

Medway Council
Planning Committee
Wednesday, 1 July 2026
7.30pm to 10.00pm

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, Gilbourne, Gulvin, Hamilton, Myton, Nestorov, Peake, Pearce and Vye

Substitutes: Councillors:
Brake (Substitute for Barrett)
Howcroft-Scott (Substitute for Field)
Kemp (Substitute for Etheridge)

In Attendance: Councillor Mandaracas (agenda item 7)
Councillor Maple (agenda item 6)
Councillor Louwella Prenter (agenda items 5 and 8)

Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer
Peter Hockney, Service Manager, Development Management
Joanna Horne, Lawyer
Justin Kazembe, Planner
Arron Nicholls, Senior Planner
Sam Pilbeam, Senior Planner
Nick Roberts, Principal Planner

109 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barrett, Etheridge and Field.

110 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 3 June 2026 was agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

111 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

112 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

Councillor Gilbourne referred to application MC/26/0642 and MC/26/0643 The Old Farm House, Harrow Road, Hempstead, Gillingham Medway ME7 3QA and stated that as these were his planning applications, he would withdraw from the meeting and would take no part in the determination of the applications.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillor Gulvin referred to planning application MC/25/2538 Land to the south of Moor Street and east of Meresborough Road, Rainham and advised that he had been contacted earlier that day by representatives of Bellway Homes. He stated that he had not engaged in any discussion with them and informed the caller that he considered such contact to be inappropriate.

The Chief Planning Officer informed the Committee that other Members had also been contacted by Bellway Homes. He advised that he had subsequently spoken to Bellway Homes and reminded them that it was inappropriate to contact the Members of the Planning Committee on the day of the Committee. He had also requested that Bellway Homes ensure that their public relations representatives ceased contacting Members in relationship to this application.

During consideration of planning applications MC/26/0642 and MC/26/0643 The Old Farm House, Harrow Road, Hempstead, Gillingham Medway ME7 3QA Councillors Anang, Brake and Gulvin stated that as the applicant, Councillor Gilbourne, was from the same political group and very well known to them, they would withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the determination of the two applications.

113 Planning application - MC/26/0549 101 Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4QG

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from a C3 dwelling house to C4 6-bedroom 6-person houses of multiple occupation (HMO).

The Senior Planner confirmed that, within a 500-metre radius, there were 49 HMOs which represented 1.3% of the housing stock, which was not considered an overconcentration of HMOs in the area.

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

- There was a lack of supporting documentation available on the Planning Portal, which limited Members ability to fully scrutinise the planning application.
- Concerns regarding the absence of a Waste Management Plan and how waste generated by the proposed HMO would be stored and managed, with potential implications for the street scene if not properly controlled.
- Concerns regarding parking pressures in the area, particularly as no Parking Management Plan had been submitted. Whilst a condition was proposed to restrict parking permits being issued, it was suggested that up to six occupants could each own a vehicle and seek to park within the local area.
- The absence of details relating to cycle storage and discrepancies within submitted plan, where no kitchen was located. There was also a reference to a road in Orpington as a point of access within the Fire Safety Strategy, surely an error.
- Reference to the Article 4 Direction and the importance of assessing the wider impact of HMO proposals on the local community.
- Concerns regarding the concentration of HMOs and other residential conversions in the area, including properties converted into flats, supported living accommodation and care facilities, together with concerns that a number of HMOs may be unregistered. It was considered that the proposal would add to an existing overconcentration of HMOs and the potential for increased activity associated with the proposed use.
- Concern regarding the loss of a family homes within the area.

The Committee discussed the planning application in detail and noted there were no actual planning grounds to refuse this application. Some Members expressed concerns regarding the loss of a family dwelling, parking pressures, waste storage arrangements and the concentration of HMOs in the local area.

Members acknowledged the demand for this type of accommodation, however, sought further information on the number of non-single family dwellings within the surrounding area, as it was considered that there may be an overconcentration of HMOs in the local area.

The Senior Planner confirmed that Condition 5 required the submission and approval of a Parking Management Plan prior to first occupation of the property as a HMO. This would set out how parking would be managed for residents and visitors and would include measures to mitigate parking pressures, including restrictions on eligibility for residents' parking permits.

