

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Wednesday, 14 January 2026
6.30pm to 8.15pm

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, Field, Filmer, Gilbourne, Gulvin, Hamandishe, Myton, Peake and Vye

Substitutes: Councillors:
Shokar (Substitute for Hamilton)
Kemp (Substitute for Etheridge)
Mandaracas (Substitute for Bowen)
Williams (Substitute for Pearce)

In Attendance: Councillor George Crozer (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Pearce (Agenda Items 4, 6, & 7)
Vanessa Etheridge, Democratic Services Officer
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer
Peter Hockney, DM Manager
Joanna Horne, Lawyer
Arron Nicholls, Senior Planner
Joshua Odell, Planner
Amy Shardlow, Planner

592 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Etheridge, Bowen, Hamilton, and Pearce.

593 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

594 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

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Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Filmer referred to application MC/25/1687 Phipson Croft, Sharnal Street, High Halstow, Rochester, Medway, ME3 8QN and advised that he owned land adjacent to the application site. He would therefore withdraw from the meeting for this agenda item and take no part in the discussion or determination of this application.

Councillor Filmer also referred to application MC/25/0937 Two Acre Farm, Ropers Green Lane, High Halstow, Rochester, Medway ME3 8QP) and advised that he lived close to, and in the same road as the application. He would therefore withdraw from the meeting for this agenda item and take no part in the discussion or determination of this application.

Other interests

There were none.

595 Planning application - MC/25/1687 Phipson Croft, Sharnal Street, High Halstow, Rochester, Medway, ME3 8QN

Councillor Filmer left the meeting for this item and took no part in the discussion or determination of this application.

Discussion:

The Service Manager - Development Management, presented the application which sought outline application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping) for construction of up to 9 no. dwellings. It was noted that matters relating to layout, scale and access were for consideration as part of this application. Members' attention was drawn to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which advised that a Unilateral Undertaking had been submitted to seek to address the second reason for refusal contained within the recommendation. However, that was not in a final agreed position to enable the impact on the Special Protection Areas of the Thames Estuary and Marshes and the Medway Estuary and Marshes, to be sufficiently mitigated. The second reason for refusal was therefore retained as part of the officer recommendation to refuse.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Pearce addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following points in support of the officers recommendation to refuse the Application, due to the following concerns:

- The Peninsula contained many internationally and nationally protected habitats.
- The applicant had not provided the required information to conduct an appropriate assessment of the environmental impact, and without this assessment it was unsafe to approve the application because the impact on wildlife was unknown.

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- The applicant had not made the required Bird Wise payment and approving the application would set a dangerous precedent, signalling to future applicants that they did not need to consider habitat protection, or make Bird Wise payments.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation, the report, the supplementary advice sheet and the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

Decision:

REFUSED for reasons 1 and 2 as set out in the report.

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

Councillor Filmer, having already left the meeting for the previous application, remained away for this item and took no part in the discussion or determination of this application.

Discussion:

The Senior Planner presented the application which sought planning consent for the extension of the existing Two Acre Farm gypsy and travellers caravan site towards the rear, to facilitate the provision of an additional eight pitches that would accommodate 12 caravans and a day room. Members' attention was drawn to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which recommended the inclusion of two additional conditions, 9 and 10, in relation to refuse storage arrangements and foul and surface water drainage.

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

- Restricted access to the site - Parbrook Road and Ropers Green Lane provided limited access. Parbrook Road was a narrow lane with no formal passing places, and mobile homes had already caused blockages during delivery due to difficult manoeuvring.
- Condition of Ropers Green Lane - much of Ropers Green Lane was effectively a dirt track and had received minimal maintenance from the Council. If approved could there be a condition made requiring a full review and repair of the lane (particularly the section behind Sharnal Street).
- Lack of waste storage and collection arrangements - current plans made no provision for on-site domestic waste storage. Residents currently placed waste at the top of Parbrook Road at a sharp junction, a communal point which regularly became unsanitary, with wildlife scattering rubbish. The area frequently attracted fly-tipping and had occurred twice in recent months. If approved, could there be a condition requiring proper on-site waste storage, and could the Council introduce

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curb side collections for properties on Parbrook Road and Sharnal Street.

