

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AREA 2 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 18th February, 2026

Present: Cllr W E Palmer (Chair), Cllr B Banks, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr S Crisp, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr K B Tanner, Cllr Mrs M Tatton and Cllr M Taylor.

In attendance: Councillor R I B Cannon was also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Brown (Vice-Chair), P Boxall, M A Coffin, Mrs T Dean, D Harman and J R S Lark.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

AP2 26/7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

AP2 26/8 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Area 2 Planning Committee held on 14 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

AP2 26/9 GLOSSARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

Decisions were taken on the following applications subject to the pre-requisites, informatives, conditions or reasons for refusal set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services or in the variations indicated below. Any supplementary reports were tabled at the meeting.

Members of the public addressed the meeting where the required notice had been given and their comments were taken into account by the Committee when determining the application. Speakers are listed under the relevant planning application shown below.

MATTERS FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS
(IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION)

**AP2 26/10 TM/25/01412/FL - LAND NORTH OF DRAYHORSE MEADOW,
FIELDS LANE, WATERINGBURY**

Erection of 66 new homes (including affordable homes), together with associated open space, landscaping, access and parking.

Due regard was given to the determining issues, conditions, reasons and informatives as detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. The views of public speakers were also taken into account.

Members expressed concerns regarding the proximity of the development to the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), the loss of Best and Most Versatile land, the harmful impact of the layout on the landscape character and views of the Medway Valley. Furthermore, Members considered the proposal to be an inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Councillor R Betts proposed and Councillor S Hudson seconded that the application be refused, contrary to Officer's recommendation, for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposal by virtue of the proximity of the development to the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) would lead to the worsening of the AQMA contrary to paragraph 199 of the National Policy Planning Framework and policy SQ4 of the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan Document;
- (2) The proposal by virtue of the layout, loss of Best and Most Versatile land and loss of important views into and out of the Medway Valley would result in irreversible landscape harm to the detriment of this countryside location, contrary to paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework, policy CP14 of the Core Strategy and Maidstone Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (Medway Valley); and
- (3) The proposal would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt contrary to paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework for which no very special circumstances have been demonstrated.

Following a formal vote, the proposal was supported by the majority of the Committee and on the grounds that the above refusal reasons were not considered could be substantiated at an appeal, the vote taken was a recommendation only in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 Rules of the Constitution.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the planning application be DEFERRED for a report from the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer on the risks arising from a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health* (as set out in Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution).

[Speakers: Councillor K Hutchinson (on behalf of Watlington Parish Council), Mr P Coulling, Mr J Etheridge, Mr D Mitchell-Moore (statement read by the Democratic Services Officer), Ms J Northern, Ms E Peacock and Mr J Tilthorpe (statement read by Mr P Coulling) (members of the public); and Ms H Becker (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

*The post title of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health was renamed to the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services from 22 January 2026 and the relevant references within the Constitution were subsequently updated following approval by Full Council.

AP2 26/11 TM/25/01596/PA - BLACK HORSE INN, TUMBLEFIELD ROAD, STANSTED

Proposed change of use of part of the public house to form 2 x 1 bed and 2 x 2 bed apartments with associated parking, amenity space and use of existing access.

Due regard was given to the determining issues, conditions, reasons and informatives as detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. Members expressed concern regarding the significant reduction in floor space, which would impact the viability of the remaining parts of the public house as a community facility and the absence of a viability report to demonstrate the sustainability of the public house. Concern was also raised regarding the likely harm that the proposed development would have on the conservation area, and the loss of a landmark and heritage asset.

It was proposed by Councillor R Betts, seconded by Councillor M Taylor and unanimously supported by the Committee, that the application be refused.

RESOLVED: That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposed development would result in the loss of part of the premises last used for the provision of community services and it had not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that the remaining facility was of an adequate scale to meet the identified significant need or of a size that was adequate to support the community facility contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP26; and

- (2) The proposal was contrary to Paragraph 98 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework, in that the building provided a social recreation, cultural facility and service to the community.

[Speakers: Councillor Y Tisson (on behalf of Stansted Parish Council), Mr D Epps, Ms D Estrade (on behalf of Black Horse Project Steering Group), Mr T Seldon and Mr B Shaw and Mr G Whitaker (members of the public) and Mr P Nicholls (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

AP2 26/12 TM/25/01771/PA - ALANS HECTARE, CEMETERY LANE, HADLOW, TONBRIDGE

Change of use of land to a travellers caravan site consisting of 6 additional residential caravan plots to rear of existing site.

Due regard was given to the determining issues, conditions, reasons and informatives as detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services. The views of public speakers were also taken into account.

