

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Wednesday, 17 December 2025
6.30pm to 10.59pm

Record of the meeting

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

- Present:** Councillors: Stamp (Chairperson), Jones (Vice-Chairperson), Anang, Bowen, Etheridge, Field, Filmer, Gulvin, Hamandishe, Hamilton, Myton, Peake, Pearce and Vye
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Kemp (Substitute for Gilbourne)
- In Attendance:** Councillor Crozer (agenda item 10)
Councillor McDonald (agenda item 6)
Councillor Louwella Prenter (agenda items 7 and 8)
Councillor Mrs Turpin (agenda item 5)
Councillor Williams (agenda item 5)
Martin Carpenter, Consultant
Chantelle Farrant-Smith, Senior Planner
Cathy Fishenden, Consultant
Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer
Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services
Peter Hockney, Service Manager - Development Management
Jo Horne, Lawyer
Arron Nicholls, Senior Planner
Joshua Odell, Planner
Sam Pilbeam, Senior Planner
Amy Shardlow, Senior Planner
Steven Ward, Highways Consultant

557 Apologies for absence

An apology of absence was received from Councillor Gilbourne.

558 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 19 November 2025 was agreed and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

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559 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

560 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 Bowen referred to planning application MC/25/0937 Two Acre Farm, Ropers Green Lane, High Halstow, Rochester ME3 8QP and stated that as she had a Romany background, she would withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the determination of the application.

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 Filmer referred to planning application MC/25/0937 Two Acre Farm, Ropers Green Lane, High Halstow, Rochester ME3 8QP and stated that as mentioned in the report that he lived 100 metres away from the site, he would withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the determination of the application.

Councillor Myton referred to planning application MC/25/0006 Land off Lower Rochester Road, Wainscott, Rochester Medway and stated he was part of the Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School Trust and would withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the determination of the application.

Councillor Pearce referred to planning application MC/25/0937 Two Acres Farm, Ropers Green Lane, High Halstow, Rochester, ME3 8QP and stated that a close family member had business dealings with the applicant's family within the last 12 months, therefore, he would withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the determination of the application.

Councillor Pearce referred to planning application MC/25/0484 Land adjacent of "Kingsnorth", Sharnal Street, High Halstow, Rochester, Kent ME3 8QJ and planning application MC/25/0701 Land to the north of Stoke Road and east of Walnut Tree Grove, Hoo St Werburgh, ME3 9YB and informed the Committee

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that as he wanted to address the Committee as Ward Councillor, he would take no part in the determination of these applications.

Councillor Stamp referred to planning applications MC/25/1657 15 Paget Street, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5ER and MC/25/1488 25 Franklin Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4DF and stated although the applicant was a friend, however, she did not socialise with him. She was approached by the applicant at her ward surgery on 8 November 2025, however, refused to enter into any discussion with them and informed them to go through their Planning Officer. Therefore, she would remain and take part in the consideration and determination of the planning application.

Note: Prior to the consideration of the planning applications set out on the agenda, the Service Manager - Development Management informed the Planning Committee that a draft new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had been published on 16 December 2025. As this was a draft NPPF for consultation until March 2026 and the existing NPPF had not been modified or revoked, officers would continue to assess the planning applications against the current NPPF.

561 Planning application - MC/25/0006 Land off Lower Rochester Road, Wainscott, Rochester, Medway

Discussion:

The Chief Planning Officer explained why this planning application had been brought to the Planning Committee as a non-determination application and stated there was a holding objection from National Highways. The applicant had also recently submitted further information which officers needed to consider and consult on. He explained that the applicant was aware that the Council had a Draft Local Plan which was being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination next year. The Chief Planning Officer clarified that if the applicant thought Members would refuse this planning application, and they wanted to appeal, the planning application could be heard through the Rosewell Procedures and, if appropriate, a public inquiry in advance of the Local Plan examination could be heard.

It was clarified that the Council was not able to determine this planning application, however, the Planning Committee should consider what their decision would have been if they had been in a position to determine it.

The Planning Consultant discussed the outline application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for demolition of existing buildings, the erection up to 800 dwellings (use class C3), 2-Form Entry primary school, mixed use local centre (use class E and F2), retirement living (use class C2), associated works and public open space. Approval was sought for the principal means of vehicular access from Lower Rochester Road and Higham Road.