- Uncertainty over foul water treatment – he noted that the applicant listed the method of foul water disposal as “unknown.” No drainage strategy was provided and approving the application without clarity on sewage handling was a major risk.
- Signage – if the application was approved, could the Parbrook Road street sign be amended to include “Leading to Roper’s Green Lane” which would assist delivery drivers and prevent people missing the small connecting section.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation, the report, the supplementary advice sheet and the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

During the discussion some concerns were raised which included: the history of breaches of planning and this being an attempt to regularise and expand unlawful development; site use was inconsistent with the original permission, with evidence that chalets were being advertised for rent, and not a traditional Traveller site; lack of basic infrastructure with the access road being narrow single-track, with damage already having occurred; no sewage facilities, and no provision for waste disposal and allowing further development would worsen public health risks and cause further environmental harm; overdevelopment of the site and whether it was possible to limit further expansion. Concern was also raised that there had been a persistent lack of enforcement by the Council over the years. A query was raised as to why an officer visit was taking place at the site the following week, which the Senior Planner clarified was part of a medway wide audit of Gypsy/Traveller sites rather than anything to do with any assessment of the planning merits of the application.

During the discussion it was also noted that the family had lived there for more than 20 years and that there was a significant shortfall in Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the area, with evidence suggesting the true need was even higher due to undercounts and unmet demand. Therefore windfall sites contributed positively to meeting Medway’s wider equality obligations.

In response to some of the points raised during the discussion the Senior Planner advised that the application would address previous non-compliance with the original consent. He had visited with an enforcement officer which had led to a delay and some changes to the application and was the reason it was in part retrospective. He also advised that he believed the proposed conditions addressed the concerns raised.

The Chief Planning Officer advised that in relation to any concerns as to whether the current or future occupants were genuine Gypsy/Travellers, officers had visited the site and were satisfied that the occupiers met the policy definition. Additionally, Condition 3 legally restricted the site to Gypsy/Traveller occupation, making this an enforceable condition. With reference to enforcement in general, he advised that residents’ concerns had been acted upon, and previous issues on the adjacent site had been regularised. Although

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part of the current proposal was retrospective, officers had worked closely with the applicants to produce a scheme that was a significant improvement on what currently existed. The application also supported the objective, of meeting Medway's substantial unmet need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and the importance of enabling families to expand on or near existing sites to stay together.

With the agreement of the Committee, the Chief Planning Officer undertook to speak to Highways and reference the concerns expressed at the meeting concerning signage at Parbrook Road and Ropers Green Lane.

Decision:

APPROVED subject to:

- a) conditions 1 to 8 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report; and
- b) the inclusion of two additional conditions, 9 and 10 as set out in the supplementary advice sheet for the reasons stated therein.

Having previously withdrawn from the meeting, Councillor Filmer returned for the remainder of the meeting.

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

As Councillor Shokar was not present for part of the officer presentation, he did not take part in the determination of this application.

Discussion:

The Planner presented the application which sought outline planning consent with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout) for the construction of two, 2 storey dwellings with off road parking. The matters to be considered as part of the application, were therefore, the access for the development and its scale.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Pearce addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following points in support of the officers recommendation to refuse the Application:

- He supported the reason for Refusal 1, noting its consistency with the earlier Sharnal Street application refused by the Committee.
- He supported Reason for Refusal 3, as the applicant had not assessed the impact on protected habitats, leaving the extent of any potential harm unknown. In the absence of habitat assessment and the required Bird

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Wise mitigation payment, the Member stated that refusal was the only appropriate option.

- There was a key difference from the previous proposal because the application was no longer for self-build and as such there was a statutory requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and the application did not demonstrate compliance with the requirements, justifying the additional refusal reason.
- Irrespective of the planning merits, the identified technical non-compliances meant the application could not be supported, and approving a non-compliant application would set an inappropriate precedent for future applicants regarding habitats and BNG obligations.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer's presentation, the report and the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

Decision:

REFUSED for the reasons 1 to 3 as set out in the report.

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

Discussion:

The Senior Planner presented the application which sought outline planning permission with all matters reserved for the construction of 75 residential units, with associated works and infrastructure. Alongside the demolition of the existing equestrian and VHF Transmitter buildings and structures onsite. Members' attention was drawn to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which set out 10 further objections received in relation to the application. However it was noted that the matters raised had been dealt with in the main report or would be addressed at the Reserved Matters stage, therefore the recommendations remained unchanged.

