

**Medway Council**  
**Planning Committee**  
**Wednesday, 3 June 2026**  
**6.30pm to 9.13pm**

**Record of the meeting**

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

- Present:** Councillors: Jones (Vice-Chairperson in the Chair), Anang, Barrett, Bowen, Field, Gilbourne, Gulvin, Myton, Nestorov, Peake and Vye
- Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Crozer (Substitute for Pearce)  
Hubbard (Substitute for Stamp)  
Joy (Substitute for Etheridge)
- In Attendance:** Councillor Tracy Coombs (agenda items 5 and 6)  
Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer  
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer  
Peter Hockney, Service Manager, Development Management  
Joanna Horne, Lawyer  
Arron Nicholls, Senior Planner  
Sam Pilbeam, Senior Planner  
Jonathon Simon, Planner  
Stephie Theedom, Senior Planner

**29 Apologies for absence**

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

**30 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 6 May 2026 was agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

**31 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances**

There were none.

**32 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

During the consideration of planning application MC/26/0473 78 Ingram Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 1SH, Councillor Barrett stated, at the point of voting, that he knew the applicant and, therefore, abstained from voting.

**33 Planning application - MC/26/0282 13 Park Avenue, Gillingham, ME7 4AS**

**Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from Class C3 Dwellinghouse into a 7-bedroom, 8-person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis) with improved communal living space and amended internal layout; reinstatement of front balcony, wood. Existing woodwork to front to be repaired, refurbished and painted. To the rear, to install 3 x rooflights and install cycle store within existing side garage. (revised scheme). Following removal of permitted development rights (Lawful Development Certificate ref: MC/25/0950).

The Senior Planner confirmed, that within a 500-metre radius, there were 33 HMOs which represented 1.3% of the housing stock, which was not considered an over proliferation of HMOs in the area.

An alteration to the description of this planning application was included in the supplementary agenda advice sheet.

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

- Park Avenue was a residential road comprising of 58 separate properties and was located within a conservation area. This application site was directly opposite Gillingham Park, an extremely popular and well used public open space.
- A previous planning application to convert a 6-bedroom HMO into a 7-bedroom, 8-person HMO was refused in December 2025. While some of the reasons for refusal had been addressed, concerns regarding parking demand remained unresolved. The application site sat outside a Parking Management Zone, meaning Medway Council had no control to restrict

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the number of parking permits issued, rendering any such controls meaningless.

- A parking beat survey was undertaken during the early hours of a weekday. Given the high visitor numbers to Gillingham Park, it was considered that a more accurate assessment would have been achieved if undertaken during peak periods, such as weekends and during school holiday.
- The previous refusal concluded that the proposal would result in an intensification of use, leading to increased comings and goings, as well as additional noise, disturbance, nuisance and waste. These concerns were not referenced in the officer's report.
- The density of multi-occupancy had been misrepresented, if this planning application and the adjacent proposal were approved, there would be 3 HMOs within a street of 58 properties which would equate to 5.2% concentration. When considered alongside the nearby 13-bed care home which accommodated residents with significant mental health needs, there would have been a notable clustering of high occupancy uses. In this section alone, 14 out of 17 properties were multi-occupancy, which would accommodate a total of 56 residents.
- Concern over the level of concentration contributed to an over-intensification of multiple occupancy uses within what was otherwise a residential street.
- Concerns were raised regarding increased parking pressures, waste, anti-social behaviour, additional noise and general disturbance arising from additional comings and goings. Furthermore, the proposal was not considered to align with the emerging Local Plan.
- Overall, the planning application was considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area, as well as on neighbouring amenities, traffic conditions and parking provision.

The Committee discussed the application in detail and Members were concerned with increased parking pressures.

The Service Manager - Development Management clarified that a parking beat survey had been requested by Medway Council's Highways Team and had been undertaken in accordance with the standard Lambeth Methodology. Medway Council's Highways Officers had reviewed the survey, considered it acceptable and raised no objections.

The Service Manager - Development Management confirmed that a Bin Management, Waste and Recycling Plan, had been provided.

