At the meeting of the East Herts Council Development Management Committee held on Wednesday 18th September 2024 the Committee resolved to grant permission for the application to build 118 dwellings on land known as Bengeo Field. The scheme proposes to create a new vehicular access from Wadesmill Road.

The permission is subject to 45 planning conditions (including footway improvements along Wadesmill Road and prevention of flooding and of harm to groundwater resources by preventing risk of water pollution) and the completion of a Section 106 legal Agreement.

The Heads of Terms to be covered in the legal agreement cover financial contributions to projects and services run by Hertfordshire County Council (£ 3,643,133 (including £1,492,588 towards Secondary Education and £1,273,520 towards Primary Education), East Herts Council (47 Affordable Housing units and £352,2230) and the National Health Service (£205,792).

An agreement under the Highways Act will include “implementation of a 40 m.p.h speed limit buffer and associated infrastructure”. There is no proposal for a bus service from within the development.

The application was originally submitted on 5th September 2023. During the last year the proposals evolved taking into account feedback from consultees. A report from Planning Officers lists improvements secured by negotiations. These improvements related to affordable housing, design and layout, transport and drainage. Amendments to the application reflected these improvements.

During two rounds of consultation 1205 objections were received and 9 supporting comments

The Civic Society commented that

“… for many years the site had given pleasure to not only local residents but also to many others in the town. We therefore have much sympathy with those people campaigning for rejection of this application.”

The Society suggested conditions that should be attached if the Council were minded to approve the application.