

November Planning decisions

25/504109/LBC	1/ 3 Douglas Court Faversham Rd. Lenham ME17 2PL	No Comment
25/504108/FULL	1/ 3 Douglas Court Faversham Rd. Lenham ME17 2PL	No Comment
25/503909/FULL	Land Opposite the Wishful Thinker Sandway ME17 2HY	See Annex A
25/504020/FULL	11A High Street Lenham Kent ME17 2QD	See Annex B
25/504021/LBC	11A High Street Lenham Kent ME17 2QD	See Annex B
25/504219/LBC	Parapet House Maidstone Road Lenham ME17 2QJ	No Comment
25/504047/SUB	Lenham Social Club High Street Lenham ME17 2QB	No Comment
25/504251/FULL	Land At 1 Rose Cottages Lenham Forstal Rd ME17 2JL	We have no objection in principle to this application however we note the comments submitted by the police and would ask that the Planning Officer incorporate the points made as planning conditions.
25/504168/FULL	The Oaks Green Hill Lane Harrietsham Kent ME17 1NF	No Comment
25/504188/FULL	Ashurst Lodge Dickley Lane Lenham ME17 2DD	No Comment
25/504386/SUB	6 Old School Close Lenham Kent ME17 2HD	We have no objection in principle to this construction management plan – however we do not think that the intended restrictions on parking go far enough. Old School Close is effectively a single track road and the intended parking of four vehicles (mainly contractors vans) will either block the pavements or restrict deliveries or other traffic e.g. the bin lorries from accessing further down Old School Close. Ideally parking should be restricted to the small “square” off School Close in front of number 6. We would also like to see a system of off site parking for construction delivery lorries, only allowing them on site when unloading space has been confirmed.

		We would be grateful if the two points above could be included as planning decisions.
25/504525/SUB	Land At Old Ham Lane Lenham Maidstone Kent	We object and would ask that if the Planning Officer is of a mind to approve that it is called into the Planning Committee – see annex C
25/504547/TCA	Lilac Cottage High Street Lenham Kent ME17 2QD	Given that this is part of the Conservation Area we object to this application on the grounds of insufficient detail.

Annex A

Planning consultation 25/503909/FULL Land Opposite To The Wishful Thinker Lenham Heath Road Sandway Kent ME17 2HY

Lenham Parish Council wish to see this application refused. If the planning officers recommendation is contrary to this view, we request that the application is reported to the Planning Committee for the planning reasons set out below.

Effect on Character and Appearance.

The application site lies in an area of attractive countryside outside both the village Lenham and the hamlet of Sandway. The application site is clearly visible from the public realm along the Lenham Heath Road.

Whilst there is a scatter of development, including the Wishful Thinker Inn and some residential development in the vicinity, this area is clearly open and mainly undeveloped attractive countryside. The site abuts land now under the ownership and management of Forestry England, which has plans for public access to the new planting that is planned. It is unclear whether FE has been consulted.

It would appear that the current lawful use of the site is agriculture. The spread and form of the development proposed would have a significant harmful effect on the rural character and appearance of the countryside such that the proposal would clearly conflict with development plan policy LPRSP9 which aims to protect the countryside from inappropriate and intrusive development.

Whether sustainable location and accessibility.

Sandway has no facilities and residents turn to the villages of Lenham and Harrietsham, both rural service centres situated about 1 mile away, for their day-to-day needs. The characteristics of the intervening roads, which are at the national speed limit (60mph) are not conducive for walking or cycling.

In particular the lane to Lenham is mostly unlit with no footway and has for a large part restricted forward visibility for all uses which makes it generally unsuitable for children and the elderly to walk or cycle along. There are no public transport services at Sandway.

Mr David Murray, the Inspector appointed by the government to determine a recent appeal at Warren Lands also at Sandway and less than 100m metres from this proposed site, considered whether the Hamlet was a sustainable location suitable for a gypsy or traveller caravan site. In his decision letter dated as recently as eighth of October 2024 concluded as follows at paragraph 27, page 6.

