

# Planning Committee – Supplementary agenda no.1

**A meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on:**

**Date:** 9 April 2025

**Time:** 6.30pm

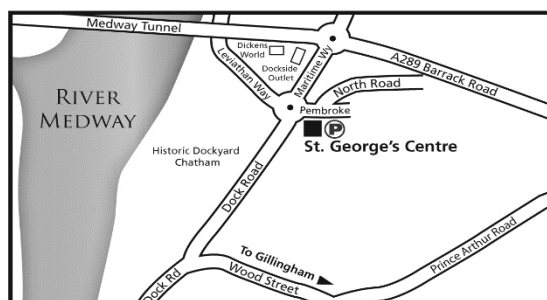
**Venue:** St George's Centre, Pembroke Road, Chatham Maritime, Chatham  
ME4 4UH

## Items

- 8 Additional Information - Supplementary Agenda Advice Sheet (Pages 3 - 8)**

For further information please contact Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer on Telephone: 01634 332012 or Email: [democratic.services@medway.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@medway.gov.uk)

**Date: 9 April 2025**



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<b>Medway Council</b>
<b>Planning Committee – 9 April 2025</b>
<b>Supplementary Agenda Advice Sheet</b>

**Page 6 Minute Number 748 – Planning Application MC/23/2857 Land at the former Sturdee Club and land at Stoke Road, Hoo St Werburgh, ME3 9BJ**

The decision taken by Planning Committee on 12 March 2025, as set out in the minutes, was:-

**Approval** subject to the expiry of the consultation with Active Travel England (ATE), and the imposition of any additional conditions recommended as a result of a response from Active Travel England and no unresolvable objections being received (and the completion of a Section 106 agreement and attachment of conditions).

**Representations**

A response from Active Travel England (ATE) was received on 1 April 2025 (attached for information).

In summary, the response does not raise any objections but raises some concern with the isolated nature of the development but also notes that it is for the Council to weigh this against more favourable aspects. Where decision makers are satisfied with the quality of Stoke Road for pedestrian use and distances to key amenities, then ATE recommends that the Council should determine the application in accordance with the Committee decision; alternatively, this consideration should be reviewed and again weighed in the planning balance.

A letter has been received by Sport England (29 March 2025), outside of their role as a Statutory Consultee. Sport England object to the application on the grounds of the loss of playing field/sport facility at the former Sturdee Club that closed in 2012.

## **Officer Response**

The response from ATE does not raise any objections and the matter of the location and access to services was considered in the main report, raised by Ward Members during their address to the Committee and by Members as part of the debate. The S106 requires contributions towards public rights of way improvements.

In relation to the Sport England letter, whilst an objection has been received they are not a Statutory Consultee for this application. Furthermore, the issue of the loss of facility was considered in the main report, raised by Ward Members during their address to Committee and by Members as part of the debate.

The submitted responses require no further action and the agreed recommendation at the last Planning Committee remains and work to progress the S106 and issuing the decision will continue.

**Page 18 – Planning Application MC/24/0266 Dillywood Garden Centre, Dillywood Lane, Wainscott, Rochester, Medway ME3 7NT**

## **Representations**

A letter of representation has been received from Councillor John Williams objecting to the application. This is attached for information.

## **Officer Response**

The letter raises no issues that are not covered in the main report.



**Active  
Travel  
England**

Active Travel England  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
York  
YO1 6GA  
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Your Ref: MC/23/2857  
Our Ref: ATE/25/00386/FULL  
Date: 01 April 2025

## **Active Travel England Planning Response Detailed Response to an Application for Planning Permission**

**From:** Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

**To:** Medway Council

**Application Ref:** MC/23/2857

**Site Address:** Land At The Former Sturdee Club And Land At Stoke Road,  
Hoo St Werburgh, ME3 9BJ

**Description of development:** Proposal: Construction of 134no. residential dwellings (including affordable and over 55's homes), children's nursery (Class E(f)), cafe/community hub (Class E(b)/F2(b)) and commercial/retail floorspace (E(g)/E(a), new public open spaces, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscaping and biodiversity areas and play areas. Access to be from 4no. new locations from Stoke Road. Provision of roads, parking spaces and earthworks - Demolition of the Sturdee Club and associated structures

### **Comments**

Thank you for consulting Active Travel England (ATE) on this planning application. ATE is mindful that the application has already been referred to Council's Planning Committee with a recommendation for approval, which was carried subject to the imposition of any additional conditions being recommended by ATE and/or no unresolvable objections being received.

