, before each phase of development may be begun.

If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must include, in addition to information about steps taken or to be taken to minimise any adverse effect of the development on the habitat, information on arrangements for compensation for any impact the development has on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat.

The planning authority can only approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if satisfied that the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for the purpose of compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

More information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>.