

The Minutes of the Meeting of Thurnham Parish Council held on 28th April 2025.
Held at the Tudor Park Hotel, at 7:30pm.

Councillors present: **Duncan**
 Dunlop
 Shelley
 Smith
 Stark
 Waters
 Wise

Also: Sherrie Babington, Parish Clerk, and MBC Councillor Stephen Thompson.

In the absence of both the Chairman, the meeting was Chaired by Cllr Smith.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies and reasons for absence were received from Cllr Skinner (work), this were accepted.

Apologies were also received from MBC Cllrs Jones, Naghi and KCC Cllr Prendergast.

2. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

To consider any applications for Co-option.

No applications to consider.

3. Declaration of Interest.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

No interests were declared.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

No dispensations were considered.

4. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to all members.

It was proposed by Cllr Dunlop to accept these as a true record, these were seconded by Cllr Waters and agreed by all present.

The Minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

- Heritage Award: Cllr Wise reported she had collected the award from the Showground and passed it to the Clerk for refurbishment.
- It was noted that the old signage had now been removed from the A20 Ashford Road.

6. Public Participation.

To discuss any questions received by members of the public.

No matters were raised.

7. Clerks Report.

The Clerk's Report was received and noted.

Thurnham Car Show

For 2025 our fund-raising committee for Thurnham Church renovations have decided not to hold a classic car show. Therefore, we shall not be requesting any donation to cover the cost of portaloos. Please accept our grateful thanks for your past generosity in covering this essential facility - always required for an outdoor event.

MAIDSTONE'S CIVIC PARADE AND SERVICE

SATURDAY, 17th MAY 2025

Maidstone's Civic parade and service will be held on Saturday 17 May. The parade will provide the opportunity to welcome the Mayor-elect into office and for 36 Engineer Regiment to exercise their Honorary Freedom of the Borough by marching through the town with bayonets fixed. The parade will pass the Town Hall at 11.30 on its way to All Saints Church for the civic service, which commences at 12.00. The Mayor-elect is pleased to invite your Parish Chairman to attend the civic service and join him for refreshments in the church following the service.

8. External Reports:

a. To receive the MBC Ward Councillor's Report.

Ward Councillors Naghi and Jones gave their apologies to the meeting.

MBC Cllr Thompson attended the meeting and gave an update regarding the site at Water Lane. He informed members that he had spoken on this matter at the recent planning committee meeting and noted a new procedural change requiring large applications to be accompanied by a checklist confirming that all statutory consultees had been consulted.

He addressed concerns regarding the Water Lane development, particularly in relation to drainage and waste issues. He noted that while the applicant's representative referred to the land as agricultural during the meeting, this had not been recorded in the planning documentation. Due to these concerns and the broader issues with the site, the application had been deferred at the committee stage to allow Maidstone Borough Councillors and Planning Officers to review the matter and ensure the consultation checklist was appropriately completed. He confirmed that a planning decision on this application would be made in the near future.

A general discussion took place regarding the site and ongoing issues with the application.

b. To receive the KCC Councillor's Report.

Apologies were received from KCC Cllr Prendergast.

c. To receive the Police Report.

No police attended the meeting and no report was submitted.

d. To receive Parish Councillors Reports.

No matters were reported.

9. **St Marys Church.**

To receive a report on St Marys Church.

Cllr Smith reported on St Marys Church.

10. **Financial Matters:**

a. Financial Statement.

To receive and approve the financial statement and payments.

The financial statement was circulated to all members and was proposed by Cllr Shelley, seconded by Cllr Stark, and agreed by all present.

11. **Planning Matters:**

a. Planning Application Received

25/501294/TPOA - The Lodge Water Lane Thurnham Kent ME14 3LT

Tree Preservation Order application: T3 Oak- cut back branch which is protruding across the double gate entrance as shown on photo.

PC Decision: No Objections.

25/501115/FULL - 3 Baron Close Bearsted Kent ME14 4PZ

Garage conversion into a habitable space and addition of access door.

PC Decision: No Objections.

25/501478/REM - Glenrowan House Roundwell Bearsted Kent ME14 4HL

Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale sought) for erection of 2(no) dwellings pursuant to 21/506239/OUT (allowed at appeal).

PC Decision: No Objections.

b. MBC Planning Decisions

25/500316/LAWPRO

The Nightingales Birkdale Lane Weaving Kent ME14 5FX

Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed window on the ground floor.

