
Planning Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 5 March 2026 from 7.00 pm - 9.05 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Monique Bonney, Andy Booth (Chair), Lloyd Bowen (Substitute for Councillor Julien Speed), Hayden Brawn, Ann Cavanagh, Lloyd Chapman, Shelley Cheesman (Substitute for Councillor Tony Winckless), Simon Clark (Vice-Chair), James Hunt, Peter MacDonald, Peter Marchington, Claire Martin, Ben J Martin, Tom Nundy (Substitute for Councillor Elliott Jayes), Paul Stephen and Terry Thompson.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Andrew Gambrell, Ian Harrison, Joanne Johnson, Tim Neal and Ben Oates.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Kieran Golding, Elliott Jayes, Julien Speed and Tony Winckless.

786 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

787 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

788 **2.1 - 25/501882/FULL - Land to The North of Lower Road, Teynham, Kent, ME9 9EQ**

2.1 REFERENCE NO 25/501882/FULL	
PROPOSAL Erection of 23no. dwellings (Including Affordable Housing) with associated public open space, access, vehicle parking and an enhanced pedestrian route to Teynham.	
SITE LOCATION Land to the North of Lower Road, Teynham	
WARD Teynham and Lynsted	
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Teynham	
APPLICANT Guy Osborne	AGENT N/A

The Team Leader (Planning Applications) introduced the application as set out in the report.

Carly Chapman, a Supporter, spoke in support of the application.
Teresa Ryszskowska, an Objector, spoke against the application.
Guy Osborne, the Applicant, 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 Brawn.

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

- Disappointment that Kent County Council (KCC) Highways were neither present in person nor online, noting that the committee was being asked to consider a recommendation contrary to KCC Highways' objection;
- noted that KCC Highways' formal objections were unusual and carried weight, and therefore required careful consideration;

- suggested that the current proposal differed from the previous appeal scheme, and that the improved design could alter pedestrian behaviour and increase pedestrian use of the access route, potentially heightening risk where pedestrians must share space with vehicles;
- concerned about highway safety on Lower Road, Teynham which was described locally as an accident black spot. Members questioned whether introducing additional development pressure would exacerbate risks;
- highlighted that the access arrangements onto Lower Road appeared unchanged from earlier schemes, and questioned how the proposal mitigated the perceived danger around the bend at the point where the pedestrian route met the highway;
- the rural character of the Lower Road corridor was referenced, with questions about whether the increased vehicle movements would erode that character, and whether the road could accommodate additional traffic safely;
- parking provision within the site was queried, and noted that the layout relied heavily on tandem parking and offered limited non-tandem spaces, raising concerns that overspill parking may occur on the estate road or onto Lower Road. It was noted that Swale, not KCC, were responsible for internal road layout;
- queried whether the proposed internal roads should be built to adoptable standards and whether a condition could require adoption by KCC to allow enforcement of parking restrictions;
- Questions were raised about the practicalities of moving buggies, wheelchairs and mobility users through the pedestrian link. Members asked whether the route met accessibility standards and whether segregation between cyclists and pedestrians should be required;
- questioned the cumulative impacts of approved nearby developments, including Selby Court and other forthcoming applications, and whether similar concerns should have been raised by KCC Highways in the past;
- sought clarification regarding the mix and location of affordable housing units;
- emphasised the need for a safe, direct and accessible pedestrian route that would genuinely support walking to local services, rather than forcing residents into conflict with vehicles or onto the road network;
- expressed concern about the absence of pavements on sections of Lower Road and the safety implications of crossing movements where footways were discontinued; and
- suggested that a reduction in the speed limit on Lower Road, extending further eastwards, may be necessary if further housing was approved in the area.

Officers provided the following in response:

- The previous appeal had narrowed their concerns specifically to the condition and safety of the short internal section between Selby House and Lower Road. The appeal was not dismissed on the basis of the Lower Road crossing point itself;
- the applicant had amended the scheme directly to address the inspector's concerns by introducing resurfacing, bollard-based segregation between pedestrians and vehicles, and road markings and signage to delineate the pedestrian route;
- it was appropriate to place significant weight on the inspector's previous findings, which had to be balanced against KCC Highways' objection;
- in respect of the internal layout, officers explained that the level of parking provision met Swale's adopted parking standards and that the arrangement—including tandem parking—had previously been considered acceptable at appeal;
- the vehicular access was clarified: the only vehicle access point was to the east

- of the site directly onto Lower Road; the western route was pedestrian/cycle only;
- the pedestrian route width had been designed at 1.2 metres, which officers advised was sufficient for wheelchair access, and a legal agreement would secure the pedestrian connection in perpetuity;
- confirmed that KCC cannot be required to adopt the estate roads, as this sits within a separate statutory process. However, roads could be conditioned to be constructed to an adoptable standard if Members wished;
- on the relationship with third-party land, officers explained that the pedestrian connection would be secured through a legal agreement ensuring continued access even if land ownership changed;
- clarified that the former inspector had explicitly not found the Lower Road crossing point unsafe, but had focused on deficiencies in the internal section now proposed for improvement;
- noted that the speed limit immediately around the vehicular access was currently unrestricted, but that the part of Lower Road where the pedestrian route emerged was already within a 30mph limit; and
- confirmed that affordable housing units were dispersed within the site and not grouped into a single terrace.