The Service Manager - Development Management explained that condition 9 required remedial works to the balcony, and other elements to the front elevation, be carried out prior to first occupation, in order to restore the building to its original condition.

The Senior Planner confirmed that a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) had previously been issued for a change of use from a Class 3 Dwelling to a Class 4 HMO. However, this use had not been implemented prior to the introduction

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of the Article 4 Direction and, therefore, the lawful use of the property remained as a C3 single dwelling.

The Service Manager - Development Management advised that if Members were minded to approve the application, an additional condition could be imposed to ensure that the front balconies were not used for storage purposes.

The Senior Planner confirmed that the parking beat survey had been undertaken, in accordance with the Lambeth Methodology, at 1 o'clock on two separate occasions and that parking on the road was unrestricted.

### **Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 9 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with an additional condition to ensure the balconies were not used for storage purposes.

### **Condition 10:**

The front facing balcony space serving the hereby approved Sui Generis House In Multiple Occupancy shall not be used for the storage of any materials, equipment, refuse or recycling, household items, or any other paraphernalia. The balcony use shall be solely used as private amenity space for future occupants of the property.

Reason: To ensure that the development maintains a high-quality appearance and safeguard against the character of the area and significance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policies BNE1, BNE2 and BNE12 of the Medway Local Plan (2003).

## **34 Planning application - MC/26/0483 Ridgeway, 11 Park Avenue, Gillingham Medway**

### **Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for a change of use of Vacant Care Home Class (C2) to a 7-bedroom HMO Class (Sui Generis).

The Senior Planner confirmed, that within a 500-metre radius, there were 33 HMOs which represented 1.3% of the housing stock, which was not considered an over proliferation of HMOs in the area.

An alteration to condition 2 and an additional representation was included in the supplementary agenda advice sheet.

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

- As with the previous planning application, the property was located within a conservation area and situated opposite Gillingham Park.

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- She raised concerns regarding the quality and accuracy of the submitted planning application. The report stated the care home had ceased operating in 2023 when it was put up for auction, however, still remained vacant. It was highlighted that the property had continued to operate as care home up to March 2025. It was noted that, although the applicant had suggested that extensive marketing had been undertaken to retain the building's current use, the only evidence provided was an email from the previous owners.
- The proposed changes from a care home to a HMO, was the wrong thing to do. In Medway, there was a shortage of good quality places for vulnerable adults and keeping this as a care home could be the answer for families to have the opportunity to choose small, more intimate care homes for their loved ones.
- Although it was acknowledged that this care home was not suitable for disabled people as there was no provision for a lift, it could accommodate other residents such as vulnerable adults or people with mental health conditions.
- It was noted that the parking beat survey had been undertaken at 5am on a weekday, which was not considered to represent the typical parking demand. It did not reflect peak times, particularly given the property's proximity to a busy public open space.
- No management plan for the HMO had been submitted, and no named contact had been provided for local residents to raise concerns or report issues.
- Concern was raised that there was an over proliferation of HMOs within Medway, particularly in the Gillingham area.
- Concerns were raised regarding the impact of increased parking pressure on the surrounding area.

The Committee discussed the planning application, in detail, noting the points raised by the Ward Councillor. Members acknowledged that the proposal would result in the loss of a care home and noted that the property was located within a conservation area.

The Service Manager - Development Management confirmed that should the applicant or future applicants seek to demolish the front boundary in order to provide parking spaces, planning permission would be required. This was due to the height of the boundary and the property's location within a conservation area, meaning it was protected by relevant legislation.

The Senior Planner clarified that no basement area formed part of the planning application.

Members raised concerns regarding the high density of HMOs in the area. In response, the Service Manager - Development Management advised that 1.3% of the local housing stock, was considered to be at the lower end and did not constitute over proliferation.

The Senior Planner confirmed that all proposed bedrooms exceeded the Nationally Described Space Standards and would benefit from adequate levels

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of natural light. It was considered that three bedrooms being served by two bathrooms was acceptable.

Members requested that an extra condition be imposed to ensure that front balconies were not used for storage purposes.

