

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Thursday, 11 July 2024
6.30pm to 7.49pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: Jones (Vice-Chairperson in the chair), Anang, Barrett, Bowen, Etheridge, Field, Filmer, Gulvin, Hamandishe, Hamilton, Myton, Peake and Pearce

Substitutes: Councillors:
Kemp (Substitute for Gilbourne)
Nestorov (Substitute for Stamp)

In Attendance: Amanda Barnes, Principal Planner
Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer
Peter Hockney, DM Manager
Joanna Horne, Lawyer
Jonathon Simon, Planner
George Stow, Highways Consultant

137 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gilbourne and Stamp.

138 Record of meeting

The record of the meetings held on 30 May 2024 and 5 June 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

The Committee were advised of the following, as set out in the supplementary agenda advice sheet.

Minute number 36 - Planning application - MC/24/0279 Land south of View Road, Cliffe Woods, Rochester Kent – Committee Date 5 June 2024.

Members agreed to amend condition 28 as follows:

Revised Condition:

- 28 No dwellings hereby approved shall be occupied at any time other than by a person over aged 55 or older together with their spouse, partner, companion, carer or dependent, except that where a person aged over

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55 is predeceased having resided with the development as a spouse, partner, companion or dependent, that person may continue to reside within the development. Reason: In view of the need for older persons accommodation in the area as highlighted in Policy H7 of the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan and in accordance with paragraph 63 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

139 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

140 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillor Etheridge stated that he often attended meetings for Frindsbury and Cliffe Woods Parish Councils and explained that if any planning applications were ever discussed there, which were due to be considered by the Medway Council Planning Committee meeting, he would not take part in the discussion at the Parish Council meetings.

141 Planning application - MC/24/0221 Land to east of Woodlands Cemetery, Cornwallis Avenue, Gillingham, Medway, ME7 2DL

Discussion:

The Principal Planner outlined the application in detail for the construction of a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Secondary Free School together with associated hard/soft landscaping, including multi-use games area (MUGA), car/cycle parking, secure line fence/boundary enclosures and associated means of access.

The Principal Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which in the appraisal section of the report, provided updated information regarding potential future use of Minibuses.

The Committee discussed the planning application in detail and Members, agreed and were in favour of a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Secondary Free School within Medway and stated this project was long overdue.

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The Committee then asked a number of questions, which included:

Education – the Principal Planner confirmed, if approved, the applicant would want to start work on the site immediately and she believed they would want pupils to be enrolled in September 2025.

Members requested that pupils, which were currently attending SEND schools outside the area, be given priority admission to this school. Members were concerned with the number of children that currently attended a SEND school outside of Medway and the amount of time that was spent travelling to and from school. As this school borders other neighbouring authorities, could there be a stipulation that this school would give priority to Medway children. The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that he would discuss these suggestions with the education department and would feedback responses to Members.

Members were encouraged to see active travel for pupils and wondered if travel mentoring could be introduced.

As young people aged 19-25 years with SEN and Autism were being transported to Canterbury, could this new facility provide assistance for them as well.

Design – the Principal Planner confirmed that the photovoltaic panels could produce nearly 50 kilowatts per metre square. She also confirmed that the materials used would be fire resistant cladding.

Members wondered whether the parking requirements could remain flexible until they knew the specific needs of the pupils.

The Principal Planner clarified that the fencing had been the main topic of discussion regarding this planning application. The applicant understood the importance of the children to be kept safe, however, it also needed to look aesthetically pleasing. Due to pupil's sensitivity to noise, there would be a 3 metre timber wooden fence constructed to block any noise. At the front of the building a 3 metre anti-climb fence would be installed. She explained they could look at the colour and the style of this, however, it would be sensitively designed.

Members considered the multiple entrances to the school a good idea, especially if a pupil was going through an episode, they could be dealt with sensitively. The two separate entrances would be for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) pupils and one for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) pupils and both cohorts would be kept separate and would not mix.

Some trees would need to be pruned during the construction phase, however, additional soft landscaping would be planted once construction was complete.

The Principal Planner confirmed that there would be a number of electric charging points available which would include: 20% active and 80% passive.

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Road safety – as there would be up to 197 vehicles at peak times, it was asked if a condition could be added to restrict car travelling to 20mph and no idling cars. The Principal Planner confirmed that the two cohorts would have different start times so there should not be any vehicles waiting. The Highways Consultant stated the school could introduce signage for 20mph on-site, however, the roads neighbouring the school had not been considered. The Chief Planning Officer undertook to discuss this with the Highways Authority.

The Principal Planner also confirmed that a condition for the submission of an Air Quality Emissions Mitigation Statement could be added to any planning approval prior to the commencement of any development.

Decision:

Approved subject to:

- A) The application being referred to the Secretary of State pursuant to Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2021: and
- B) The imposition of the conditions 1 to 30 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

142 Planning application - MC/24/0710 46 Cloisterham Road, Rochester, Medway, ME1 2BW

Discussion:

The Planner outlined the application in detail for the construction of a two-storey extension to rear.

The Committee discussed the application, and a Member requested a site visit to physically see the street scene. The DM Manager referred Members to the photographs that were within the presentation and explained that the extension would have minimal impact on the street view, he considered nothing further would be gained visiting the site which had not been covered within the presentation.

Members then voted on this application being deferred for a site visit.

Decision:

Deferred for a site visit.

143 Medway Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Discussion:

The Chief Planning Officer discussed the report in detail.

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The Chief Planning Officer updated members on land banking, he explained that in Medway there were very few planning permissions affected by land banking and most permissions were delivered within a reasonable time scale. However, during periods of economic downturn delivery was slower.

He stated that there were some schemes, that had been stalled, which had been offered to small and medium sized employers (SME's) to ascertain whether they could progress any of those sites.

The Chief Planning Officer informed Members that there were a number of people on the self-build register. One development in Cliffe Woods had been delivered but another in High Halstow had been delayed due to issues with design, while three plots in Lower Rainham Road were being constructed.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

Chairperson

Date:

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