

REF: R01266/MR/DB/GO
SUBMITTED VIA PLANNING PORTAL ONLY

North Herts Council
Planning Department
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth
SG6 9SE

29th May 2026

Dear Sir / Madam,

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION TO INSTALL A NEW PLANT SOLUTION
10 HIGH STREET, HITCHIN, SG5 1BH

I write on behalf of the Applicant, Tesco Stores Ltd, to submit a full planning application for the Site at 10 High Street, Hitchin, SG5 1BH as follows:

- Application for full planning permission to install a new plant solution.

The application is detailed separately in this letter.

Background to Application

The Site, consisting of the ground floor unit at 10 High Street, Hitchin, SG5 1BH is currently vacant but was formerly occupied by an M&Co clothes store. The Site is not locally or statutory listed, but it is situated within the Hitchin Conservation Area. Further information regarding heritage considerations can be found within the Heritage Statement prepared by ROK Planning and submitted with this application.

The unit, permitted for retail uses, is proposed to be occupied as a Tesco Express. No planning permission is required for this in land use terms. This application solely seeks permission for the plant solution required to facilitate this occupation.

Proposed Works

Installation of new plant solution

Planning permission is sought for the installation of a new plant solution at roof level, composed of 1x new packaged refrigeration unit and 3x floor mounted AC units surrounded on three sides by a protection rail.

Additional information on the plant application is available on the following drawings prepared by Tesco:

- Proposed Elevations (drawing no. 03_3289_03F);
- Proposed Part Plan at Roof Level (drawing no. 02_3289_02K); and
- Proposed Plan at Roof Level (drawing no. 02_3289_02J).

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the development plan comprises the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (2022). Material considerations include relevant supplementary planning documents and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (2022)

'Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability', of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2032 (2022) highlights that all development will need to meet high standards of sustainable design and construction feasibility, relating to the scale, nature and form of the proposal.

Furthermore, 'Policy D3: Protecting living conditions', outlines that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. The policy states:

"Planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions. Where the living conditions of proposed developments would be affected by an existing use or the living conditions of an existing development would be affected by a proposed use, the Council will consider whether there are mitigation measures that can be taken to mitigate the harm to an acceptable level. If the Council is not satisfied that mitigation proposals would address the identified harm, development proposals will not be permitted."

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The NPPF is an additional material consideration. It is underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustainable development and in terms of that presumption, Paragraph 11 states that for decision taking this means *"approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay..."*

With respect to heritage, the Site falls within a conservation area, and is situated in close proximity to several listed buildings. The NPPF states the following in respect of heritage assets:

“212. 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.”

The proposed works are considered against the above context in the next section of this letter.

Planning Justification

As noted earlier in this letter, full planning permission is sought for the installation of a new plant solution at roof level.

The retail unit itself is located within a predominantly commercial area. Nevertheless, the proposed plant equipment is to be located on the roof level in order to ensure no adverse visual impact. On this basis, the proposal is considered to have been designed to have as minimal an impact as possible and ultimately is considered to be acceptable in design terms.

Given the nature of the proposal, it is necessary to consider the impact of noise on the surrounding properties. A Noise Impact Assessment prepared by KR Associates is submitted with the planning application. Overall, the resultant noise levels from the proposed mechanical equipment will result in noise levels that comply in full with the Local Plan and are at levels that are very unlikely to give rise to complaints from occupiers. On that basis, it is considered that the proposals will not have an unacceptable noise or amenity impact.

Summary

The application is considered policy compliant and acceptable in respect of design and amenity impact. It is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

Contents of Submission

The following supporting documents have been submitted via the Planning Portal in support of the application:

- The relevant planning application fee;
- The completed application form;
- This covering letter prepared by ROK Planning;
- Heritage statement prepared by ROK Planning;

- Location plan and block plan prepared by Tesco; and
- Existing and proposed drawings prepared by Tesco

I trust that you have all the information you require to validate this application. If, in the interim, you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact either Matthew Roe (matthew.roe@rokplanning.co.uk) or myself at this office. I look forward to your formal acknowledgement of the application.

Yours faithfully,



Daniel Botten
Senior Associate Director
ROK Planning Ltd