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The Planning Consultant brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet, where further comments were received from Active Travel England and an objection letter from the Independent Group. The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the Independent Group Member on the Planning Committee had not been involved or signed the objection letter.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Mrs Turpin addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- There were currently many challenges to the area and the development would change the current rural character.
- Disappointed that the applicant had already appealed, even though they were still submitting further information.
- Additional pressure on local healthcare provisions. Already one of the 4 GP surgeries had closed. How would a new community access their GP and healthcare provisions. Recruitment of rural GPs was a much greater challenge. Concerned with healthcare for all local residents.
- The developer was obliged to provide a one form entry primary school facility and contribute towards a secondary provision through S106 contributions. Medway Council's own Education Department objected to this planning application. A one form primary entry was not favoured by the Department for Education (DfE) or Medway Council as it would be educationally and financially unviable. The DfE rarely approved one form entry unless under exceptional circumstances.
- The developer referenced a two form entry school, which could result in an excess of school places, attracting pupils from out of the area, adding traffic, congestion and pollution. Medway Council did not have the additional funding to deliver a two form entry.

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

- The land proposed was Grade 1 and 2 of agricultural soil, which would result in a reduction of agricultural land. Although not within a green belt area, once built on it would be lost forever.
- This proposal did not maintain or enhance the character amenity and functioning of the countryside.
- Loss of habitat would affect bird and animal species and could have a detrimental effect on sites of special scientific interest (SSSI).
- Increased traffic would lead to road traffic emissions from major roads which would be detrimental to air quality.
- Local amenities were already under extreme pressure.

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

The Chief Planning Officer explained that further work was required regarding the S106 contributions for highways and no agreement had yet been agreed with the applicant. An Infrastructure Development Plan and an updated

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Developer Contribution guide would be considered. He confirmed that he would speak to the local Ward Councillors regarding the S106 negotiations when this application got closer to an appeal.

The Highways Consultant confirmed that a Stage One Road Safety Audit had been undertaken along with a heavy goods vehicle tracking survey and safety concerns had been highlighted.

Members were disappointed that the applicant was continuing to submit further information, giving officers no time to consider or consult on this additional information and had already gone to appeal. Members wanted to wait for a response from National Highways to ensure their concerns had been addressed and also from Active Travel England as walking and cycling were significant issues but recognised that they had to give their opinions on the application as it stood due to the appeal.

Decision:

That if the Local Planning Authority had been in a position to determine the application it would have been REFUSED for the reasons 1 to 6 as set out in the report.

562 Planning application - MC/25/1657 15 Paget Street, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5ER

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from a 6 bedroom HMO (Use Class C4) to a 9 bedroom (Sui Generis) HMO, and the construction of a rear garden outbuilding.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which illustrated, within a 500-metre radius of the application, the number of residential households (1,867) and the number of houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) (57) which equated to approximately 3% of the housing stock.

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

- Gillingham South had the highest percentage of HMOs in Medway and that only included those that the Council knew about. This property was already in use as a HMO and did not need to be increased to a 9 person HMO.
- Paget Street already had significant parking pressures, with a high volume of residents parking. With regards to future residents not being able to apply for parking permits, how would this be enforced.
- Concerns regarding odours and pests due to a lack of waste storage.
- With houses over 100 years old that shared party walls, concerns were raised regarding the risk of damage due to internal alterations.

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- Increased levels of noise and disturbance, further pressures on the local amenities and possible impact on vulnerable residents.

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

The Service Manager - Development Management confirmed that this property had been granted a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) to become a HMO for up to 6 bedrooms in June 2025.

Members raised concerns with the high concentration of HMOs in the surrounding area and although this property had been awarded permission for a HMO for up to 6 bedrooms, this one submitted was now for 9, which was a 50% uplift.

Members raised concerns with the increased parking pressures and the Chief Planning Officer explained that under LDC for a HMO of 6, they could be issued with 6 parking permits. Condition 7 would cover the Parking Management Plan and officers could stipulate how many parking permits could be issued. It was suggested that only 2 parking permits be issued. Condition 7 could also include how the applicant would manage any parking issues and could make it very clear to potential occupants that they would not be able to apply for parking permits as this would be a car free development.