Application Permitted

25/500261/FULL

Longton Manor Stockbury Valley Stockbury Kent ME9 7QN

Change of use of land for the stationing of 9(No) static caravan pitches, to be occupied by Gypsy and Traveller families, with associated hard surfacing/parking (part retrospective)

Application Refused

The Council hereby REFUSES Planning Permission for the above for the following Reason(s):

(1) The submission, by virtue of its scale, layout and location, and the removal of Ancient Woodland within the site, would harmfully consolidate sporadic and urbanising

development in the area, resulting in a development that would not positively recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside hereabouts. This failure to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape would be contrary to policies LPRSP9, LPRSP15, LPRHOU8, and LPRQD4 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2013); the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan (3rd Revision 2021-2026); and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(2) Within the application site there has been the direct loss of ancient woodland, an irreplaceable habitat. There are no wholly exceptional reasons for this loss, and compensation for the loss of irreplaceable habitat can only be considered for developments that are 'wholly exceptional', which is not the case here. On this basis, the submission is contrary to policies LPRSP14(A) and LPRSP15 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024); and Natural England's and Forestry Commission's Standing Advice on Ancient Woodland

(3) The submission does not provide an appropriate 15m buffer zone around the whole development, separating the development from the Ancient Woodland (including what has been removed); and the submission has failed to demonstrate that the development would not result in the further loss or deterioration of Ancient Woodland, an irreplaceable habitat, contrary to policies LPRSP14(A) and LPRSP15 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). and Natural England's and Forestry Commission's Standing Advice on ancient woodland.

(4) The application has failed to demonstrate, in the interests of enhancing biodiversity, that the development would deliver the minimum required level of biodiversity net gain, contrary to policy LPRSP14(A) of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038) which requires 20% BNG.

(5) The submission has failed to provide sufficient information regarding how the development, through integrated design, would improve biodiversity in and around development, and how it would secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. On this basis, the submission is contrary to policies LPRSP14(A), LPRSP15, LPRHOU8 and LPRQD1 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(6) The submission has failed to demonstrate the acceptability of the development in relation to highway safety, contrary to policies LPRSP15 and LPRHOU8 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); and paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

25/500123/FULL

13 Peverel Drive Thurnham Kent ME14 4PS

Construction of new decking and detached open sided timber structure, steps and new raised decking to rear of garden, new fence/privacy screening to northeastern neighbouring garden boundary.

25/500122/TPOA

The Lodge Water Lane Thurnham Kent ME14 3LT

Tree Preservation Order application: T3 Oak - Trim large branches back to the trunk, spread of the tree will be reduced by 7.5m, the second branch is 4.5m. The overall spread is not reduced as there are branches above this with similar length.

Application Permitted

24/505137/FULL

Cobham Manor Riding Centre Water Lane Thurnham Kent ME14 3LU

Demolition of existing livery yard and construction of 7(no) dwellings with associated car barns/garages, private stables, car barn for Cobham Manor Hall, landscaping, access and associated works.

Application Refused

The Council hereby REFUSES Planning Permission for the above for the following Reason(s):

(1) The proposed development, by virtue of its scale, design and layout, and the harm it would cause to the setting of the farmstead that includes non-designated heritage assets, would harmfully consolidate urbanising development within the area, resulting in a development that would not positively recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside hereabouts that falls within a nationally important landscape. This failure to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape would be contrary to policies LPRSP9, LPRSP14(B), LPRSP15, LPRHOU1, LPRENV1, and LPRQD4 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2013); the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan; and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(2) Without the submission of an adequate Archaeological Desk-based Assessment and an Archaeological Landscape Assessment and Impact Assessment, it is not possible to reasonably confirm whether or not the proposed development would conserve and enhance any archaeological heritage asset; and nor can opportunities to enhance awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment to the benefit of the community, be identified. As such, the proposed development would be contrary to policies LPRSP14(B) and LPRENV1 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); and the heritage aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(3) The submission has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development would achieve a minimum of 20% BNG, contrary to policy LPRSP14(A) of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038).

(4) The submission has failed to demonstrate that protected species would not be adversely impacted upon as a result of the proposed development, contrary to policies LPRSP14 and LPRSP15 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); paragraph 99 of Government Circular (ODPM 06/2005) Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations & Their Impact Within the Planning System; and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(5) The submission has failed to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposed development in relation to highway safety, contrary to policy LPRSP15 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); and paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(6) The application site is within a groundwater source protection zone and located upon principal aquifer, and the submission has failed to demonstrate that the risks posed to groundwater as a result of the proposed development can be satisfactorily managed and mitigated against, contrary to policy LPRSP14(A) of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038) and paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(7) The application has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of surface water drainage, contrary to policies LPRSP14(A) and LPRSP14(C) of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038); and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(8) In the absence of an appropriate legal mechanism to secure the delivery of affordable housing, the development would fail to contribute to meeting the local need for affordable housing. To permit the development would therefore be contrary to policies LPRINF2 and LPRSP10(B) of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038) and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

(9) The proposed development would result in additional pressure on Kent County Council infrastructure that is unlikely to be fully mitigated in the absence of a s106 legal agreement providing supplementary financial contributions to the Local Education Authority. This is contrary to policy LPRSP13 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038)

24/504600/FULL

3 Aldington Court Cottages Pilgrims Way Thurnham Kent ME14 3LW

Erection of car port.