The Senior Planner further advised that Conditions 4 and 6 required the submission and approval of a Refuse Management Strategy prior to the first occupation. This would provide details of refuse and recycling storage arrangements and the management of waste generated by the property.

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Members were reminded that an Article 4 Direction had been approved to remove permitted development rights for the change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to a Class 4 (small HMO), which was why the application required planning permission and had been brought to the Committee for determination.

The Chief Planning Officer suggested that having listened to the Ward Councillor and Members, consideration be given to deferring this application to enable officers to provide additional information on the number of single-family dwellings, HMOs, care homes and other non-residential dwellings within the immediate area.

Decision:

DEFERRED to allow further information to be provided which would include the number of single-family dwellings, care homes, non-residential dwellings and HMOs to be obtained before a decision is made.

114 Planning application - MC/26/0769 32 Salisbury Road, Chatham, Medway ME4 5NW

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a 5-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4), including associated internal alterations and the construction of a single storey extension.

The Senior Planner confirmed that, within a 500-metre radius, there were 32 HMOs.

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

- For clarification, the application would have been referred to the Planning Committee due to the number of representations, irrespective of the Article 4 Direction.
- There were already high numbers of HMOs within the locality.
- Local residents and representatives of the New Road Parents Community had raised concerns regarding additional traffic and parking pressures.
- The site was located between two schools in an area where parking was already constrained, and part of Salisbury Road was subject to a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).
- Reference was made to proposed investigative works by Highway Officers, which were due to commence at the start of the next academic year, to assess traffic levels during peak periods.
- The Ward Councillor requested that this planning application be refused due to the significant impact on the local community through increased traffic and parking demand. However, he added that, should Members

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be minded to approve the application, could the determination be deferred until the planned highways investigations had been completed and the findings made available to Members.

Members discussed the planning application in detail and expressed concerns regarding highway safety, existing parking pressures, the potential increase in traffic movement and the loss of a family dwelling.

The Senior Planner confirmed that Condition 7, required a Parking Management Plan to be submitted, prior to first occupation of the development. The plan would set out how parking would be managed for residents and visitors and would include measures to minimise parking impacts on the surrounding area.

The Chief Planning Officer reminded Members that the Article 4 Direction did not state that HMOs were unacceptable. Rather, it removed the permitted development rights for the change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to a Class 4 (small HMO), therefore, requiring planning permission.

The Committee then voted on the officers' recommendation to approve the planning application, which was lost. Members subsequently considered whether it would be appropriate to defer the determination of the planning application pending the proposed highways investigations, or whether the application should be refused.

Decision:

REFUSED on the following grounds:

- 1 The proposed use as a 6 person House in Multiple Occupation would generate a greater level of parking demand than the existing three bedroom dwelling and in the absence of any parking provision would result in increased parking pressure and indiscriminate parking in an area of parking stress in close proximity to parking restrictions and a primary school, which would interfere with pedestrian use of the footpaths and cause highway hazards contrary to policies H7, T1 and T13 of the Medway Local Plan (2003), T8 of the Regulation 22 Medway Local Plan 2041 (December 2025) and paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
- 2 The proposed change of use from a C3 dwelling to a C4 House in Multiple Occupation would result in the loss of a family dwelling that would reasonably be expected to be occupied by a single household contrary to Policy H7 of the Medway Local Plan (2003) and T8 of the Regulation 22 Medway Local Plan 2041 (December 2025).

115 Planning application - MC/26/0889 7 Camden Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 1QS

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to a 5-bedroom, 6-person house in multiple occupation (HMO) (Class C4) together with bin/cycle storage.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which included a new condition.

The Senior Planner confirmed that, within a 500-metre radius, there were 2 other HMOs in Camden Road.

