

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Wednesday, 11 March 2026
6.30pm to 9.25pm

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, Gilbourne, Gulvin, Hamandishe, Hamilton, Myton, Peake and Vye
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Mrs Turpin (Substitute for Pearce)
- In Attendance:** Councillor Price (agenda item 5)
Councillor Crozer (agenda item 6)
Councillor Pearce (agenda item 6)
Councillor Sands (agenda item 6)
Councillor Spalding (agenda item 6)
Councillor Williams (agenda item 7)
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer
Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services
Peter Hockney, Service Manager, Development Management
Joanna Horne, Lawyer
Madeline Mead, Principal Planner
Nick Roberts, Principal Planner
Steven Ward, Highways Consultant

765 Apologies for absence

An apology of absence was received from Councillor Pearce.

766 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 11 February 2026 was agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

767 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

768 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

Councillor Filmer referred to planning application MC/23/0855 Land east of High Halstow and stated that as he had a property 20 metres away from the site, he would withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the determination of the application.

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.

Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer, referred to MC/25/1506 Shaftesbury House, Upnor Road, Upnor, Rochester, Medway ME2 4XB and stated that he knew a number of people, socially, in the village as a result of previous employment in the area which had ended around 12 years ago, some of whom could have made representatives on this application. He stated that as a result of this he had no involvement in any planning applications in Lower Upnor, including this item. He withdrew from the meeting for this item.

Councillor Mrs Turpin referred to planning application MC/25/1506 Shaftesbury House, Upnor Road, Upnor, Rochester, Medway ME2 4XB during consideration of the item, disclosing that she was a Landlord with HMO properties, however, given this item did not relate to policy, she would take part in the determination of this application.

769 Planning application - MC/25/1033 Old Gas Works, Strand Approach Road, Gillingham, Medway

Discussion:

The Principal Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which included a Site Map and informed Members that under appraisal the report title "Principle of Foodstore" should read "Principle of Foodstore and Class E Floorspace".

The Principal Planner outlined the application in detail for a hybrid planning application for a mixed-use development comprising full planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and structures and the construction of a retail unit (Class E); replacement gas distribution company facilities to include

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new office, training facility and depot; internal access road, pedestrian / cycle access from Pier Road and revised access from Strand Approach Road; car parking; and alterations to the site layout to include drainage, infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping; and associated works; and outline planning permission (with all matters reserved) for the demolition of existing buildings and structures; the construction of up to 500 dwellinghouses; construction of a care home / later living (Class C2 and / or C3), erection of commercial, business and service units (Class E), provision of new sailing clubhouse and / or flexible Class E, provision of car parking and associated physical works including new access, utilities, drainage, infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping. The Chief Planning Officer advised that he was also seeking delegated authority to deal with some minor amendments to the heads of agreement with Segas Sailing Club (SSC).

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Price addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following issues:

- That he, together with Councillor Mandaracas and Naushabah Khan MP had worked closely with Segas Sailing Club, Medway Watersports Trust, the Planning Department and the developer, Blueberry Homes.
- That he was in favour of supporting the application as homes were needed, as long as residents' access to the River Medway could be secured through the continued activities of the sailing club and Medway Watersports Trust or their successors.
- That 10 conditions were agreed with Blueberry Homes but not all of them had been included in the report, in relation to the two organisations being able to deliver their services throughout the development stage, the provision of a new clubhouse during the early phase of development, multiple points of access to water and power within the new yard, and a new right of way for the transfer of boats from the entrance of the site to and around the creek and that these four conditions should be explicitly included in the conditions.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation, the report, the supplementary advice sheet and the Ward Councillor's comments.

During the discussion, Members indicated general support for the provision of housing on this site, although there was some concern regarding the height of the buildings.

Assurances were sought that the four particular matters referred to by the Ward Councillor, and not included in the report but agreed between the parties, would be included in the conditions in relation to the remediation of the north wall and creek, the developer to provide approximately 34 ladders with small locked gates and riser poles to facilitate the mooring of craft around the creek wall, the maintenance of these ladders and poles would be the responsibility of Segas Sailing Club (SSC), the developer to provide access to water and power at the creek side and a lease or similar agreement with nominal/peppercorn rent allowing SSC/ Medway Watersports Trust (MWST) to operate from the creek,

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including land for the pillar crane, and for this lease to stand for the life of the respective clubs.

