

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2024**  
**ADJOURNED TO 25 MARCH 2024**

**Present 21 March 2024:**

<b>Committee Members:</b>	<b>Councillor Spooner (Chairman) and Councillors Cox, Eagle, English, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Harwood, Kimmance, McKenna, Perry, Russell and D Wilkinson</b>
<b>Visiting Members:</b>	<b>Councillors Coates, Fort and Harper</b>

259. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeffery and Riordan.

260. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:

Councillor Eagle for Councillor Jeffery  
Councillor Garten for Councillor Riordan

261. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillors Coates and Harper were present as Visiting Members for items 16 (23/503726/FULL – Land to the East of 26 Douglas Road, Maidstone, Kent) and 17 (23/502446/FULL – Land to Rear 18-20 Hartnup Street, Maidstone, Kent).

Councillor Fort was present as a Visiting Member for item 14 (23/503997/FULL – Abbey Farm, Lower Street, Leeds, Maidstone, Kent).

262. ITEMS WITHDRAWN FROM THE AGENDA

There were none.

263. URGENT ITEMS

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

264. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillors Garten, Perry and Russell stated that although as Cabinet Members they had taken part in the decision to demolish the existing buildings at the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site, they did not consider that this should preclude them from participating in determination of application 23/504552/FULL for the redevelopment of the site.

265. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

The following disclosures of lobbying were noted:

14.	23/503997/FULL – Abbey Farm, Lower Street, Leeds, Maidstone, Kent	Councillors Cox, Eagle, English, Mrs Gooch, Kimmance, McKenna, Perry, Russell, Spooner and D Wilkinson
15.	23/504552/FULL – Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone, Kent	Councillors Cox, Harwood, Kimmance, McKenna, Russell and Spooner

266. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

267. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2024 ADJOURNED TO 22 FEBRUARY 2024

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2024 adjourned to 22 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

The Head of Development Management advised the Committee that as requested at the meeting held on 15 February 2024 adjourned to 22 February 2024, he had written to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development regarding the need for local parking standards particularly given the age of the County Council's parking standards; the possibility of the Council employing its own inhouse ecologist to advise on the ecological implications of development proposals; and the need to bring forward policies to assess the impact of dog exercising areas.

268. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

269. DEFERRED ITEMS

- 21/503412/FULL - ERECTION OF 8 NO. FULL MASTS AND 4 NO. LOWER MASTS FLOODLIGHTING TO SERVE THE SPORTS PITCHES - MARDEN SPORTS CLUB, MAIDSTONE ROAD, MARDEN, KENT
- 23/503671/FULL - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING HOUSE AND OUTBUILDING. ERECTION OF 2 NO. DWELLINGS INCLUDING EXTENSION OF EXISTING CROSSOVER AND ASSOCIATED PARKING - MONTROSE, SUTTON ROAD, LANGLEY, MAIDSTONE, KENT
- 23/504118/FULL - CHANGE OF USE OF 1 HECTARE (2.5 ACRES) OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO USE AS A DOG WALKING PADDOCK WITH ASSOCIATED 1.8METRE HEIGHT FENCING, GATE, AND PARKING - HOOK FARM, KINGS LANE, MARDEN, KENT

The Head of Development Management advised the Committee that work was in progress on all of these applications.

270. 22/502412/FULL - RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR TWO MOBILE UNITS AND A UTILITY BLOCK FOR TRAVELLER USE - PLOT 1, PEACOCK FARM, CHART HILL ROAD, CHART SUTTON, MAIDSTONE, KENT

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

**RESOLVED:**

1. That permission be granted subject to the 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 in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

Voting: 12 – For 0 – Against 0 – Abstentions

271. 23/503997/FULL - CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO RESIDENTIAL. ERECTION OF 2NO. DETACHED COTTAGES, 1NO. DETACHED DWELLING WITH OUTSIDE POOL AND CONVERSION OF CATTLE BARN TO POOL HOUSE. CONVERSION OF DOVECOTE TO ANCILLARY RESIDENTIAL OUTBUILDING. RESTORATION WORKS TO GRADE II LISTED SLYPE AND DOVECOTE AND RESTORATION OF THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE INCLUDING REPAIR OF 2 RAGSTONE WALLS. DEMOLITION OF 2NO. MODERN BARNS. NEW VEHICULAR ACCESS TO LOWER STREET, PARKING AND OTHER ASSOCIATED WORKS (RE-SUBMISSION OF 22/502610/FULL) - ABBEY FARM, LOWER STREET, LEEDS, MAIDSTONE, KENT

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

Mr Saunders, an objector, Councillor Greeff of Leeds Parish Council, Mr Spicer, agent for the applicant, and Councillor Fort (Visiting Member) addressed the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That subject to:

- A. No additional material considerations being raised as a result of the departure site and press notices that expire on 11 April 2024; and
- B. The prior completion of a legal agreement in such terms as the Head of Legal Partnership may advise (a) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report and (b) to require prior payment of monitoring fees of £1,020 for the first obligation and £510 for each additional planning obligation with amended/additional Heads of Terms to address:

Extending the days and times that the site is available for public and academic access; and

Landscape restoration issues (specifying native parkland trees and some wetland features within the arable reversion field and making sure that when opening up sections of the woodland between the new house and the Scheduled Monuments it is done in a way that is sensitive to the ecology of the woodland),

the Head of Development Management be given delegated powers (a) to grant permission subject to the conditions set out in the report and the additional conditions set out in the urgent update report with the amendment of the appropriate conditions to reflect the amended/additional Heads of Terms and (b) to be able to settle or amend any necessary Heads of Terms, planning conditions and/or informatives in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee with the proviso that the wording of the amended/additional Heads of Terms and conditions is to be agreed in consultation with the Ward Member and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Voting: 7 – For 5 – Against 0 – Abstentions