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

- There was a market need for HMOs. however, concern was expressed that, given the significant housing waiting list and the number of households living in temporary accommodation, there was also a continued need to retain 3-bedroom family homes within the area.
- Although the report and the officers' presentation stated that there were relatively few registered HMO's, it was noted from the Ward Councillor's knowledge of the area that there appeared to be a number of non-family dwellings that were not registered as HMOs. Which could be considered as an overconcentration of HMOs in the area and would have a significant impact on the local area.
- A high concentration of HMOs in a relatively small area, could result in a high turnover of occupants, which could have an adverse effect on community cohesion as residents could not establish long-term roots and invest in the local area.
- Concerns were raised regarding the potential for increased pressure on local services and amenities.
- It was considered that the development would result in additional traffic and parking demand. Whilst noting the proposed restrictions on the eligibility for parking permits, any additional vehicles would impact the local area.

The Service Manager - Development Management reminded Members that the Committee had refused a previous planning application for the site less than two months earlier on the grounds of inadequate internal amenity space. He advised that the applicant had subsequently revised the proposal to address those concerns and that the previous refusal had not been based on the overconcentration of HMOs within the area.

The Senior Planner confirmed that an additional condition would be imposed requiring the existing shower within the ground floor communal room be removed and replaced with a toilet and hand basin only.

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The Senior Planner explained, notwithstanding the sloping roof, the proposed bedrooms complied with the Nationally Described Space Standards.

In response to a question regarding the concentration of HMOs within the locality and whether Members had sufficient information on this matter, the Chief Planning Officer advised that the Article 4 Direction had been approved on 22 January 2026. The Committee's previous refusal of the planning application in May 2026, had, therefore, been made after the Direction had come into effect. He reiterated the comments of the Service Manager – Development Management that the earlier refusal had related solely to the lack of adequate internal amenity space and had not been based on concerns regarding the concentration of HMOs in the area.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 8 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report with an additional condition.

Condition 9:

Prior to the commencement of use, the existing shower located off the ground floor communal room shall be removed and converted to contain a toilet and sink only as shown on plan no. K1344-PL-106 Rev C and maintained thereafter.

Reason: To regulate and control the number of occupants of the property in the interests of the amenities of neighbouring properties and of occupants of the site itself which has limited communal facilities, in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

116 Planning application - MC/26/0188 Land adjacent to 2A Borough Road, Gillingham, ME7 4LS

Discussion:

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the construction of a 3-bedroom chalet bungalow with off street parking and associated hard standing and associated landscaping.

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

- Concerns were raised by residents that a 3-bedroom dwelling was being constructed within the rear garden of an existing terrace property. It was considered the plot would have insufficient open space for future occupants and noted that the loss of garden space would be permanent.
- Residents of 156 Nelson Road currently benefited from access to that open space, which would be lost as a result of the development.
- Concerns were raised regarding surface water, with reference being made to previous sewage leakage issues from that property.

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- Reports that a large tree had already been removed from the garden, allegedly without permission, in preparation for the proposed development.
- The removal of an existing brick wall was said to have had a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene.
- Objections were raised in relation to parking. Although the proposal included hardstanding for two vehicles, it was considered the space insufficient to accommodate two vehicles, which could lead to additional on-street parking and increased parking pressures in the area.
- It was noted that staff working at the nearby care facilities also relied on local parking, additional parking pressures would make it more difficult for care staff to park nearby.

The Senior Planner confirmed that the proposal met the minimum garden size standards and that 158 Nelson Road had been subsequently sold, subdivided into two flats with no rear garden.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 16 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

117 Planning application - MC/25/2538 Land to the south of Moor Street and east of Meresborough Road, Rainham

Discussion:

The Principal Planner presented the outline planning application (with all matters reserved other than access) for up to 150no. dwellings, including public open space, landscaping and associated works.

The Principal Planner brought Members' attention to the two supplementary agenda's that were published, amending the original report and provided further representation received from the applicant.

The Chief Planning Officer clarified that the applicant had indicated an intention to lodge an appeal, dependent on the decision of this planning application. He further advised that, should Members be minded to support the officers' recommendation and refuse planning permission, the planning application would first need to be referred to the Secretary of State before a formal decision could be issued.

The Chief Planning Officer reiterated that the application had been assessed in detail by the case officer in consultation with specialist Heritage and Landscape Consultants and having carefully considered all material planning considerations and balanced the benefits and harms of the proposal, officers had recommended that planning permission be refused.