Resolved: That application 25/501882/FULL be DEFERRED to allow officers to liaise with the applicant regarding concerns raised by the committee and to enable discussion with KCC Highways as to how their objection could be overcome.

789 **2.2 - 25/504418/REM - Land At Lady Dane Farm, Love Lane, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8YN**

2.2 REFERENCE NO 25/504418/REM
PROPOSAL Approval of Reserved Matters (Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping) for residential development comprising 70no. dwellings, together with associated landscaping, drainage, and ancillary works, pursuant to 25/501335/HYBRID.
SITE LOCATION Land At Lady Dane Farm, Love Lane, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8YN
WARD Watling
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Faversham Town Council
APPLICANT Fernham Homes Operations Limited
AGENT DHA Planning

The Planning Consultant introduced the application as set out in the report.

The Chairman moved the officer recommendation to grant 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:

- Disappointment that Faversham Town Council had not attended to explain its objection and commented that the scheme broadly complied with the outline permission and presented no obvious reason for refusal;
- highlighted the positive inclusion of 35% affordable housing across the wider site and noted that this exceeded levels often secured elsewhere;
- concerned that the dwelling mix did not align with the Council's identified housing

needs, particularly the demand for smaller one and two-bedroom units. The development should reflect local evidence of need rather than favour larger properties;

- queried the number of fully accessible units and noted that only three dwellings were proposed to M4(3) wheelchair-user standard;
- There was a general lack of bungalows delivered by major developers, despite high demand and strong market value. Noted that bungalows sell quickly and would meet an important housing need within Swale; and
- repeated their view from an earlier agenda item that estate roads should be required, via condition, to be built to adoptable standards. This was considered important to ensure proper long-term management, prevent unresolved parking issues, and avoid estates remaining in private management where enforcement was more difficult.

Resolved: That application 25/504418/REM be granted as per the recommendation in the report.

790 **3.1 - 24/502717/OUT - Land West of Borden Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8HR**

3.1 REFERENCE NO 24/502717/OUT	
PROPOSAL Outline Application (with all matters reserved) for erection of a care home (Class C2), with associated parking, landscaping and substation.	
SITE LOCATION Land West of Borden Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8HR	
WARD Borden and Grove Park	
PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Borden	
APPLICANT Aspire LPP	AGENT SLR Consulting Limited

The Planning Manager (Planning Applications) introduced the application as set out in the report.

Borden Parish Councillor Lee Small spoke against the application.

Sarah Booker, an Objector, spoke against the application.

Ryan Nicholls, 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:

- Noted the appeal timetable and the need to confirm the Council's position quickly;
- acknowledged that the application had already been refused and would now be decided by an Inspector, with the committee's task being to confirm which refusal reasons should be defended;
- emphasised that recent appeal decisions on nearby sites were important material evidence and should inform whether the existing ecology reason remained defensible;
- argued that the ecological refusal reason should be withdrawn to avoid a potential application for an award of costs, given the strength of the appellant's evidence and lack of objection from KCC Ecology.

- the site functions was a traditional orchard and priority habitat;
- the ecological value and connectivity to the adjacent wildlife site remained significant;
- the countryside gap reason was still robust and was upheld in a recent appeal;
- criticised reliance on desktop ecology assessments and highlighted local knowledge of the site's wildlife activity;
- concerned about habitat fragmentation, countryside gap erosion, and the loss of agricultural potential;
- voiced doubt that the ecological refusal reason could be successfully defended given national guidance, the treatment of wildlife impacts in recent appeals, and the ability to manage impacts through conditions;
- sought clarification on what methodology the Inspector would use at appeal and whether they would rely solely on desktop evidence; and
- questioned whether the applicant's ecological surveys were adequate, given the site's proximity to a designated wildlife site.

In response, the officer advised:

- While costs risks could be highlighted, Members must base decisions on planning merits;
- the committee must decide whether each refusal reason remained "sound" in the light of new evidence submitted as part of the appeal;
- Inspectors normally held a site visit, but their assessment would most likely be guided primarily by the technical ecological evidence before them;
- similar appeals (e.g., Riddles Road, Sittingbourne), inspectors acknowledged local observations but placed greater weight on professionally prepared ecology reports and the fact that KCC Ecology had raised no objection.
- the applicant had submitted ecology surveys;
- further ecological information accompanied the appeal;
- KCC Ecology had raised no objection;
- the new appeal evidence had not identified ecological constraints; and
- an Inspector would consider countryside gap policy as a separate planning matter, distinct from ecology.

Resolved: That application 24/502717/OUT be refused as per reasons 5.2a and 5.3i in the report.

791 Part 5 applications

Item 5.1 – Gate Service Station, London Road, Dunkirk, Kent ME13 9LN

PINS Decision: APPEAL DISMISSED

Committee or Officer Decision: DELEGATED REFUSAL

Item 5.2 – Land off Riddles Road, Borden, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8HP

PINS Decision: APPEAL DISMISSED (PARTIAL AWARD OF COSTS)

Committee or Officer Decision: COMMITTEE DECISION

Item 5.3 – Former Kingsfield Care Home, Jubilee Way, Faversham ME13 8GD

PINS Decision: APPEAL ALLOWED

Committee or Officer Decision: NON-DETERMINATION

Chairman

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