ATE will therefore focus its comments on what it considers to be the key issue, which is whether the development is considered sustainable in planning terms. In this regard, ATE has some concern that the connectivity of the site to a range of key amenities is very poor for pedestrians, both in terms of distance and the quality of routes, and it does not appear that this consideration has been appropriately addressed in the application documents or Committee report.

The main route between the three land parcels and the village centre of Hoo St. Werburgh is via Stoke Road, which the Transport Assessment describes as follows:

*3.3.1. The proposed development site benefits from existing footway provision along Stoke Road. In proximity of the western development parcels the footway runs along the southern side of the carriageway from the village of Hoo St. Werburgh, approximately 1km*

*to the southwest (a 13-minute walk / 3-minute cycle), to a point approximately 70m west of the Stoke Road / Ropers Lane roundabout.*

The Committee report similarly comments that:

*Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure*

*Pedestrian footways are provided on the southern side of Stoke Road. To the west they provide a pedestrian access to the Village Centre, Hoo Surgery on Bells Lane and the Walter Brice Centre, Pottery Road Village Hall, primary and secondary schools and the sports centre on main road. To the east it provides pedestrian and cycle access to Ropers Lane and the Kingsnorth Industrial Estate.*

However, Google mapping (May 2023) between the site and village centre shows numerous examples of pavement parking, narrow footways and street furniture that limits the safety, comfort and attractiveness of the route. In addition, walking times from the central part of the biggest land parcel would be around 1.5km/20 minutes to the village centre and 2.5km/34 minutes to the nearest school (The Hundred of Hoo Academy) such that the opportunity to travel to these destinations on foot is severely restricted and somewhat impractical for wheeled mobility.

ATE notes that the Committee report references that there are several development sites to the west that have resulted in some improvements to the footways along Stoke Road. However, in the absence of an audit of this route in the applicant's Transport Assessment, ATE is unable to review the current condition of Stoke Road.

As such, ATE expresses some concern with the isolated nature of the development but also notes that it is for the Council to weigh this against more favourable aspects. Where decision makers are satisfied with the quality of Stoke Road for pedestrian use and distances to key amenities, then ATE recommends that the Council should determine the application in accordance with the Committee decision; alternatively this consideration should be reviewed and again weighed in the planning balance.

Letter from Councillor John Williams

Objection to Planning Application MC/24/0266

According to the NPPF Part 13 item 142 and 153.

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Proposals affecting the Green Belt 153. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations

The proposed residential use does not conform with Green Belt policies and no very special circumstances to warrant overriding Green Belt policy have been put forward. 3. Access to the site is sub-standard.

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence and this could set a precedence for other development to build locally and infill the green belt and eventually link to the already urban creep

I think this proposed development is detrimental to the surrounding Green Belt and it should be protected from any speculative development.

I feel this application is an over development of the site and is out of character with the area being a rural area.

The roads leading up to the site are very narrow single lane country roads with passing places and very eroded banks with limited lighting and with the increased traffic during and after the build will put unacceptable stress on the local infrastructure putting even more problems on the b2000 which is a very busy road and getting busier all the time with the numerous developments in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods being built.

Not forgetting the danger to pedestrians who frequently use Dillywood Lane for their walks in the countryside.

The 2003 Medway local under heading Development in the Countryside 3.4.71

As a valuable resource, the countryside needs to be protected for its own sake. The loss of countryside to encroaching urbanising development must, therefore, be resisted. Nevertheless, the countryside supports a range of activities and some necessary change is to be expected as activities develop or decline. In particular, national agricultural policy has altered, land is being taken temporarily out of agricultural production and diversification of rural enterprises may be required to help sustain the economy in rural areas.

With the threat of closing down of the Higham Medical Centre hanging in the balance any increase in the population would put even more stress on the already under pressure doctor's surgeries in the area.

I feel that this proposed application would be detrimental to the Rural feeling of the area and as stated earlier would put unnecessary pressure on local infrastructure and services.

I would ask the committee to refuse this application.

Cllr John Williams

Member for Strood Rural