The Chief Planning Officer advised the Committee that whilst these agreements had been made in writing, the reason they were not included in the conditions were because SSC was a private company and it was difficult to address these types of issues in a S106 agreement. However, he was seeking delegated authority to secure a condition to address the above.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of Napoleonic graves on the site, the Chief Planning Officer advised that the Council had been approached by a company which had provided burial facilities elsewhere, this information had been provided to the applicant.

In response to Members' questions, the Principal Planner advised that the proposed 140 units for older persons was in addition to the proposed 500 units, the Chief Planning Officer advised that the Council and the applicant were discussing with Homes England the possibility of providing some affordable homes on site, the Chief Planning Officer advised that the retail unit was in the detailed part of the application and would provide funding to deliver the site, therefore, the foodstore would be delivered first and that it was understood that the developer had a provider in place for this.

Decision:

Approved subject to:

- A. The applicant entering into a Section 106 agreement to secure the following:
- i) £168,745.00 towards Designated Habitats Mitigation.
 - ii) £167,315.00 towards the complete refurbishment of the Strand Lido including new flooring.
 - iii) £50,000 towards Commodores Hard surface improvements and introduction of a sea lane buoy system to separate watercraft from swimmers.
 - iv) £78,940.00 towards open space enhancements within the vicinity of the development mainly The Strand.
 - v) The construction of a new combined Club House facility on the adjacent Council-owned land currently occupied by the Medway Water Sports Trust. The new Club House will be fully constructed, fitted out and operational prior to the demolition and relocation of the existing Segas clubhouse facility. (Blueberry Homes to cover any cost over and above £1,000,000).
 - vi) £15,000 towards a new bus shelter on Pier Road to include real time information.

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- vii) To provide a new pillar crane capable of handling boats of up to 12.5 tonnes in weight and 43 feet in length and new hydraulic boat-moving trailer with a handling capacity of up to 15 tonnes.
- viii) To use reasonable endeavours to seek apprenticeships and entry level employment opportunities during the construction of the Development in accordance with a strategy to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council prior to the Commencement of Development.
- ix) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council, no dwelling shall be first occupied until details of the proposed Car Club Scheme, providing a minimum of 10 Car Club parking spaces, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.

The Car Club Scheme shall:

- Identify the location and layout of all Car Club parking spaces;
- Set out the discounts and incentives to be offered to future residents; and
- Include a strategy for monitoring use of the Car Club, including the submission of annual monitoring reports for a period of two years following implementation.

The approved Car Club Scheme shall be implemented in accordance with a timetable that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council.

- x) The applicant/owner shall submit a Late-Stage Viability Review to the Council once 90% of the residential units within the Development have been disposed of, or prior to first occupation of the final residential unit, whichever is sooner.
 - a. Assess the actual costs and revenues incurred/achieved on the Development;
 - b. identify the Actual Profit achieved;
 - c. compare Actual Profit to the profit level assumed in the Agreed Viability Position.

If the Late-Stage Viability Review identifies a Surplus Profit (being profit in excess of that assumed in the Agreed Viability Position) 50% of the Surplus Profit shall be paid to the Council as additional s106 contributions.

- B. Conditions 1 to 63 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report and that the requested delegated authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Opposition Spokespersons be granted to add a further condition to

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secure agreement covering the following matters between Segas Sailing Club, Medway Watersports Trust and the Blueberry Homes (the developer) covering: the remediation of the north wall and creek, the developer to provide approximately 34 ladders with small locked gates and riser poles to facilitate the mooring of craft around the creek wall, the maintenance of these ladders and poles would be the responsibility of SSC, the developer to provide access to water and power at the creek side and a lease or similar agreement with nominal/peppercorn rent allowing SSC/MWST to operate from the creek, including land for the pillar crane, and for this lease to stand for the life of the respective clubs, and any further amendments to the heads of terms to the S106 agreement.

770 Planning application - MC/23/0855 Land east of High Halstow

Councillor Filmer withdrew from the meeting for this item.

Discussion:

The Principal Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which set out details of revised conditions 44, 45, 50 with condition 70 to be removed, 25 further letters of objection, a representation from some members of the Independent Group plus some other matters.

