

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Wednesday, 22 October 2025
6.30pm to 8.02pm

Record of the meeting

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

Present:	Councillors: Stamp (Chairperson), Anang, Bowen, Etheridge, Filmer, Gilbourne, Gulvin, Hamandishe, Hamilton, Myton, Peake, Pearce and Vye
Substitutes:	Councillors: Campbell (Substitute for Field) Price (Substitute for Jones)
In Attendance:	Councillor Louwella Prenter (agenda item 6) Chantelle Farrant-Smith, Senior Planner Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer Peter Hockney, DM Manager Joanna Horne, Lawyer Jacky Olsen, Senior Planner Sam Pilbeam, Senior Planner

380 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Field and Jones.

381 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 24 September 2025 was agreed by the Committee 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 38 – Planning Application MC/25/1034 Land to the rear of The Old Vicarage, High Street, Isle of Grain, Rochester

Following the Planning Committee's decision to approve the application subject to an additional condition in relation to foul drainage, which was agreed as set out below:

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Prior to the commencement of development, details of the proposed means of foul drainage disposal shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

Reason: To ensure adequate foul drainage in accordance with paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

382 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

383 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 of 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.

Councillor Campbell stated that although she worked with the local MP Naushabah Khan and some of these planning applications had come into the office, Councillor Campbell was not involved in case work and, therefore, not involved in any of these planning applications.

Councillor Campbell referred to planning application MC/25/1488 25 Franklin Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4DF and stated that she had met with the applicant and his brother briefly whilst working in the office with MP Naushabah Khan, however, had no discussions regarding this planning application.

Councillor Stamp referred to planning application MC/25/1488 25 Franklin Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4DF and stated she had known the applicant for a number of years, they were friends on facebook, but not close friends and did not socialise together, however, had no discussions regarding this planning application.

384 Planning application - MC/25/1062 42 Malvern Road, Gillingham, Medway, ME7 4BA

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from Class (C3) Single dwelling house to Class (C2) Residential Institution (Children's Care Home) for up to 2 children.

The Committee considered the application noting that, in Medway, there was a shortage of suitable care provisions for young people.

The Senior Planner explained that there were parking pressures within the local area. The supporting statement outlined that staff members would be advised that they could not drive to work using their own private car, however, as this would be difficult to enforce, a condition for the Travel Management Plan would be included towards public transport or other sustainable forms of transport.

The Service Manager - Development Management clarified that it would be difficult to enforce a requirement for no member of staff ever to drive to work as there could be many different reasons why staff members needed to drive, however, the applicant would encourage the use of public transport. He explained that parking issues and vehicle movements / disturbances could potentially be greater if the six-bed family home was occupied by a family with all members of the family being of an age where they could drive and owned separate cars. The Travel Management Plan to be submitted pursuant to the recommended condition would give the Planning Team the ability to control parking pressures.

The Chairperson explained that where the Planning Committee approved planning permission for children's care homes, this approval related only to planning terms and that the permission for the Children's Care Home to operate was granted by Ofsted.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 6 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with condition 2 being amended as follows:

Amended Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Received 26 May 2025
Site Location Plan

Received 22 October 2025
PFP02 - Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations

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Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

385 Planning application - MC/25/1595 31 Stafford Street, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5EN

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from Class (C4) House in multiple occupation (HMO) to sui-generis 7 bed HMO.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Louwella Prenter addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- The number of HMOs in Gillingham was increasing. Family homes were now being replaced by HMOs which removed much needed affordable family housing. We do not want an over development which resulted in residents living on top of each other.
- Living in one room could affect the resident's mental health.
- Concern regarding extra vehicle movements either from those living there or from their visitors. If residents were shift workers, there could be noise and movement 24 hours a day.
- This HMO could have a negative impact and put excessive stress on neighbours through increased noise and the reduction of light to their home.
- Refuse storage, as there was no rear access, the rubbish that was stored in the rear garden would be required to be brought through the house on bin day. Or would it just be left out the front of the property all the time.
- We should limit the number of HMOs within a certain distance.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

The Committee acknowledged that there was high demand for people waiting for this type of accommodation, however, care should be taken to ensure that there were not too many HMOs within the same area. Members noted the concerns from residents' complaints of a proliferation of HMOs within the local area.

The Chairperson clarified that there could be up to six residents living within a HMO which would not require planning permission but was concerned about the increase and acceptance of planning applications for 7 or more residents. The Senior Planner confirmed that condition 4 stated that "the house of multiple occupation hereby approved shall be occupied by a maximum of seven people". That would include residents using the same room throughout a 24-hour period, for example one using the room during the day and one during the night, that would, therefore, equate to two residents.

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The Senior Planner had provided a land use map which showed the number of registered HMOs, however, it was acknowledged that there could be hidden HMOs across Medway that could not be accounted for.

Some Members were concerned with the size of the accommodation and outdoor space. The report confirmed that all bedrooms exceeded the space standard guidelines and that there were communal spaces including a kitchen and a separate living / dining room.

Members discussed how the prevalence of having too many HMOs in one area could affect the community cohesion of the area. They discussed looking at no more than 10% of HMOs in one specific area.

The Chief Planning Officer informed Members that Medway Council continued to encourage university students, staff from Medway Hospital and young professionals to live in the area and a HMO may be the only type of accommodation that they could afford. Medway Council prioritised its expectations of developers to improve the standard of these types of accommodation and the internal room sizes. In the past, room sizes in these properties definitely would not have met the statutory space guidelines. This property did and, in some rooms, significantly exceeded the space requirements.

The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that condition 6 dealt with refuse facilities. He did suggest that the condition could be amended to include the requirement for a Refuse Management Strategy to ensure that waste was not left out of the front of the property apart from on bin day.

As Members requested to see all the HMOs located within a 500-metre radius, Members agreed to defer this application and the next two planning applications so that officers could provide this information. The Chief Planning Officer also stated the team would look into data on hidden HMOs and that all the information would be brought back to a future Planning Committee meeting for determination.

Decision:

DEFERRED so that officers could do further research into the number of HMOs within a 500-metre radius and report back to a future Planning Committee meeting.

386 Planning application - MC/25/1453 3 Kingswood Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 1DZ

Decision:

DEFERRED so that officers could do further research into the number of HMOs within a 500-metre radius and report back to a future Planning Committee meeting.

387 Planning application - MC/25/1488 25 Franklin Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4DF

Decision:

DEFERRED so that officers could do further research into the number of HMOs within a 500-metre radius and report back to a future Planning Committee meeting.

388 Exclusion of the press and public

Decision:

The Committee agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 10 (Planning Enforcement Report) because consideration of these matters in public would disclose information falling within paragraph 6 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as specified in agenda item 12 (Exclusion of Press and Public) and, in all the circumstances of the case, the Committee considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

389 Planning Enforcement Report

Discussion:

The Chief Planning Officer gave a summary of the planning enforcement proceedings referred to in Appendix A to the report.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

Chairperson

Date:

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