
Planning Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 5 February 2026 from 7.00 pm - 8.41 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Andy Booth (Chair), Hayden Brawn, Lloyd Chapman, Simon Clark (Vice-Chair), James Hunt, Elliott Jayes, Peter MacDonald, Peter Marchington, Charlie Miller (Substitute for Councillor Ann Cavanagh), Julien Speed, Paul Stephen, Terry Thompson and Tony Winckless.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Andrew Gambrell, Ian Harrison, Joanne Johnson and Philippa Richardson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Chris Palmer and Richard Palmer.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (VIRTUALLY): Councillor Dolley Wooster.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Monique Bonney, Ann Cavanagh, Kieran Golding, Claire Martin and Ben J Martin.

713 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

714 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 January 2026 (Minute Nos. 608 – 614) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

715 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Peter MacDonald declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 2.1 25/504680/FULL 6 Marine Parade, Sheerness as he sat on Sheerness Town Council. He explained that he was not at the Town Council meeting when the matter was discussed and would speak and vote on the application.

Part 2 - Applications for which PERMISSION is recommended

716 **2.1 - 25/504680/FULL 6 Marine Parade, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 2AL**

2.1 REFERENCE NO 25/504680/FULL
PROPOSAL Proposed change of use of existing building to 9 bed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis).
SITE LOCATION 6 Marine Parade, Sheerness, Kent. ME12 2AL
WARD Sheerness
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Sheerness Town Council
APPLICANT Mr Andrew Johnstone - AJJ Management Ltd
AGENT Mrs Hayley Richardson – Planning Geek

The Team Leader (Planning Applications) advised that there were no updates to the report.

Hayley Richardson, the Agent, spoke in support of the application.

The Chairman moved the officer recommendation to grant planning permission as per the recommendation in the report, and this was seconded by Councillor Tony Winckless.

A visiting Ward Member spoke against the application.

The Chairman invited Members to make comments, and these included:

- The photographs along Berridge Road, Sheerness which had been circulated indicated the current vehicle parking situation in the area;
- Members needed to note that paragraph 5.3 in the report set out that Kent County Council (KCC) Highways and Transportation had advised that the proposal did not meet the criteria to warrant their involvement;
- parking in this area had historically been sporadic, but if the application was granted, the parking situation was likely to be exacerbated;
- the application site sat within Flood Zone 3, with a high probability of flooding and was surprised that there was bedroom accommodation on the lower ground floor;
- there were serious issues with vehicle parking in the area;
- this was overdevelopment;
- did not agree with the Environment Agency's opinion of having no objection;
- the site was not sustainable;
- the application could set a precedent;
- considered the application was harmful to the area, where there were already issues of double parking;
- paragraphs 7.31, 7.32 and 7.33 set out the professional consultees' opinion on any flood risk;
- in favour of the application;
- concerned with the emergency access from the building and clarification sought on whether fire experts had been consulted;
- any free vehicle spaces in nearby streets were because residents were at work; and
- did not agree that on-street parking spaces in Berridge Road were an option as this was a particularly bad road for parking, with a lot of illegal double parking.

In response the Team Leader explained that the existing building currently had a Lawful Development Certificate for six bedrooms and in terms of a nine bedroom HMO, the applicant would have needed a licence and emergency access would have been addressed through that, rather than the planning process. In response to a further question, he confirmed there was no on-site parking provision.

Before they made their decision, the Chairman referred Members to paragraphs 7.15 and 7.16 in the report.

Resolved: That application 25/504680/FULL be granted as per the recommendation in the report.

717 **2.2 - 24/504410/OUT Land East of Holywell Primary School, Forge Lane, Upchurch, ME9 7AD**

2.2 REFERENCE NO 24/504410/OUT
PROPOSAL Outline application (access and layout sought) for overflow community parking, erection of 16no. dwellings, with associated parking and gardens, and formation of new access and egress points onto Forge Lane.
SITE LOCATION Land East Of Holywell Primary School, Forge Lane, Upchurch ME9 7AD
WARD Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Upchurch
APPLICANT Cantium Land And Development Ltd.
AGENT Mrs. J. Scott Finns

The Planning Manager advised that some additional papers were tabled. These included an officer update and a written statement from a member of the public. Members were given a few minutes to read the papers.

Parish Councillor Gary Rosewell, representing Upchurch Parish Council spoke against the application.

Jane Scott, the Agent, spoke in support of the application.

The Chairman moved the officer recommendation to grant planning permission as per the recommendation in the report, and this was seconded by Councillor Hayden Brawn.

Two visiting Ward Members spoke against the application.

The Chairman invited Members to make comments, and these included:

- Sought clarification as to why the application had not been determined on time;
- noted that the application included a supporting report which had identified the land as Grade 3B, and so not best and most versatile (BMV);
- considered the Council should have commissioned a report to check whether the land was BMV;
- the application conflicted with Policy ST3 being outside the settlement boundary, this was an unallocated site in the countryside and could set a precedent; and
- did not agree with the housing mix set out in paragraph 7.4.2 of the report and considered the affordable housing element was skewed away from what families needed and this conflicted with Policy CP3 which required development to deliver a balanced mix of dwellings.

