

Date: 11.03.25  
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The Rt Hon Victoria Collins MP  
Member of Parliament for Harpenden and Berkhamsted  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Victoria Collins MP

**Re: Lidl development site, Berkhamsted**

Thank you for your email dated 25<sup>th</sup> February regarding the status of the above development site.

In your email you highlight that several constituents are frustrated by the ongoing limbo of this site. As such, you have asked for an up-to-date status for this site, including who owns it, what the current plans are in relation to it, any attempts by the Council or other parties to accelerate progress on it, and what steps could be undertaken at a ministerial level to provide further impetus.

Firstly, I can confirm that the site is owned freehold by Lidl.

In terms of a site update, I fully acknowledge the frustrations of your constituents in seeing this site remain undeveloped for such a long period of time. However, I can reassure your constituents that, in the past few months, matters have been picked up speed again.

Lidl has detailed to Officers that all avenues have been explored at length to deliver the mixed-use foodstore and residential scheme that was granted planning permission in 2014 and subsequently amended. Unfortunately, their efforts have been to no avail and Officers have been satisfied, through independent audit of a viability assessment, that there is no reasonable prospect of the residential element being delivered.

As such, there have been positive pre-application discussions with Lidl and their planning consultants regarding a standalone supermarket proposal.

Both the applicant and the Council are very keen to see the site delivered as soon as possible. At this stage the development team are finalising the detailed design. It has taken a little longer than they anticipated due to the levels on the site and utilities

running through the site; however, Lidl are seeking to ensure that the scheme is absolutely deliverable at the point if and when planning permission is granted.

The next steps are for Lidl's planning consultants to submit updated information in response to the Planning Case Officer's comments by the end of March, progressing to Lidl holding a public consultation event in April.

Thank you for your offer of ministerial assistance. In this instance, bearing in mind the current late stage of pre-application discussions, I am hopeful that the revised planning application will be submitted very soon.

I hope that this information is helpful.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Stanley', is centered within a faint, light-grey rectangular border.

**Philip Stanley**

Head of Development Management