It is inherent that a Gypsy or Traveller way of life is dependent on a regular degree of travel probably by a vehicle. Nevertheless, the proposals are for a dwelling and /or a settled permanent base and this is likely to involve the families having to reach schools services and facilities even when a worker is travelling away. The location of the site away from services and facilities and the lack of practical alternatives to the use of the car means that the proposed dwelling or gypsy/traveller site would still be largely dependent on the use of the car. This would not help achieve a sustainable pattern of growth and both proposals conflict with the policy in the Framework to promote sustainable transport, together with Policy AT2(3) of the LNP (Lenham Neighbourhood Plan) .

Lenham Parish Council believes that the above comment clearly indicates that Sandway is not a suitable or sustainable location in principle for development for Gypsy and Traveller sites. Such development proposals at Sandway are clearly contrary to both the development plan and government policy as set out in the Framework.

The heart of the Sandway conservation area, which is very close to the application site, comprises a narrow and dangerous road junction. Additional traffic generated by the proposal would have to navigate this junction which would be highly detrimental to highway safety.

The effect on protected species and biodiversity.

Policy LPRSP14(a) requires new development to deliver a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain or if this is unviable the statutory minimum net gain provision. No information has been provided within the application which demonstrates that proposals to comply with this policy have been thought through and are proposed. As such the application is contrary to this important development plan policy. The proposal is within the Stodmarsh Marshes SAC affected area (there are tributaries to the Stour surrounding the site) that is also unclear.

Policy LPRHOU8.

The application conflicts with policy LPRHOU8 part (b) in terms of the sites accessibility to local services, part (c) because of the significant landscape impact and harm to rural character, part (d) the wider impact on highway safety including the very dangerous and congested junction which lies at the heart of the Sandway conservation area and part (f) the ecological impact on the Stodmarsh SAC.

Gypsy and Traveller development plan document

Maidstone Borough Council will make provision for sites to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community through the forthcoming development plan document (DPD).

The short-term use of the current application site to accommodate the travelling community does not justify harm to rural and residential amenity on a permanent basis which would result from the approval of the proposals. The proposals clearly conflict with the guidance contained within the Framework and should therefore be refused in order that a more considered and balanced appraisal of suitable sites for the Gypsy and Traveller community can be considered through the forthcoming DPD.

Annex B

Lenham Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds.

Please note that if the Planning Officer is minded to approve, we would wish it to be called in to the Planning Committee.

There is insufficient information on how the site would be accessed.

No traffic plan has been created to show how the site will be accessed via the Narrow neighbour's passageway or otherwise, and how it would impact the business of the neighbouring shop.

No detail has been given as to the parking of Contractors vehicles in the Narrow High Street.

Plan/elevations

The elevations provided do not show the flank wall of the neighbour's building which is to be adjoined – making it impossible to judge scale/impact etc

The plan/elevations have no dimensions (plan or elevation) or materials listed at all, there is insufficient information to comment especially remembering that this is part of the Lenham Square Conservation Area.

Neither the proposed SW elevation nor the 'cut out' of the NE elevation indicate the presence of a window in the building to be adjoined. It is totally unacceptable that the window giving light ventilation etc. is to be arbitrarily blocked.

There is no mention of a party wall agreement which will be needed based on a surveyor's report before proceeding.

The surveyor's report should also detail the foundation work required (on the presumption that the materials are masonry with low tiles of some sort) and also including any underpinning potentially required to the building being adjoined.

Structural Engineering report

This application should be accompanied with a full structural engineering report to cover both the effects on the property to be adjoined, the housing in close proximity and the fact that there is a 2m or so drop between this property and the properties in Church Square.

As detailed in previous applications relating to this property the integrity of the retaining wall protecting Church Square from the difference in level is questionable.

Roof Pitch

The low pitch is not usual for use with the proposed traditional Kent peg tiles - it is considered impracticable.

Being part of the Conservation Zone we would of course be looking for traditional tiles and not any alternative undefined materials more suitable to the low pitch.