The Principal Planner outlined the application in detail for a hybrid Planning Application for (i) Full Planning Application (Phase 1) for the erection of 270 no. residential units (including affordable housing) and the local centre (up to 1,000 sqm Use Classes E and F) with open space, associated vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access off Christmas Lane, upgrade of existing Public Right of Way, associated services and infrastructure, public realm, landscaping and SuDS. (with associated highway works and (ii) Outline Planning Application (all matters except for access, to be reserved for future determination) for the erection of up to 490no. residential units (including affordable housing), and a primary school (Use Class F1(a)) with new vehicular access points, car and cycle facilities and provision of public open space, sustainable drainage and landscaping works.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Pearce addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following issues:

- That approving the application now was risky as it would mean dealing with the various problems later, which he considered to be a common link throughout the report.
- That Active Travel England had issued a holding objection in relation to key issues which had not been resolved such as walking and cycling routes, connectivity gaps, cycle parking, the travel plan and RS44 Public Right of Way (PROW). Therefore, approving the planning application now did not represent sound planning and that it was an unsustainable development.

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- That the recreational effects on the habitat at Northwood Hill Nature Reserve would be significant without mitigation and that the RSPB objected, in principle, because the costs for fencing had not been agreed or secured.
- That KCC Biodiversity would require further information before determination including an agreed mitigation strategy with Natural England and the RSPB.
- That the report referred to the Fisherswood ancient woodland, which was an irreplaceable habitat, and that the report was unclear about the size/extent of the buffer between this stage and reserved matters stage of the application.
- That if the application and recommendations were sustainable it would not be necessary to rely heavily on conditions, future plans, reserved matters and a legal agreement at this stage.
- That the Committee either refuse the application or at least defer the application to enable the contradictions and critical matters to be resolved and for the mitigations to be agreed and secured.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Sands addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following issues:

- That High Halstow was one of the most elevated settlements on the Hoo Peninsula standing between the River Medway and River Thames.
- That High Halstow was a rural village with a long history over many centuries.
- That this was not a small addition to the village but rather would permanently alter the character of High Halstow and accelerate the urbanisation of rural areas.
- That there was no thought for the residents who already lived there and the infrastructure which was already under strain.
- That given the issues surrounding children and families in temporary accommodation and the prices these houses were being marketed for, how many local families would be helped, therefore, this development would not answer the Medway's housing needs.
- That many residents saw this application as an attempt to pre-empt the Local Plan and if approved would change the character of the village forever.
- That the Committee should be refuse or at least defer the application.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Crozer addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following issues:

- That this application had been sitting with the Planning Department for three years, however, the 107 page report which had been published a few days ago represented a rush to the finish line which would double the size of the village. This was unfair to the community and a risk to the Committee and was an attempt to bypass the public examination of the emerging Local Plan.

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- That the Committee was effectively being asked to decide the soundness of Policy SA9 before the Independent Inspectors had even looked at it.
- That approving the application now would be pre-empting the new Local Plan.
- That the report suggested that the £6.8M contribution for Four Elms Hill junction works was enough, however, previous HIF data suggested that over £100M was required for the Hoo Peninsula mitigations.
- That condition 72 allowed for 350 homes to be occupied before the strategic highway mitigation was even operational and he questioned where was the evidence that Four Elms Hill could handle these additional homes.
- That regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations could not be met at this stage and that the delivery timeline contradicted the applicant's own transport assessment.
- There were five specific questions, as summarised in the Chief Planning Officer's responses below.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Spalding addressed the Committee as an adjoining Ward Councillor and outlined the following issues:

- That he and other Members had attended a presentation on this application three weeks ago and that the 107 page officer report, published 8 days ago, setting out the various conditions and S106 elements, combined with the 454 documents on the Planning Portal, meant it was not possible to make proper representations in the time period (5 working days), which he considered to be a procedural flaw and he questioned whether the Committee members had read all of the report and supporting documents.
- That the planning history in the development area indicated that all appeals had been dismissed, yet the only planning history provided in this report related to environmental information reports. Therefore, if an officer's report failed to provide sufficient information any decision could be unlawful.
- That the new Local Plan would require 30% social housing on this type of application, yet, this application only provided 25%, and he commented on the impact that could have on children in temporary accommodation.
- That he represented the adjoining ward which included the parish of St. Mary Hoo. This area would bear the brunt of the various knock-on effects of the development, however, he stated that the Parish Council had not been consulted, which he considered to be a procedural flaw.
- That there was no mention of Fenn Corner roundabout or other roads/developments in the north of the peninsula in the report.
- That there were a number of grounds for the Committee to defer the application on, including the receipt of detailed Ward Councillor representations, a site visit and for the application to consider additional social housing which could assist with taking children out of temporary accommodation.