The Chief Planning Officer advised Members that there was a dispute regarding the date the care home had ceased and the level of marketing undertaken and the Ward Councillor had provided local information that contradicted that within the application documents. Notwithstanding that, the Chief Planning Officer and Senior Planner advised that, in its current form, the building had limitations as a care home. These included accessibility constraints, such as the lack of potential for a lift and had narrow corridors, which would restrict its suitability for some disabled residents and the lack of en-suites to the bedrooms. It was accepted that the cost of those upgrade works to bring the care home up to modern day expectations and standards, would be prohibitive and unviable for a care home of this size.

### **Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 6 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with an amendment to condition 2 and an additional condition be added to ensure the balconies were not used for storage purposes.

### **Condition 2:**

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

Received 10 March 2026:

Site Location Plan  
4AS.11.PRO.002 – Proposed Block Plan

Received 1 June 2026:

4AS.11.PRO.001 REV A – Proposed Floor Plans

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

### **Additional Condition:**

### **Condition 7:**

The front facing balcony space serving the hereby approved Sui Generis House in Multiple Occupancy shall not be used for the storage of any materials, equipment, refuse or recycling, household items, or any other paraphernalia. The balcony use shall be solely used as private amenity space for future occupants of the property.

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Reason: To ensure that the development maintains a high-quality appearance and safeguard against the character of the area and significance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policies BNE1, BNE2 and BNE12 of the Medway Local Plan (2003).

### **35 Planning application - MC/26/0473 78 Ingram Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 1SH**

#### **Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use of dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 6 bedroom house in multiple occupation (Class C4) together with construction of a single storey rear extension, dormer window to rear and installation of roof light to front to provide additional living accommodation within roof space with associated bin/cycle store and hard and soft landscaping.

The Senior Planner confirmed, that within a 500-metre radius, there were 28 HMOs which represented 1.27% of the housing stock. This level was not considered an over proliferation of HMOs in the area.

The Committee considered the application and noted concerns regarding the loss of another family dwelling and the potential for increased parking pressures.

The Chief Planning Officer explained that the Article 4 Direction had been introduced to ensure that changes of use to HMOs, and the associated loss of family dwellings, required planning permission and could be properly assessed. Such applications were considered against Policy H7 of the adopted Local Plan and Policy T8 of the emerging Local Plan, as set out on pages 51 and 52 of the report.

The Service Manager - Development Management clarified that specialist consultants had supported the development of the Article 4 Direction, which included the production of HMO density mapping. These maps identified both registered HMOs and 'hidden' HMOs, based on indicators such as changes to council tax records or to the electoral roll and were considered to be as accurate as reasonably possible.

The Senior Planner advised that any future alterations to the internal layout, such as converting a study or living room / communal living space into an additional bedroom, would require the submission of a further planning application.

#### **Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 7 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

**36 Planning application - MC/26/0625 415 Canterbury Street, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5LL**

**Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 6-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Class C4) together with construction of a dormer window to rear and installation of roof lights to front to provide additional living accommodation within roof space with associated external alterations and a detached shed and cycle storage to rear.

The Senior Planner confirmed that there was a cluster of 6 HMOs, however, they were further along Canterbury Street, and no other HMOs were located within the immediate vicinity of the application site.

The Senior Planner confirmed that a Parking Management Plan, secured by condition 7, would be submitted and approved prior to first occupation. This would set out how parking associated with the development would be managed.

The Senior Planner clarified that, as currently used, bedroom three of the dwelling fell below the minimum size set by the Nationally Described Space Standards, but that all bedrooms proposed in the HMO exceeded the standards.

The Service Manager - Development Management advised that the Council did not currently apply a specific percentage threshold in respect of HMO density. Instead, a case-by-case approach was taken. He explained that a database of relevant appeal decisions was being developed to support the assessment of future applications and establish a consistent approach.

The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the introduction of the Article 4 Direction had strengthened the Council's ability to manage HMO development. He advised that, whereas properties of this nature could previously have been converted into HMOs with minimal internal alteration, such proposals were not subject to full planning assessment against relevant policy criteria. Now with the Article 4 and the need for permission, the proposals could be assessed against policy and this would now ensure that adequate room sizes and sufficient communal space would be provided as part of the proposed development.

**Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 7 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

**37 Planning application - MC/26/0221 58 York Avenue, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5JG**

**Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 6 bedroom 6 person house in multiple occupation (Class C4) together with construction of a single storey rear extension, L-shaped dormer window to rear and installation of roof lights to front to provide additional living accommodation with roof space with associated bin/cycle store.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet, which confirmed that the SAMMS Bird Fee had now been paid. As a result, the second reason for refusal had been withdrawn.

The Senior Planner confirmed, that within a 500-metre radius, there were 42 HMOs in the area. The officer's recommendation for refusal remained, based on the inadequate provision of internal communal space.

The Committee discussed the application in detail and Members expressed concern regarding the insufficient communal and living space.

**REFUSED** for reason 1 only as set out in the report.

**38 Planning application - MC/26/0606 98 Grove Road, Strood, Rochester, Medway ME2 4BY**

**Discussion:**

The Service Manager - Development Management outlined the application in detail for a change of use of existing dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 4-bedroom house in multiple occupation (Class C4) together with construction of an L-shaped dormer window to rear and installation of roof lights to front to provide additional living accommodation within roof space and construction of single storey rear extensions.

The Service Manager – Development Manager advised that, compared to the area surrounding Gillingham train station, the number of HMOs within Strood was considerably lower, with less evidence of clustering, proliferation or loss of family dwellings.

The Service Manager – Development Management brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which included amendments to conditions 2, 5 and 6.

The Committee considered the application in detail and Members requested that an additional condition be imposed requiring the installation of an alley gate, in order to prevent the accumulation of refuse along the alleyway. The Service Manager – Development Management advised that he was not sure

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that the alley was within the application site and, therefore, whether a condition could be used. He recognised the concerns of members and advised that he would check and either impose a condition or include an informative to address this concern.

The Service Manager – Development Management confirmed that Medway Council's Highways Team had advised that a parking survey was not necessary. The Chief Planning Officer clarified that as the application site fell within a parking restriction zone, a Parking Management Plan was recommended. This would set out measures to deter residents from obtaining parking permits.

The Service Manager – Development Management advised that the minimum bedroom size standards were 7.5 square metres for a single bedroom and 11.5 square metres for a double bedroom. All proposed bedrooms within the planning application exceeded these standards, with the double occupancy bedroom measuring 17.3 square metres.

### **Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 8 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with amended conditions 2, 5 and 6. An additional condition or informative to be added to secure alley gates on both ends of the alley.

Revised plans for cycle parking were submitted and the conditions 2, 5 and 6 were amended:

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

Received 01 June 2026:

- A.01 - Site Location Plan
- A.02 - Existing and Proposed Site Plan
- A.04 - Proposed Floor Plans
- A.06 - Proposed Elevations

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

- 5 Prior to the first occupation of the property as a four bedroom HMO, the cycle facilities as shown on approved drawing A.02 Proposed Site Plan and A.07 Proposed Cycle Parking received 01 June 2026 shall be implemented in accordance with these details and thereafter retained.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability and to encourage cycle use with regard to Policy T4 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 6 Prior to the first occupation of the property as a four bedroom HMO, the refuse storage as shown on approved drawing A.02 Proposed Site Plan

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received 01 June 2026 shall be implemented in accordance with these details and thereafter retained.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability and to encourage cycle use with regard to Policy T4 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

### **Additional Informative:**

The applicant is advised to explore the ownership of the adjacent alleyway and if possible secure with gates.

### **39 Planning application - MC/26/0385 98 Howard Avenue, Rochester, Medway ME1 2AN**

#### **Discussion:**

The Planner outlined the application in detail for the construction of a first floor extension and a rear roof dormer to form two 2-bedroom flats.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet that added a new condition and included further representations.

#### **Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 4 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with an additional condition 5.

#### **Condition 5:**

- 5 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the self-contained flats hereby approved shall remain in use as self-contained falling within Class C3 only of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) and no change of use shall be carried out unless planning permission has been granted on an application relating thereto.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control such development in the interests of amenity, in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

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**Chairperson**

**Date:**

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