272. 23/503726/FULL - ERECTION OF A NEW DETACHED DWELLING WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING, RESIDENTIAL AMENITY SPACE AND LANDSCAPING (RE-SUBMISSION OF 22/504135/FULL) - LAND TO THE EAST OF 26 DOUGLAS ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT

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

Mr Osborne, agent for the applicant, and Councillors Harper and Coates (Visiting Members) addressed the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in the report with an informative advising the applicant to contact Maidstone Parking Services to investigate the possibility of a new on-street parking space in Douglas Road.
2. That the Head of Development Management be given delegated powers to be able to add, settle or amend any necessary planning conditions/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

273. 23/502446/FULL - ERECTION OF 1NO. DETACHED BUNGALOW WITH PARKING - LAND TO REAR 18-20 HARTNUP STREET, MAIDSTONE, KENT

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

Councillors Harper and Coates (Visiting Members) addressed the meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in the report with an additional condition specifying that when the site is cleared it is done progressively to safeguard any species protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
2. That the Head of Development Management be given delegated powers to be able to add, settle or amend any necessary planning conditions/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

274. 23/504552/FULL - DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES AND ERECTION OF A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 217NO. RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS AND 1,863.5SQM OF COMMERCIAL FLOORSPEACE (COMPRISING FLEXIBLE E USE CLASSES) COMPRISING BLOCK A (6-7 STOREYS), BLOCK B (8-9 STOREYS), BLOCK C & D (7-8 STOREYS), BLOCK E (3 STOREYS), PUBLIC REALM WORKS (SANDLING ROAD FRONTAGE AND PUBLIC PIAZZA), CAR AND CYCLE PARKING, LANDSCAPING, INFRASTRUCTURE (INTERNAL ROADS), EARTHWORKS, AND ANCILLARY WORKS (SUB-STATIONS AND GENERATOR) - FORMER ROYAL MAIL SORTING OFFICE, SANDLING ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT

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

Mr Mellor, agent for the applicant, addressed the meeting.

During the introduction of the application, the Head of Development Management advised the Committee inter alia that:

- The Council, the previous day, had adopted the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2021-2038. Although this had substantial weight, it did not have the full weight of the 2017 adopted plan because the six-week period for judicial review had only just started. The Officers were however giving more weight to the Local Plan Review because it had an up-to-date evidence base in terms of the proposed uses.
- Affordable housing was not provided for viability reasons. However, the applicant had stated the intention to apply for Homes England funding under the Affordable Homes Programme to provide affordable housing should permission be granted.
- There had been a positive response from the NHS regarding the use of floor space offered by the applicant for healthcare purposes.
- In terms of the design, the buildings together were of scale but there were buildings of size close by and the large Royal Engineers Road adjacent.

**RESOLVED:** That consideration of this application be deferred to:

Explore the possibility of more contextual massing in the design of buildings;  
Explore improving the quality of the open space proposed including more useable spaces; and  
Explore locking the applicant into the delivery of 100% affordable housing by way of, for example, a Grampian condition or cascade legal agreement.

Note 1: The provision of secured open space areas can be conditioned.

Voting: 10 – For 1 – Against 0 – Abstentions

Note 2: Councillor Kimmance left the meeting during consideration of this application (8.45 p.m.).

275. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Following consideration of the report of the Head of Development Management relating to application 23/504552/FULL (Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, Sandling Road, Maidstone, Kent), the Committee:

**RESOLVED:** That the meeting be adjourned until 6.00 p.m. on Monday 25 March 2024 when the remaining items on the agenda will be discussed.

276. 23/504640/FULL - CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING KIOSK AND WC BUILDING TO STORAGE AND CHANGING ROOMS. ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION, INCLUDING REPLACEMENT OF FLAT ROOF WITH A NEW PITCHED ROOF AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING WORKS - MOTE PARK KIOSK, WILLOW WAY, MAIDSTONE, KENT

Rolled over to the adjourned meeting on 25 March 2024.

277. 23/505669/TPOA - TPO APPLICATION TO: HOLLY (T4) INSTALL A 3 WAY COBRA SYSTEM, ASH (T9) SEVER IVY AND DEADWOOD, CHERRY (T12) REDUCE LARGE LIMB OVER FOOTPATH BY 1M AND DEADWOOD AND REMOVAL OF TWO ASH (T13 AND T15) - 20 THE TRINITY FOYER, FIRST FLOOR, FLAT 1, CHURCH STREET, MAIDSTONE, KENT

Rolled over to the adjourned meeting on 25 March 2024.

278. 5012/2023/TPO - MATURE THUJA TREE LOCATED ALONG THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF ST MARY'S CHURCH - ST MARY'S CHURCH, OLD ASHFORD ROAD, LENHAM, MAIDSTONE, KENT

Rolled over to the adjourned meeting on 25 March 2024.

279. (A) 23/505231/NMAMD & (B) 23/505593/NMAMD - HEATHER HOUSE, BICKNOR ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT

Rolled over to the adjourned meeting on 25 March 2024.

280. APPEAL DECISIONS

Rolled over to the adjourned meeting on 25 March 2024.

281. DISCUSSION ITEM ON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Rolled over to the adjourned meeting on 25 March 2024.

282. DURATION OF MEETING

6.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m.