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The Chief Planning Officer responded to the five questions raised by the Ward Councillor. The £24M S106 contributions across 13 heads of terms had been assessed against regulation 122 of the CIL regulations and compliance statements had produced for each of those. The £6.8M sum for Four Elms Hill would not cover all of the improvements, rather it was a proportionate contribution, based on the allocations in the Local Plan. In relation to the issue regarding 250 units in seven years, compared to 320 units in five years, he referred to the tilted balance and factors such as a 5 year housing land supply and the housing deliver test (75%), in both cases the Council was under those targets (2.9 years and 72%), which placed an emphasis on the delivery of homes, taking into account information in the Local Plan. It was also now likely with Redrow being part of the Barrett Group, that the site would be built out by several developers thus increasing delivery.

The Chief Planning Officer advised that in relation to the question of pre-empting the Local Plan examination period, the Council had taken KC advice from two Barristers and he referred to speculative applications and the issues surrounding defending any appeals. This application had been with the Council for over two years and the applicants had not agreed a further extension meaning they could appeal against non-determination, and the Council still needed to determine applications and deliver homes, despite the proximity of the Local Plan examination stage. He also referred to the five year housing land supply and the need to deliver the infrastructure to accelerate this delivery. With regards to the delivery of 350 homes and the need for the improvements to Four Elms Hill (and other roundabouts in the area), the delivery of housing would provide the funding to make those improvements. The timescales for producing the officer report had complied with the legal requirement, the application had been with the Council for over two years, therefore, a wide range of comments had been received and they had been considered and reflected by officers.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation, the report, the supplementary advice sheet and the Ward Councillors' comments.

In response to issues raised around drainage, flood risk assessments and upgrades to be undertaken by Southern Water, the Principal Planner referred to Southern Water's representations and that there were conditions in the report linked to the issue of insufficient foul capacity and the requirement to ensure that adequate infrastructure would be in place prior to properties being occupied. He further advised that an environmental impact assessment had been submitted with application, the Council had appointed an Independent Consultant to review this and associated documents and were found to be robust and resilient. With regards to drainage conditions, these would be agreed with Southern Water.

In response to concerns about the type of development with regards to infrastructure, the land use and proposed housing mix, including 44% of houses with four or more bedrooms, the Chief Planning Officer advised the Committee

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that the emerging Local Plan was concerned with delivering housing needs across Medway, therefore, a mix of housing was required and the proposed mix was in keeping with a rural setting, with 25% affordable housing for this part of Medway. He reminded the Committee that the housing needs for Medway over the Local Plan period was 24,000 homes, whilst recognising the impact this would have on local areas, and that this site was identified in the emerging Local Plan for development. The Service Manager – Planning Development confirmed that 4,841 new properties of four or more bedroom houses, which represented 31% of owner occupied houses, were included in the Local Plan, therefore, this was considered appropriate for this particular site.

In response to issues raised around school provision including primary and secondary, the Chief Planning Officer advised that the Council's Education Team had looked at the allocation in the Local Plan and that the existing 1FE primary school would be replaced by a new 2FE primary school. This would require the use of all of the developer contributions for Education to construct a whole new primary school, whilst the receipt of the sale of the former school site would be used for secondary school provision. The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the existing primary school was owned by an Academy, and that there was agreement between the Education Team and the Academy to use the money generated from the sale of the site for secondary provision.

Decision:

Approved subject to:

- A. The applicant entering into a Section 106 agreement to secure the following:
 - i) £174,504.80 to improve equipment and facilities at Medway Mobile Libraries and/or the local history library at Medway Archives Centre and/or libraries in the vicinity.
 - ii) £191,398.40 towards the provision of enhancements of community facilities within High Halstow to benefit the local community and residents of the development including but not limited to upgrades to the existing cricket pavilion, toilet block and village hall.
 - iii) £256,492.40 towards Designated Habitats Mitigation.
 - iv) £81,806.40 to support youth development and youth provision within the local vicinity.
 - v) £281,055.60 towards improved civic space and gateways to High Halstow (including but not limited to greening, bollards, seating, lighting, paving, wayfinding and signage).