Previous application 24/503821/FULL

We would refer you to the LPC comments and comments made by others including the KCC Archaeological Officer, the Conservation officer etc. made in respect of the 24/503821 application.

The basic comments made at that time still stand and have not been properly addressed in this new application.

Further comment made to MBC

LPC notes that in addition to our previous comments that there is an established right to light in the existing building that would be affected by the proposed development (as the window has been in the façade for more than 20 years). This is regarded as a significant right in planning terms.

Annex C

Lenham Parish Council objects to this application relating to condition 17 of 19/503996 EIFUL and would ask that it is called in to Committee if the Planning Officer is minded to approve.

The drawings submitted are as those submitted in 2019 and not the amended drawings as agreed by the developers. In particular we bring your attention to proposed Highway Plan 2 of 2. The southern (bottom edge) of this drawing shows a “proposed” guarded area for a future vehicular link. This is not what was subsequently agreed would be the case, in discussion between the developer, MBC. Lenham Parish and Lenham Storage.

It was agreed that the roadway would be fully completed between the development and the Railway Bridge. This completion is essential for the ongoing building work created by the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2021) which requires an adoptable link road suitable as a bus route to be built between the Headcorn Road and the A20 running through the Neighbourhood plan developments.

We include below our comment on this point which was made in respect of the original 19/503996 EIFUL application

The Parish Council wish to object to this application and strongly propose that it is called in to the Planning Committee. The submission as it stands is inconsistent in that the indicative designs do not specifically include a reference to the ambition to create appropriate infrastructure within the emerging Lenham Neighbourhood Plan, of which all the developers including Countryside have positively engaged. This is articulated in the form of a continuous service road from Headcorn Road in the east to the A20 Maidstone Road. As a minimum the Parish Council wish to see this included. Our main objection is that this proposal as it stands does not reflect this and therefore does not comply with the Transport requirements of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan which is close to being submitted for Regulation 16 consultation by MBC. It is a key requirement of the Neighbourhood Plan that there should be a continuous adoptable service road running through all the housing developments South of the Railway and West of Ham Lane to allow for the option of the existing bus route being modified to run through the developments this being to the advantage of future residents in these developments. It is worth noting that discussions have taken place with both KCC and MBC to get the adoptable service road agreed and it is generally accepted that the infra structure upgrade should proceed in step with development. The application itself makes reference to this requirement as a "future possibility" the Parish Council need this to be a specific planning condition with no occupation allowed until the proposed central estate roadway running parallel to Old Ham Lane is physically connected to the Railway Bridge "locally known as Smokey Bridge". A similar condition was applied by MBC to a building application South of the Railway where again the Neighbourhood Plan was being ignored in this respect. There is every possibility that if the Roadway connection was ever proposed "in the future" that the residents of the new properties would and could seriously object to its "future instatement". It is therefore crucial that this element is included from the outset

Also enclosed below are photos from the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan showing both the agreed roadway connection within site 5 the current development and to site 3 connected by the Railway bridge.

May we also point out that this sub application makes no mention of the standard of the Roadway to be built between the Railway Bridge and the Northwestern corner of the development. This is to be built to KCC approved roadway standard capable of use as a bus route and with pavement(s) as the main spine through the development eventually leading on to phase 2 of this site.

Plus of course the roadway from the current entrance on Old Ham Lane to its joining to the main spine to be to adoptable standard with pavement(s). The Roadway work on Old Ham Lane see "proposed" Highway plan 1 of 1 has largely already been completed leaving us wondering why this sub document has been submitted at all.

The first drawing below (Plan 3) clearly shows the Roadway in the bottom right hand corner from the development connected to the Railway bridge running through the current phase 1 of the development before crossing over to Phase 2 and thence the A20

The second drawing below (the policies map) shows sites 3 and 5 connected via the Railway Bridge allowing for a bus route through sites 2, 3 and 5

Lenham Neighbourhood Plan - Plan 3 Sites 5, 6 & 7 Masterplan