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

- Overdevelopment - Stoke Road had previously been a quiet rural lane, characterised by farming activity and orchards on both sides but had experienced significant loss of local character due to large-scale housing developments since 2016, and the extensive development had fundamentally altered what was once the centre of the local farming community. Mirroring the experience on nearby Bells Lane, now considered unsafe for pedestrians and motorists due to overdevelopment and insufficient road improvements.
- Highway safety - despite repeated concerns raised with Medway Council, no meaningful highway safety improvements had been delivered for Stoke Road. Sections of the road had a footpath on only one side, and other stretches had footpaths too narrow for prams or wheelchairs, which was unacceptable and potentially non-compliant. A

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road safety audit had been requested, but no update or assurance had been provided. Many residents considered the situation to be ‘an accident waiting to happen.’

- Ash tree – Jones Homes had felled a mature English ash tree opposite the site, despite having previously stated in writing that it would be retained. The tree had been valued by residents, and its removal caused concern about the reliability of commitments made by the applicant.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation, the report, the supplementary advice sheet and the points raised by the Ward Councillor.

In response to some concerns raised during the discussion and by the Ward Councillor, the Senior Planner firstly advised that the applicant was not Jones Homes which was a different site and incident. With reference to air quality, the proposed condition 26 required submission of an emissions mitigation statement. The Senior Planner had visited the footpath which appeared wide enough for a pushchair and person overtaking and deemed it adequate.

Decision:

APPROVED subject to:

- A. The applicants entering into agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act to secure:
 - i. A minimum of 25% affordable housing.
 - ii. £17,023.50 to improve equipment and facilities at Hoo Library.
 - iii. £23,354.25 towards improvements at Hoo Leisure Centre.
 - iv. £17,838 for the provision, improvement and promotion of waste and recycling services.
 - v. £83,995.22 towards improvements to open space and outdoor formal sport within the Hoo area.
 - vi. £142,143.00 for mainstream nursery provision within 2 miles of development site and /or SEND Education in Medway.
 - vii. £318,991.54 for mainstream primary provision within 2 miles of development site and/or SEND Education within Medway.
 - viii. £276,443.25 for mainstream or SEND secondary provision within Medway.
 - ix. £51,978.21 for mainstream or SEND Sixth form provision within Medway.

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- x. £65,183.25 health contribution towards extension/refurbishment or upgrading of existing proactive premises within the vicinity or contribution to a new facility.
 - xi. £5,625 for PROW and £3,750 towards the England Coast Path improvements within the vicinity of the site.
 - xii. £224,000 towards Public Transport provision improvements.
 - xiii. £308,000 Off site highways improvements.
 - xiv. £ 18,375 towards public realm improvements in Hoo centre.
 - xv. £25,311.75 towards strategic measures in respect of the coastal North Kent Special Protection Area.
 - xvi. £62,448.41 towards the provision of a replacement community centre in Hoo.
 - xvii. Offer the Pill box on site to the Parish Council for £1.
 - xviii. Meeting the Council's costs.
- B. Conditions 1 to 31 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

599 Planning application - MC/25/2152 Chatham Town Football Club, Maidstone Road Sports Ground, Bournville Avenue, Chatham, Medway

Discussion:

The Service Manager - Development Management presented the application which sought permission for the construction of a floodlit football foundation play zone with linked path.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation and the report. In response to a concern raised about CCTV and anti-social behaviour, the Chief Planning Officer advised that he would raise any concerns with the relevant Council department.

Decision:

APPROVED subject to conditions 1 to 7 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

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

Discussion:

The Planner presented the application which sought permission for the construction of a wraparound part single/ part first floor extension to rear/side; construction of a single storey garage with storage to side of rear garden and change of use of amenity land to vehicle crossover to front of new garage onto Strodes Close, of which would involve the demolition of existing side garage and conservatory.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation and the report.

Decision:

APPROVED subject to conditions 1 to 5 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

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

Discussion:

The Planner presented the application which sought permission for the formation of a crossover from Dart Close to the rear garden of 56 Darnley Road. This would require the replacement of part of the rear fence with a new double timber gate to gain access to the new hard surfaced parking area within the rear garden.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation and the report.

Decision:

APPROVED subject to conditions 1 to 3 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

Chairperson

Date:

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