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- vi) £180,758.40 towards the improvement and promotion of waste and recycling services serving the development.
- vii) £254,318.80 towards enhancements to existing and new sports and leisure provision within High Halstow including but not limited to the purchase of additional land to improve existing sports provision within the village, upgrades to the existing cricket pavilion, toilets and village hall and upgrades to existing and new football pitches at High Halstow playing field and Deangate Sports Ground.
- viii) £57,000 towards improvements to signage/information and any relevant surface improvements, to the nearby public rights of way. Including new surfacing, seating, lighting, signage and associated legal costs where applicable.
- ix) £2,042,211.20 towards the creation of additional capacity in social care, primary care and community care required as a result of the increase in housing and resulting patient registration.
 - Social Care - £218,211.20
 - Health Primary Care - £1,520,000
 - Health Community Care - £304,000
- x) £11,465,701.11 towards delivering a Two Form Entry Primary School, including land transfer and measures to ensure vehicular and pedestrian access up to the site boundary with the school along with the necessary services.
- xi) £6,787,120.00 towards strategic highway mitigation including but not limited to improvements to Four Elms, Sans Pareil, Main Road, Ropers Lane roundabouts and a wider sustainable transport package.
- xii) £859,560.00 towards improvements to improving existing open space provision and equipment within High Halstow including but limited to the existing MUGA, Skate Park, football pitches, cricket pavilion, village hall and or towards the purchase of additional land to improve existing sports provision within the village.
- xiii) £1,278,099.60 towards a Strategic Environmental Mitigation Strategy (SEMS) to would include the Northward Hill SSSI Mitigation and other identified sites.
- xiv) 25% of all housing to be provided as affordable housing.
- xv) No development shall take place until a full implementation and phasing plan for the off-site highway works proposed on drawings 271568-00-047-05 Rev A, 271568-00-047-05 Rev A, 271568-00-047-06 Rev A, 271568-00-047-07 Rev A , 271568-00-047-08 Rev A , 271568-00-047-09 Rev A 271568-00-047-09 Rev A, 271568-

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00-047-10 Rev A, 271568-00-047-10 Rev A and 271568-00-047-12 Rev A have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Local Highway Authority. The approved plan shall include drawings, delivery sequencing linked to phased occupations, and a timetable for completion. The works shall thereafter be delivered in accordance with the approved details and phasing plan.

- xvi) No development above ground floor slab level within Phase 1 shall commence until a PRow RS44 Implementation Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include:
- (a) final alignment and detail design (surfacing, lighting, drainage, accessibility features);
 - (b) consents and agreements (including any third-party land arrangements);
 - (c) delivery timetable aligned to early occupations; and
 - (d) arrangements for inspection and maintenance responsibilities.

Financial contributions equate to £23,910,026.71 (£31,461.00 per dwelling) plus the non-financial elements including 25% affordable homes and on-site facilities such as open space and the MUGA within the school.

- B. Conditions 1 to 72 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with amendments to conditions 44, 45, 50 and 70 as follows:

Condition 44:

Prior to the occupation of the 271st dwelling a Local Centre Delivery Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The Strategy shall include:

- A timeline for the construction and leasing of the Local Centre floorspace, demonstrating alignment with the rate of residential completions:

The Strategy shall demonstrate compliance with emerging Local Plan Policy DM12 and SA9 criteria 7. Development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Strategy.

Reason: To secure the timely and effective delivery of everyday retail and community facilities in parallel with housing occupation, ensuring the development functions as a sustainable neighbourhood and residents are not forced to travel for basic services, consistent with sustainability objectives and paragraph 20 of the NPPF.

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Condition 45:

Pursuant to condition 44 no dwelling within the Reserved Matters construction phase(s) shall be occupied until the commercial floorspace within the approved Local Centre has been:

- Fully constructed in accordance with the timetable;
- Fitted out to a specification suitable for immediate occupation; and
- Actively marketed for appropriate retail and community use.

Evidence demonstrating completion and readiness for occupation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any dwelling within the Reserved Matters construction phase(s).

Reason: To guarantee that essential everyday services are available to residents as the community builds out, thereby reducing the need to travel, supporting the retail hierarchy, and ensuring the Local Centre fulfils its intended role within the masterplan and paragraph 20 of the NPPF.