In response, the Planning Manager said that in terms of the housing mix, it was correct that all the open market dwellings would be four or five bedroom houses and the affordable housing were the six smaller units: two one bedroom houses; three two bedroom houses and one three bedroom house. He added that it was correct that this did not perfectly reflect the requirement identified in the housing market assessment (HMA). The HMA requirement applied borough-wide. The provision of affordable housing was given substantial weight in appeal decisions. In terms of the provision of larger dwellings in the open market, he referred to Policy CP3 and Policy DM8. With the

Council not having a five-year housing supply, the tilted balance applied and as such there were conflicts with some of the Council's policies. Officers were happy with the applicant's testing of the quality of the land. The Planning Manager outlined the reasons why the application had not yet been determined and these included various amendments to the application, discussion on affordable housing provision, and amended plans that needed to be consulted on. The Planning Manager indicated on the site plan where the different types of housing would be positioned, together with the schedule of accommodation. He also indicated the landscaping and provision of hedges on the site and the provision of car barns, parking spaces and garages and the community car parking area.

Members made further comments:

- Clarification sought on the date the application should have been determined by;
- recognised that this was an unsustainable site, but the Planning Inspector would grant the application as the Council did not have a five-year housing supply;
- Members should go with the officer recommendation otherwise the Council would have to pay appeal costs; and
- there was a shortage of agricultural land and housing should not be built on it.

On being put to the vote, the motion to grant the application was lost.

There was some discussion on the reasons for refusal.

Councillor Julien Speed moved the following motion: That the application be refused as the proposed development, by virtue of the position of the proposed dwellings outside the built-up area boundaries of the Swale Borough, would conflict with the Council's Settlement Strategy. Moreover, the development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the locality and a significant and inadequately mitigated impact on the local landscape. The proposal is, therefore, unacceptable and contrary to policies ST1, ST3, CP4, DM14 and DM24 of Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Council (SBC) Local Plan 2017 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition, the proposed development, by virtue of the proposed mix of housing and affordable housing, would fail to reflect the established needs of the Borough and, as such, would conflict with Policies CP3 and DM8 of Bearing Fruits 2031: The SBC Local Plan 2017 and the NPPF. Furthermore, the proposed development could result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land and it has not been demonstrated that an overriding need exists for the development that cannot be met on land within the built-up area boundaries or that no alternative site on land at a lower grade could accommodate the proposed development. The proposal is, therefore, unacceptable and contrary to Policies ST1, DM3 and DM31 of Bearing Fruits 2031 - The SBC Local Plan 2017 and the NPPF. This was seconded by Councillor Peter Marchington and on being put to the vote was agreed.

Resolved: That had an appeal against non-determination not been made that the Council would have refused application 24/504410/OUT for the reasons minuted above.

Part 3 - Applications for which REFUSAL is recommended**718 3.1 - 25/504706/OUT Ten Acres, Breach Lane, Lower Halstow, Kent, ME9 7DD**

3.1 REFERENCE NO 25/504706/OUT
PROPOSAL Outline application (with all matters reserved except access) for demolition of existing brick outbuilding and erection of 3no. detached custom-build dwellings.
SITE LOCATION Ten Acres Breach Lane Lower Halstow Kent ME9 7DD
WARD Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Lower Halstow
APPLICANT Mr & Mrs Keith & Glenda Tress
AGENT Benchmark Design Build LTD

The Planning Manager advised that there were no updates to the report.

Louise Campbell, an objector, spoke against the application.

Keith Tress, the Applicant, spoke in support of the application.

The Chairman moved the officer recommendation to refuse planning permission as per the recommendation in the report, and this was seconded by Councillor Brawn.

The Chairman invited Members to make comments, and these included:

- Did not see a problem with the application, so long as the three proposed dwellings were self-build projects as set out in the report; and
- considered there should be more self-build opportunities within the borough.

On being put to the vote, the motion to refuse the application was lost.

There was some discussion on the conditions that would be applied to the application.

Councillor James Hunt moved the following motion: That the application be granted and delegated authority be given to officers to issue a decision notice with the standard conditions for this type of development. This was seconded and on being put to the vote was agreed.

Resolved: That application 25/504706/OUT be granted and delegated to officers to issue a decision notice with the standard conditions for this type of development.

719 Part 5 applications

Decisions by County Council and Secretary of State, reported for information

Item 5.1 – Unit 1, Jetty Road, Warden, Kent ME12 4NF

PINS Decision: APPEAL ALLOWED

Committee or Officer Decision: DELEGATED REFUSAL

A Member considered this to be an appalling decision.

Item 5.2 – Webbenditch Cottage, Cold Harbour Lane, Bobbing, Kent ME9 8NN

PINS Decision: APPEAL ALLOWED

Committee or Officer Decision : DELEGATED REFUSAL

A Member considered this to be an appalling decision.

Item 5.3 – Land at The Tractor Shed, Provender Lane, Faversham ME13 0SL

PINS Decision: NOTICE QUASHED

Committee or Officer Decision : ENFORCEMENT NOTICE ISSUED

A Member was disappointed with the decision.

A Member applauded officers for their continued work.

720 Adjournment of Meeting

The Meeting was adjourned from 7.36 pm until 7.40 pm.

Chairman

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel