

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

Attendees for 26 September 2024:

Committee Members:	Councillors Burke, Cleator, Cox, Field, Greenan, Harwood, Jeffery, Milham, M Naghi, Oliver, Riordan, J Sams, Springett, M Thompson, Wilby (Chairman) and D Wilkinson
Visiting Members:	Councillors Russell, J Sams and Wales

142. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cox, Harwood, Jeffery, Spooner, Summersgill, S Thompson and Trzebinski.

143. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:

- Councillor Oliver for Councillor Summersgill
- Councillor Milham for Councillor S Thompson
- Councillor Springett for Councillor Trzebinski

The following Substitute Members were noted for Items 9 (23/504552/FULL, Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone, ME14 2RJ) and 13 (23/504311/FULL Vinters Park Crematorium, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Maidstone, ME14 5LG):

- Councillor J Sams for Councillor Cox
- Councillor Field for Councillor Harwood
- Councillor Greenan for Councillor Jeffery

144. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Wales was present as Visiting Member for Item 9 (23/504552/FULL – Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 2RJ).

Councillor Russell was present as Visiting Member for Item 10 (24/501907/FULL - The Orchard, Copper Lane, Marden, Kent, TN12 9DW) and Item 11 (24/502003/FULL – The George, Benover Road, Yalding, Maidstone, Kent, ME18 6EJ).

Councillor J Sams was present as Visiting Member for Item 14 (24/501092/FULL – The Gables, Warren Street, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 2ED).

145. ITEMS WITHDRAWN FROM THE AGENDA

There were none.

146. ANY BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN REGARDS AS URGENT INCLUDING THE URGENT UPDATE REPORT AS IT RELATES TO MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING

The Chairman stated that he intended to take the update reports of the Head of Development Management and any verbal updates as urgent items as they contained further information relating to the applications to be considered at the meeting.

147. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Harwood stated that he was a Member of the Cabinet and would not sit on the Committee for the applications 23/504552/FULL (Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3DX) and 23/504311/FULL (Vinters Park Crematorium, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5LG).

148. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

The following disclosures of lobbying were noted:

9.	23/504552/FULL - Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone, ME14 2RJ	Councillors Cleator, Field, Greenan, Harwood and Wilby
10.	24/501907/FULL - The Orchard, Copper Lane, Marden, Kent, TN12 9DW	Councillors Harwood and Wilby
11.	24/502003/FULL - The George, Benover Road, Yalding, Maidstone, ME18 6EJ	Councillors Harwood, Milham, M Thompson and Wilby
12.	23/503025/FULL - The Vale Nursing Home, 191 Willington Street, Maidstone, ME15 8ED	Councillors Burke, Cleator, Harwood, Milham, M Naghi, Riordan, Springett, M Thompson and Wilby
13.	23/504311/FULL - Vinters Park Crematorium, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Maidstone, ME14 5LG	Councillors Harwood and Wilby
14.	24/501092/FULL - The Gables, Warren Street, Lenham, Maidstone, ME17 2ED	Councillors Burke, Cleator, Harwood, Milham, M Naghi, M Thompson, Riordan, J Sams, Springett and Wilby

149. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION.

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

150. 23/504552/FULL - FORMER ROYAL MAIL SORTING OFFICE, SANDLING ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME14 2RJ

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Development Management.

The Head of Development Management clarified that the Council had adopted a new Local Plan which designates much of the urban area, including where this application was situated, as a low value zone. He explained the applicant had demonstrated that the application was unable to provide any affordable housing due to viability. National policy requires viability be weighed in the balance but the Local Plan gives more weight to viability as a material consideration.

Philip Morris, as the applicant's representative, and Councillor Wales, a Visiting Member, addressed the committee.

RESOLVED:

1. That permission be granted subject to planning conditions, heads of terms, and delegated powers to negotiate amended plans to reduce the amount of hard surfacing within the central open space as set out in the report, with

2. The following informatives:

The landscaping details submitted under condition 21 should avoid the use of non-native species.

Ward Councillors shall be consulted on any submission of condition 21 (landscaping).

The play equipment details submitted under condition 20 should avoid the use of a water fountain/water feature.

3. Amendment to condition 20 to include reference to catering for 'needs' as well as a range ages for play equipment.
4. That the Head of Development Management be given delegated powers to investigate whether a wet pond feature can be provided in the northwest corner of the site.
5. That the Head of Development Management be given delegated powers to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions and/or informatives in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

Voting: 12 – For 0 – Against 0 – Abstentions

151. 23/504311/FULL VINTERS PARK CREMATORIUM BEARSTED ROAD WEAVERING MAIDSTONE KENT ME14 5LG

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Development Management.

RESOLVED:

1. That permission be granted subject to planning conditions set out in the report.
2. That the Head of Development Management be given delegated powers to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions and/or informatives in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

Voting: 12 – For 0 – Against 0 – Abstentions

152. 24/501907/FULL THE ORCHARD COPPER LANE MARDEN KENT TN12 9DW

The following Substitute Members were introduced at 6.44 p.m. after the conclusion of Item 13 (23/504311/FULL - Vinters Park Crematorium, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Maidstone, ME14 5LG)

- Councillor Harwood for Councillor Field
- Councillor Jeffery for Councillor Greenan
- Councillor Cox for J Sams

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Development Management.

Geoff Haskins, the applicant, and Councillor Russell, a Visiting Member, addressed the Committee.

RESOLVED: That consideration of this application be deferred to:

Seek further information on the number of mobile homes and site plan included in the application.

Voting: 7 – For 4 – Against 1 – Abstentions

153. 24/502003/FULL THE GEORGE BENOVER ROAD YALDING MAIDSTONE KENT ME18 6EJ

The Committee considered the report and urgent update report of the Head of Development Management.

Ian Simmons, an objector, Hannah Rushbridge, the applicant's representative, and Councillor Russell, a Visiting Member, addressed the Committee.

RESOLVED: That consideration of this application be deferred to:

Amend the application to state that it is retrospective.

Seek further information on compliance with conditions, size of the floor plan and contemporary photography of the application.

Voting: 9 – For 3 – Against 0 – Abstentions

154. 23/503025/FULL THE VALE NURSING HOME 191 WILLINGTON STREET MAIDSTONE KENT ME15 8ED

The Committee considered the report and urgent update reports of the Head of Development Management.

Peter May, an objector, Dave Elsworth, a concerned resident in the Residents' Association speaker slot with the Chairman's discretion and Pete Hadley, for the applicant addressed the meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That permission be granted to the conditions and informatives set out in the report subject to:
 - Amendment of condition 7b to include double staggered hedgerows.
 - Amendment of condition 7h (Landscaping) to include 10 year landscape management plan.
2. That delegated powers be given to the Head of Development Management to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions and/or informatives in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

Voting: 8 – For 3 – Against 1 – Abstention

155. 24/501092/FULL THE GABLES WARREN STREET LENHAM MAIDSTONE KENT ME17 2ED

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Development Management.

Councillor Alastair Walmsley of Lenham Parish Council and Councillor J Sams as a Visiting Member addressed the meeting.

RESOLVED: That permission be refused for the reasons set out in the report.

Voting: 7 – For 1 – Against 4 – Abstentions

156. APPEAL LIST

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Development Management setting out details of appeal decisions received since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

157. DURATION OF MEETING

6.00 p.m. to 8.50 p.m.