Condition 50:

No part of the development hereby permitted shall be first occupied or brought into use until a detailed Travel Plan for that phase (Residential Travel Plan and/or School Travel Plan, as applicable) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan(s) shall be based on the principles, objectives and framework measures set out within the submitted Framework Travel Plan, and shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Updated baseline information, travel patterns and mode share targets appropriate to the relevant phase;
2. SMART targets for achieving a reduction in single occupancy car journeys and an increase in sustainable travel modes;
3. Full details of the Travel Plan Coordinator, including responsibilities, resourcing and management arrangements;
4. A programme of measures for residents, staff, pupils and visitors to promote and encourage walking, cycling, public transport and other sustainable travel options;
5. A programme of marketing and communication, including travel packs and information for new residents, staff and parents;
6. Monitoring arrangements, including TRICS compliant surveys, timescales, performance indicators and reporting mechanisms to the Local Planning Authority;
7. Review procedures, triggers and remedial action for those measures which are within the applicants control;
8. Implementation timetable, linked to the phased occupation of the development.

The Travel Plan(s) shall thereafter be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details from first occupation of each phase, and all measures, targets and monitoring shall be maintained and reviewed for a minimum period of five years from first occupation of that phase, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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Reason: To ensure that sustainable travel is promoted and that the development minimises reliance on the private car, in the interests of highway efficiency, climate objectives and sustainable development.

Condition 70:

Condition 70 to be removed as PRow improvements and pedestrian connections for off-site highways works are to be covered and secured in the S106 agreement.

Councillor Filmer returned to the meeting.

771 Planning application - MC/25/1506 Shaftesbury House, Upnor Road, Upnor, Rochester, Medway ME2 4XB

The Chief Planning Officer left the meeting.

Discussion:

The Principal Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which amended the proposal and amended condition 2.

The Principal Planner outlined the application in detail for a change of use from dwelling house (Class C3) to a 11 bedroom house of multiple occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis) (Class C4).

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Williams addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and outlined the following issues:

- That if the planning application was agreed it would be detrimental to the rural feel of the village and would be out of keeping with the existing residential settlement, including the scale and intensity of an 11 bed HMO, representing an overdevelopment of the site, and would negatively affect the surrounding community.
- That public transport was inadequate with only a 2 hourly bus service, meaning that there was reliance on car travel for access to employment, education and basic services.
- That there were no footpaths in and out of the village and limitations on cycling.
- That the application was contrary to the provisions of Local Plan policies BNE1, BE2 and CF1. In particular, there was a lack of community facilities in Upnor.
- That the extra traffic generated by the proposed application would have a detrimental effect on the amenities of the local residents.
- That the application was in conflict with National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 8, regarding sustainable development, given the lack of adequate infrastructure in the area, and paragraph 110, transport and highways safety, given the traffic pressure the proposal would place on local narrow village roads, creating unsafe conditions for local residents and visitors.

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- That the Frindsbury Extra Parish Council and the Dickens Country Protection Society and many local residents had objected to the proposals.
- That approval of the application may set a precedent for future HMO developments in the area.
- That the Committee should refuse the application.

The Committee discussed the planning application noting the officer presentation, the report, the supplementary advice sheet and the Ward Councillor's comments. In particular, the issues of the lack of public transport, traffic movements, parking, social cohesion and the particular location of this application were discussed.

In response to an issue raised around the parking provision, the Principal Planner advised that there were no parking standards for HMO parking.

The Service Manager – Development Planning responded to the issues raised by Members during discussion, stating that as previously advised, there were no standards in place for HMO parking, that a variety of housing was required across Medway and HMOs formed part of that mix, this property had no attached neighbours and that the National Planning Policy Framework supported the reuse of existing buildings, this site had been vacant for a significant amount of time.

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.

Decision:

REFUSED on the grounds including the introduction of a HMO into a location which has limited facilities and is considered to be in an unsustainable location, the lack of sustainable transport opportunities, the impact of lack of parking on the amenity of local residents and the lack of facilities for those living in the HMO.

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

The Chief Planning Officer returned to the meeting.

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772 Planning application - MC/25/2292 Land adjacent to 50 Lime Court, Wigmore, Gillingham, Medway

Discussion:

The Service Manager - Development Management outlined the application in detail for the construction of an end of terrace dwelling with associated parking, bin and cycle storage.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 11 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

Chairperson

Date:

Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

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