The Chief Planning Officer acknowledged that Medway Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and had consistently failed to

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meet the housing delivery test and both these aspects, therefore, carried substantial weight in favour of the application. However, it was considered that the adverse impacts of the development in terms of the heritage and landscape harm particularly would outweigh any benefits associated with the provision of up to 150 more dwellings.

The Committee discussed the planning application in detail. Whilst Members recognised the need for additional housing and the current shortage of housing land, they agreed with the officers' recommendation.

Decision:

REFUSED in accordance to reasons 1 to 5 as set out in the report and a referral to the Secretary of State.

118 Planning application - MC/26/0584 Land adjacent to Kingsnorth, Sharnal Street, High Halstow, Rochester

Discussion:

The Service Manager - Development Management discussed the outline application with all matters reserved for the construction of two 5no. bedroom two storey self-built dwellings with off road parking and landscaping.

The Service Manager – Development Management outlined the planning history of this site. Members were advised that a previous planning application for the construction of 2 self-build dwellings had been approved by the Planning Committee in September 2025. Subsequently, a revised application was submitted seeking to remove the self-build element and, therefore, was brought back to the Planning Committee, where planning permission was refused.

The Service Manager – Development Management explained that the current planning application was a re-submission of MC/25/0484 for the construction of 2 self-build dwellings.

With the agreement of the Committee, the Chief Planning Officer read out Councillor Crozer's statement as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- Members were reminded that an application on the site had recently been refused. The fundamental planning constraints, policy conflicts and environmental impacts that led to that refusal remained unresolved.
- It was considered that the principle of development was entirely wrong as the site lies outside any recognised settlement boundary and within the open countryside. There were no overriding local housing need to sufficiently justify a departure from well-established rural protection policies.
- Concern was expressed that the development, comprising of two large, five-bedroom, two-storey houses would appear incongruous within the

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rural setting and would introduce a harsh urbanising effect on what was currently a verdant and open location.

- Due to the isolated location, future occupants would be reliant on private vehicles, rendering the proposal an unsustainable form of development.
- The applicant completely ignored the mandatory requirement for biodiversity. They failed to demonstrate how the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement would be achieved.
- The site was within the catchment zone for the internationally protected Thames and Medway Estuary Marshes Special Protection Areas. Insufficient data was submitted to enable a required appropriate assessment to be undertaken.
- The applicant had not committed to a financial contribution towards bird mitigation costs and that, as a result, the proposal failed the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.

The Committee discussed the planning application in detail, taking into account the concerns raised by the Ward Councillor and noting the demand for self-build opportunities, as evidenced by the significant number of individuals registered on the self-build waiting list.

During the debate, Members expressed a view that the two buildings be of exceptional architectural design, that would complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area. Members, therefore, queried whether a condition be imposed requiring the detailed design of the buildings to be referred back to the Planning Committee for consideration. In response, the Chief Planning Officer advised that, following legislative changes being introduced in the autumn, he would need to check whether the approval of any reserved matter applications would fall within the scheme of delegation to officers or whether it could be required to come back to the Planning Committee for determination.

The Service Manager – Development Management clarified that as the proposal constituted a self-build development, it was exempt from the mandatory requirement to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. He further advised that the required bird mitigation costs would form part of the approval process, should planning permission be granted.

Decision:

Approved subject to:

- i) To secure the dwellings being delivered as self-build.
- ii) The payment of £674.98 (plus £550 legal costs and monitoring officer fees) to cover bird mitigation costs.
- iii) Conditions 1 to 15 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

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119 Planning application - MC/26/0642 The Old Farm House, Harrow Road, Hempstead, Gillingham, Medway ME7 3QA

Councillors Anang, Brake, Gilbourne and Gulvin left the meeting for the next two planning applications.

Discussion:

The Planner gave a joint presentation on MC/26/0642 and MC/26/0643 The Old Farm House, Harrow Road, Hempstead, Gillingham, Medway ME7 3QA and outlined the application in detail for the replacement of an existing conservatory and listed building consent for the replacement of existing conservatory.

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 3 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

120 Planning application - MC/26/0643 The Old Farm House, 4 Harrow Road, Hempstead, Gillingham, Medway ME7 3QA

Decision:

Approved with conditions 1 to 3 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

Chairperson

Date:

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