The Chief Planning Officer stated that Cabinet, on 16 December 2025, had approved the serving of Article 4 Directions which would remove permitted development rights for a change of use from a dwelling to a HMO for 7 wards in Medway which would include Gillingham South. All future HMOs would now require planning permission.

The Chief Planning Officer clarified that the condition that related to the refuse management could stipulate that only the storage area specified for refuse was used and that refuse should not be left out on non-bin days.

The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that it would be within the applicant's interest to manage their residents' behaviour and an additional condition could be recommended for a management procedure that would stipulate how the applicant should manage their occupants, how they interact with their neighbours and how the applicant would manage breaches of rules of the property.

On being put to the vote, the proposal to approve the recommendations set out in the report (approval with conditions), was lost.

Members discussed the reasons for refusal, in detail, which included the impact of additional residents on neighbours, increased noise, anti-social behaviours (ASB), parking constraints and impact on the visual character of the area. Bedrooms 8 and 9 were originally one bedroom and had now been divided into 2 bedrooms with bedroom 8 having a sloped roof, which did not have the height space recommended.

Decision:

REFUSED on the grounds of an overdevelopment, impact on noise and amenities, poor quality of bedroom 8, impact on additional comings and goings on the character of the area and the impact on neighbouring properties.

Final wording to be agreed by the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Service Manager - Development Management Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Opposition Spokespersons.

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

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 9 bedroom house in multiple occupation (Sui Generis) together with construction of a two storey side/rear extension L-shape dormer window to rear together with alterations to rear roof slopes, installation of roof lights to front and second floor window to side to provide additional living accommodation within roof space with associated external alterations, parking, bin/cycle store, storage sheds and landscaping.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which illustrated, within a 500-metre radius of the application, the number of residential households (2,606) and the number of houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) (37) which equated to approximately 1.5% of the housing stock.

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

- Increased traffic, parking pressures and noise.
- Losing a family home was unacceptable and this was considered an overdevelopment and overpopulation of a house.
- There was nothing within the planning application to support the community cohesion and how that would positively impact the neighbours. Although other local houses had extensions, they did not house 9 people along with their guests.
- Although the front had been converted to parking spaces, having extra residents would only add to parking pressures.
- With larger numbers of transient residents, this could result in additional fly tipping.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting points raised by the Ward Councillor and the Senior Planner explained that changes had been made to the application since the previous planning application was refused.

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The Senior Planner confirmed that there would be a lightwell in the basement for the kitchen, that could be opened and each of the bedrooms had sufficient lighting.

Members raised concerns with the high concentration of HMOs in the surrounding area and although this property had been awarded permission for HMO for up to 6 bedrooms, this one submitted was now for 9, which was a 50% uplift.

The Service Manager - Development Management confirmed that building regulations would assess the whole property including soundproofing.

On being put to the vote, the proposal to approve the recommendations set out in the report (approval with conditions), was lost.

Members discussed the reasons for refusal, in detail, which included the increased movement due to additional residents which would impact the neighbours and the inadequate level of amenity for bedroom 2 and 5.

Decision:

REFUSED on the grounds of increased movement of additional residents that would impact the neighbours and the inadequate level of amenity for bedrooms 2 and 5.

Final wording to be agreed by the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Service Manager - Development Management, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Opposition Spokespersons.

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

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from a dwelling house (Class C3) to a 8-bedroom house of multiple occupation (Class C4) with loft conversion, single storey rear extension.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which illustrated, within a 500-metre radius of the application, the number of residential households (2,266) and the number of houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) (62) which equated to approximately 2.7% of the housing stock.

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

- Petition submitted signed by 55 residents which showed the level of objection to this application.

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- Excess refuse, noise, ASB, increased movement due to additional residents in HMOs.
- Needed a proper Waste Management Plan. Refuse bags being blown around would create a negative impact on the street which would then require those refuse bags to be cleaned up.
- There were (potentially) hidden HMOs in that road along with temporary accommodation, a care home and supported living. This all added to the number of residents living in this road.
- Street congested and parking was already at a premium.

