

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AREA 3 PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday, 25th September, 2025

Present: Cllr D Thornewell (Chair), Cllr R W Dalton (Vice-Chair), Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr L Chapman, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr S M Hammond, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr D Keers, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley and Cllr C J Williams

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A McDermott.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

AP3 25/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

AP3 25/20 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Area 3 Planning Committee held on 5 June 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

AP3 25/21 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 Environmental Health 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)

AP3 25/22 TM/25/01319/PA - COBDOWN SPORTS GROUND, STATION ROAD, DITTON, AYLESFORD

Full planning permission for development at Cobdown Park to provide a football training centre (sui generis), comprising of the demolition and redevelopment of existing Clubhouse building, refurbishment of existing Academy building; demolition of ancillary buildings and structures across the Site; provision of new grounds maintenance building and service area; refurbishment of existing pavilion building to provide upgraded changing and kitchen facilities; provision of new upgraded grass football pitches and upgrade of existing synthetic surface; new areas for car and cycle parking; upgrade to existing sports lighting; boundary treatment and hard and soft landscaping and associated site infrastructure and site plant.

Due regard was given to the determining issues detailed in the report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health with particular reference made to the community, social, employment and economic benefits to arise from the proposed scheme, and it was considered that the overall benefits outweighed any detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field for any former use, including hockey and croquet. However, it was noted that the impacted clubs were encouraged to engage with the Council's Planning Policy Team and Leisure Services to seek to address their needs for sports provision as part of the Local Plan development process that was currently underway.

Furthermore, suggestions were made by Members in respect of implementing low level lighting along the new public right of way to balance safety and ecological concerns, exploring further improvements to mitigate flooding on the footpath to the north-east of the grounds, restricting site traffic during construction to avoid peak school time as part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan, considering future provision for solar panelling on the roof of the new buildings to enhance sustainability and enhancing landscaping plans to ensure the planting of native species for better biodiversity.

It was proposed by Councillor D Thornewell (Chair), seconded by Councillor R Dalton, and the Committee unanimously

RESOLVED: That planning permission be GRANTED in accordance with the submitted details, conditions and reasons and informatives set out in both the main and the supplementary reports of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health, subject to:

- (1) the completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure the following:
- Employment and training obligations in relation to:
 - o Local employment and training
 - o Local supply chain commitments
 - Travel Plan pursuant to the approved Framework Travel (monitoring fee of £1,422).
 - Community Benefits Plan to include but not limited to:
 - o Use of community 3G pitch
 - o Use of Cobdown Park Pavillion
 - o Use of recreational area
 - o Use of car parking facilities
 - o Use of wider facilities
 - o Details of community outreach and programmes including school outreach, local football clubs' outreach, SEND days and links to education programmes etc
 - o Details of clinics and coaching sessions for local coaches.
 - Details of the proposed Community Liaison Officer.
 - Setup and operate a Management Board in accordance with the details as part of the Community Benefit Plan for the lifetime of the Development (option for TMBC to be part of the management board).
 - Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain obligation; and

(2) Amended Condition 35:

Prior to the commencement of landscaping works, a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, including details of existing trees to be retained and size, species/cultivar, native hedging, planting heights, densities and positions of any soft landscaping; the design of access to the public right of way and associated surfacing, widths, gradients, landscaping and structures and details of any signage, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out before the end of the first planting and seeding season following occupation of any part of the buildings or completion of the development, whichever is sooner, or commencement of the use.

Any existing tree shown to be retained or trees or shrubs to be planted as part of the approved landscaping scheme which are removed, die, become severely damaged or diseased within five years of the completion of development shall be replaced with trees or shrubs of appropriate size and species in the next planting season.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and trees.

[Speakers: Ms C Thompson, Mr M Sharp, Mr D Crouch, Mr G Mancini and Ms R Cheesman (members of the public) and Ms N Curtis (on behalf of the Applicant) addressed the Committee in person.]

AP3 25/23 PLANNING APPEALS, PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS

The report setting out updates in respect of planning appeals, public inquiries and hearings held since the last meeting of the Planning Committee was received and noted.

AP3 25/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm
having commenced at 7.40 pm