During deliberation, Members took into consideration the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show-person Accommodation Assessment 2025 (GGTA) which set out an identified need for 33 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the Borough. Concern was raised regarding the landscaping and boundary treatment and to ensure that there was a level of control over the fencing, it was proposed by Councillor W Palmer (Chair), seconded by Councillor R Betts, and the Committee unanimously

RESOLVED: That planning permission be GRANTED in accordance with the submitted details, conditions and reasons and informatives set out in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services, subject to consultation with the Chair of the Area 2 Planning Committee and the local Ward Members on the details of the scheme of landscaping and boundary treatment to be submitted by the Applicant pursuant to Condition 9.

[Speakers: Councillor O Baldock (on behalf of Hadlow Parish Council) and Dr A Murdoch (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

AP2 26/13 TM/25/01509/PA - ALLENS OAST, 4B OLD ROAD, EAST PECKHAM, TONBRIDGE

Retrospective permission for the unauthorised erection of a summerhouse outbuilding.

Further to Minute AP2 26/4 of the meeting held on 14 January 2026, the Committee considered the above application with the report of the

Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer set out in Part 2 of the agenda (Minute AP2 26/16 refers).

On the grounds of Member's continued concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on the adjacent Grade II listed building, wider heritage impacts and landscaping, it was proposed by Councillor S Hudson and seconded by Councillor M Boughton, that retrospective permission be refused, contrary to Officer's recommendation, for the following reason:

- (1) That the unauthorised erection of a summerhouse outbuilding with flat roofed projection further towards the Grade 2 Listed building at Strettitt Place was contrary to Policies CP24 (design), S66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 and 213A of the NPPF and created additional harm to the setting of the historic asset.

Following a formal vote, the proposal was carried with seven Members voting in favour and two Members voting against. One Member abstained from voting. On the grounds that the above refusal reason was not considered could be substantiated at any appeal and there was likely to be a risk of significant costs being awarded against the Council at any appeal, the vote taken was a recommendation only in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure Rule 15.24, Part 4 Rules of the Constitution.

RECOMMENDED*: That consideration of the planning application stand ADJOURNED with the recommendation to refuse the planning application being referred for determination by Council in accordance with Council and Committee Procedure rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution.

***Recommended to Council**

AP2 26/14 PLANNING APPEALS, PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS

Members received a verbal report detailing the Planning Inspectorate's appeal decision regarding the site at Land north-east and south of 161 Watringbury Road, East Malling. The appeal was allowed, and outline planning permission was subsequently granted. All matters were reserved except for access, with approval for the erection of up to 52 residential dwellings. The development included affordable housing, open space and landscaping, roads, parking facilities, drainage and earthworks, and a new access to be formed from Watringbury Road, in accordance with application TM/22/01570/OA. The permission was subject to specified conditions.

The Planning Inspectorate considered the effect of the proposed development on:

- the setting of listed buildings, including Huntley Cottage, Ivy House Farm and Barn, and the on-designated heritage asset of Belvedere Oast.
- East Malling Conservation Area.
- the character and appearance of the landscape, including the 'historic landscape'
- highway safety
- ecology, in particular badgers; and
- the living conditions of the occupants of the adjacent No. 51 Watlingbury Road with particular regard to privacy and light intrusion.

In weighing up the proposal in the planning balance, the Inspector concluded that the proposal complied with numerous local policies, including the provision of affordable housing, the availability of sustainable transport and proximity to the local services, the protection of biodiversity, no harm to residential amenity and provision of open space.

The Inspector considered that the proposal would not cause a material increase in traffic or risk to highway safety and that it had been satisfactorily demonstrated that the development would have an insignificant effect on air quality including on the Watlingbury Air Quality Management Area.

The Inspector did identify some harm, specifically regarding the setting of the Conservation Area, local landscape character, and the loss of Grade II agricultural land. However, these harms were considered modest. Taking into account the Council's history of poor housing delivery and the very low five-year housing land supply, the Inspector concluded that any conflicts did not outweigh the benefits provided by the development.

AP2 26/15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair moved, it was seconded and

RESOLVED: That as public discussion would disclose exempt information the following matters be considered in private.

PART 2 - PRIVATE

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

AP2 26/16 TM/25/01509/PA - ALLENS OAST, 4B OLD ROAD, EAST PECKHAM, TONBRIDGE

At the meeting of the Area 2 Planning Committee held on 14 January 2026 consideration of the application was deferred for a report from the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer on the risks arising

from a decision contrary to the recommendation of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health (as set out in Council and Committee Procedural Rule 15.24, Part 4 (Rules) of the Constitution) (Minute AP2 26/4 refers). The report of the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer provided an assessment of the risks arising from a resolution to refuse planning permission and advised that any such resolution would be a recommendation only and the matter would stand adjourned to be considered and determined by Full Council (Minute AP2 26/13 refers).

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.

The meeting ended at 11.49 pm
With an adjournment between 9.50 pm and 9.59 pm