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

The Service Manager - Development Management clarified that it had been agreed at a previous Planning Committee that officers would produce a map of all the HMOs within a 500-metre radius. This was alongside the report that went to Cabinet regarding Article 4 Directions. Officers used data from Council Tax, HMO licensing records, planning and enforcement records into a predictive modelling software. The Article 4 Direction, which had been approved at Cabinet on 16 December 2025, would give the Local Planning Authority increased decision making powers regarding properties that wished to be converted to HMOs.

The Senior Planner confirmed that all rooms were either street or rear fronted and only one room was located in the loft area. He advised that the lightwell window opened.

The Senior Planner confirmed that this property was located within a parking management zone and within the Parking Management Plan restrictions on the number of additional parking permits being issued could be controlled. Although there were garages on site, they were not sufficient in size to be utilised as parking spaces and were not incorporated within the report as the amount of parking spaces available.

Members were concerned with additional noise and disturbance and acknowledged that Kingswood Road had other properties such as flat conversions and a care home.

The Senior Planner confirmed that a condition would cover bin storage.

On being put to the vote, the proposal to approve the recommendations set out in the report (approval with conditions), was lost.

Members discussed the reasons for refusal, in detail, which included the over concentration that would impact amenity and further loss of family homes and asked officers to investigate how many family homes there were in the street and what the percentage was and whether that had been reached.

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Decision:

REFUSED on the grounds of an over concentration that would impact amenity and further loss of family homes and asked officers to investigate how many family homes there were in the street, what the percentage was and whether concentration levels had been reached.

Final wording to be agreed by the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Service Manager - Development Management with the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Opposition Spokespersons.

Note: Please note that the meeting was adjourned during this agenda item owing to a medical incident.

565 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) HMO to sui-generis 7 bed HMO.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which illustrated, within a 500-metre radius of the application, the number of residential households (2,253) and the number of houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) (58) which equated to approximately 2.6% of the housing stock.

The Senior Planner confirmed that there was a lightwell in the basement which provided sufficient light and the dining room was located on the lower ground floor in addition to a communal area above.

The Chief Planning Officer clarified that this planning application was different from the previous applications on the agenda as this planning application was for one additional occupant. The property had two communal rooms with a kitchen / dining room in the basement which had sufficient light. The bedrooms were all either front or rear facing with no impacting outlook. The room sizes all met, or exceeded, the national standard guidelines. There was an outbuilding at the end of the garden which could provide further amenity space. If the applicant wanted to extend the property, they would need to apply for planning permission.

The Committee discussed the application in detail and Members were concerned with the increased parking pressures and the Chief Planning Officer explained that condition 7 would cover the Parking Management Plan and could stipulate that no further parking permits be issued.

The Chief Planning Officer clarified that the condition that related to the Refuse Management Plan could stipulate that only the area specified for refuse was to be used and that bags could not be left out on non-bin days.

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Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 7 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with condition 6 being amended to include a Waste Management Plan, the final wording to be agreed by the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Opposition Spokespersons. The Chief Planning Officer would discuss condition 7 with the Highways Authority regarding no further parking permits being issued to this property.

Note: Owing to the medical incident referenced above, it was agreed that agenda items 10-14 would be deferred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee, as set out below.

566 Planning application - MC/25/0937 Two Acre Farm, Ropers Green Lane, High Halstow, Rochester, Medway ME3 8QP

Decision:

The determination of this planning application was deferred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

567 Planning application - MC/25/0484 Land adjacent of "Kingsnorth", Sharnal Street, High Halstow, Rochester, Kent ME3 8QJ

Decision:

The determination of this planning application was deferred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

568 Planning application - MC/25/0701 Land to the north of Stoke Road and east of Walnut Tree Grove, Hoo St. Werburgh, ME3 9YB

Decision:

The determination of this planning application was deferred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

569 Planning application - MC/25/0810 66 Brompton Farm Road, Strood, Rochester, Medway ME2 3QY

Decision:

The determination of this planning application was deferred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

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**570 Planning application - MC/25/0659 56 Darnley Road, Strood, Rochester,
Medway ME2 2HA**

Decision:

The determination of this planning application was deferred to the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

Chairperson

Date:

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