Application Permitted

24/503384/SUB

Scammell Lodge Friningham Detling Kent ME14 3JD

Submission of details pursuant to conditions 8 - External Materials and 11 - Biodiversity Enhancements, Subject to 20/506149/FULL

Application Refused

The Council hereby REFUSES the detail(s) reserved by the Condition(s) as listed above for the following Reason(s):

(1) Details of following conditions are REFUSED:

Condition 8 (External Materials): the materials submitted do not correspond with the parent application.

c. Other Planning Matters.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(PUBLIC BRIDLEWAYS KM82 (PART) AND KH123A (PART) THURNHAM)
PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT
MODIFICATION ORDER 2024

On 26 February 2025 the Kent County Council confirmed the above Order under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.

The effect of that Order as confirmed is to divert the entire width of that length of public bridleway numbered KM82 which begins at an unaffected length of bridleway KM82 at NGR TQ 8043 5587 (Point A) and travels in a northerly direction for 170 metres to NGR TQ 8046 5614 (Point B), then continues in a north northeasterly direction for 239 metres to NGR TQ 8058 5635 (Point X), then continues in a northeasterly direction for 95 metres to NGR TQ 8065 5641 (Point P), where the path terminates at its junction with public bridleway KH123A. As shown by the bold continuous line between Points A-B-X-P on the Order Plan and will add a new length of public bridleway numbered KM82 with a width of 4.0 metres which begins at the aforementioned Point A and travels in a northeasterly direction for 438 metres to NGR TQ 8068 5634 (Point C), then continues in a westerly direction for 99 metres to NGR TQ 8058 5635 (Point X), where the path terminates at its junction with public bridleway KM81. As shown by the broken line with crossbars in the intervals between Points A-C-X on the Order Plan.

Also, the entire width of that length of public bridleway numbered KH123A which begins at NGR TQ 8071 5638 (Point Q) and travels in a north westerly then south westerly direction for 70 metres to NGR TQ 8065 5641 (Point P). As shown by the bold continuous line between Points Q-P on the Order plan and will add a new length of public bridleway numbered KH123A with a width of 4.0 metres which

begins at the aforementioned Point Q, and travels in a south westerly direction for 48 metres to NGR TQ 8068 5634 (Point C), where the path terminates along the length of Public Bridleway KM82. As shown by the broken line with crossbars in the intervals between Points Q-C on the Order Plan. All directions general, all distances approximate.

A copy of the Order as confirmed and the Order Map have been placed and may be seen free of charge at the Kent County Council, History & Library Centre, James Whatman Way, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1LQ, from 10am-5pm. The documents can also be viewed online at www.kent.gov.uk/prownotices or a copy can be obtained by contacting Michael Tonkin on 03000 41 03 25 or email Michael.tonkin@kent.gov.uk

12. Devolution and Community Governance Review.

The Clerk updated members on Devolution and the Community Governance Review being undertaken by Maidstone Borough Council. She informed members that KALC had scheduled an Extraordinary Meeting on 19th June 2025, which was open for members to attend. She confirmed she had also booked herself onto this meeting.

13. Parish Council Annual Report.

The Clerk advised members that the Annual Report was in progress and would be finalised once the annual accounts had been published, so these could be incorporated into the publication.

Action: Clerk to progress.

14. Highway & PROW Matters.

a. To consider general highway and PROW matters.

Cllr Smith reported that the double yellow lines at the bottom of Hockers Lane were due to be implemented within this financial year.

A discussion took place regarding the entrance to the Bearsted Woodland Trust site and problems with cars parking in the layby. KCC had suggested double yellow lines on that side of the road to deter parking.

A general discussion took place regarding the car park and verge damage caused by vehicles parking outside of the car park. Cllr Smith stated that bollards had been considered, but it was agreed this would not resolve the issue and would likely displace parking further along the road.

Cllr Wise stated that he understood the car park was due to reopen soon.

b. HIP (Highways Improvement Plan).

Cllr Smith reported on the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) and a recent meeting with Greg McNichol from Kent County Council.

He stated that the HIP covered two key areas: the A20 and traffic calming along Pilgrims Way.

Pilgrims Way

Signage for entry points to Pilgrims Way from Harrietsham, Broomfield and Detling had been proposed by KCC and was now with designers.

“Ice on road” warning signs would be installed along Thurnham Lane in areas prone to freezing.

A20 – Ashford Road

The A20 initiative included pedestrian refuge islands and crossing points, which were scheduled to proceed in this year’s budget.

A 40mph speed limit for the A20 from Junction 8 to Maidstone had been proposed.

Cllr Smith stated that he had requested a 30mph speed limit at Roundwell, but KCC advised there were insufficient residential properties to justify it.

Cllr Smith reported that Bearsted Parish Council was exploring installation of “Slow” and “Elderly people crossing” signs as part of their HIP.

15. Policy Review.

It was agreed that the Clerk would email the policies to all members ahead of the next Parish Council meeting.

Action: Clerk to progress.

16. Future Agenda Items.

No matters were raised.

17. Annual Meeting of the Parish.

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Parish would be held on 19th May 2025 at 7:30pm, ahead of the next Parish Council meeting.

18. Date next Meeting

The date of the next meeting - Monday 19th May 2025.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed to the press and public at 8.49pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....