



STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE 16TH MARCH 2026 MINUTES

PUBLIC FORUM

A number of residents spoke;

- This is a known area for flooding both surface water flooding and foul water flooding – with combined drains in the area
- Heavy rain leads to foul water flooding
- The Area cannot cope as it is, why add 62 extra homes.
- In October 2025 – flooding – foul as well as surface water, led to local ponds flooding and Environmental Health visiting to remove dead fish.
- Adjacent farm track – could there be a footpath route into Stanley Close to improve access to school and local amenities
- If approved must be a condition regarding drainage prior to houses being occupied and ongoing maintenance of drainage.

Present: Cllr Ash, Sharp, McLaughlin, Farragher, Pett and the Clerk

APOLOGIES: Cllrs Wakeford and Arger

APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES: Minute Pages 1845p – 1847p of 23rd February 2026 available at: <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/planning-committee/>

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting 23rd February 2026, agreed unanimously.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda: -

1. Declarations of Lobbying.- Cllr Pett - 26/500660/FULL
2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests- NA
3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda - NA
4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

CLERK'S PLANNING REPORT:

Land North of Staplehurst Station Rd, Staplehurst – Developers invited to present to public on 30th March 2026, not yet received a positive response

Land North of Staplehurst Station Rd, Staplehurst is a strange title for the application; Station Rd is the A229 and runs north to South?

Also Post Code does not match the site

Signed by

Chairman.....Date.....

Maybe "Land to the North of George Street and the land adjacent to Couchman Green Lane Staplehurst

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Farragher recommended that we request a more accurate name and post code for the application – agreed unanimously.

FULL PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

26/500660/FULL - Land South Of Marden Road Staplehurst Kent TN12 0PE

Residential development comprising 62 homes, new access onto Marden Road, public open space, SuDS and provision of a swale on the northern boundary to provide flood alleviation for Marden Road.

Following debate, which welcomed the affordable homes percentage and that the site was not over Intensified, following points were made;

1. Surface water drainage - history of problems in the area with surface drainage - proposal to increase storage capacity on site welcomed but will it be enough? If in the long run, they prove be insufficient the residents would be liable for the costs to rectify this.
2. Foul drainage - history of problems in the area - appreciate the developer pays the connection fee but there are capacity issues – confirmed by Southern Water.
In their comment on the MBC portal SW state that they currently do not have local capacity to support 62 homes.
Will the developer contribution be enough to upgrade the local system (with in 24 months of the development).
When the Dickens Gate development north of Marden Road had drainage issues a large underground tank was built on the site now being discussed. We believe this is currently being maintained and paid for by MBC. We would expect explicit guarantees that this will continue for ever as it should not be for the new development residents to be liable for the infrastructure future costs.
3. Surface Water Management Plan for Staplehurst highlights this area at risk.
4. Potential Foundation Risk: The developer plans to place a major SuDS attenuation basin (**Feature 8**) immediately adjacent to neighbouring properties. On this heavy clay site with a high water table, this creates a "bathplug" effect, risking lateral water migration and ground heave to foundations of neighbouring properties.
5. Drainage Betterment: There is currently no provision for "cut-off" drainage to prevent the new development from shedding water onto neighbouring land, potentially turning neighbouring gardens into a sump.
6. Highways - we understand the access into the site will be adopted (say 10m) but the remaining internal roads / drains / footpaths will be constructed to KCC standards but transferred to the Residents Management Company (RMC) - recent concerns are that the internal roads / drains / footpaths are not built to KCC standards - Therefore we will seek a condition that the internal roads / drainage / footpaths are constructed to KCC standards and inspected by KCC qualified staff to sign off before handover to the RMC
7. Footpath – option link a footpath into the Stanley Close towards the south of site - an informal link has been established.
8. Allotments - can we request that you provide some allotments for the residents of Staplehurst. There is a strategic lack of allotments in Staplehurst, and we would happily take them on and manage them.
9. Property design - flint is not a Staplehurst house design feature - except on new developments that claim it is a Staplehurst design feature.
10. Open space / Swale etc ongoing maintenance - can you provide a maintenance specification as part of the planning application which will then be carried on by the RMC?
11. Clarify play area LAP, LEAP.
12. Environmental issues
 - Solar panels? Or fitting to allow solar panels to be fitted by home owner?
 - EV charging points on property

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

- Water butts per property
- 13. Biodiversity - can you clarify the off-site bio-diversity site in Staplehurst? What Biodiversity will there be on site and what will be off site? How will you protect Miner bees.
- 14. Heritage hedge - we understand the hedge at the front is a Heritage hedge? How will you protect it? Note, **21/500117/HEDGE** The Council's Planning Committee resolved that a Hedgerow Retention Notice be issued on the grounds that the hedgerow is considered to be important and the Council is not satisfied that the circumstances justify its removal as proposed. The hedgerow Retention Notice will be issued under separate cover
- 15. Ecological Loss: The proposed "woodland path" fragments a vital wildlife corridor used by free-roaming deer (which are observed frequently) and removes the natural buffer that protects local biodiversity.
- 16. RMC - residents in the area have had bad experiences of RMCs. Therefore, we request that any items such as Roads / drains / footpaths / streetlights / open space / Play areas are inspected by KCC / MBC (or Unity Authority) qualified staff that the work has been done to the correct standard, copy of warranties / guarantees are provided. There should be a binding agreement that the development cannot be passed to the residents until the relevant signoffs are in place. As it stands we understand any developer can handover a site to the RMC regardless of the completion of conditions or outstanding Breaches of Conditions; and in such cases this transfers the liability to the residents.
- 17. RMC fees - management fees are transparent and properly itemised and administration fees are highlighted
- 18. 5 year housing land supply current 4.5 years this only means you cannot refuse it on the grounds of having 5-year housing land supply
- 19. No comment from KCC highways yet

In conclusion we have serious drainage, foul water and environmental concerns about this application and that future residents will be living in properties prone to flooding / foul water and will then have to cover the cost via Resident Management Company fees. This is not a sustainable site.

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to recommend refusal on the following grounds

NPPF

Sustainability – 6 page item 11dii. "Adverse impacts of (approval) would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits"

Planning and flood risk page 49 item 170 "inappropriate development in areas of risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas of high risk.

MBC

LPRSP6 (F) Staplehurst - Outside the village envelope
LPRSA066 – Staplehurst Site allocations – site not included
LPRQD1 – Sustainable design

Staplehurst NDP

PW2 – Proposals outside the extended Village envelope
PW4 - new development must have regard for the environment / heritage landscape
Access Theme - objective 6 connectivity

If MBC Planning Officers are minded to approve, Staplehurst Parish Council request that it is called in to MBC Planning Committee.

If the application is approved, or wins on appeal, request the following;

Conditions

1. Surface water – that surface water infrastructure is completed and tested to be adequate by Southern Water prior to the occupation of properties

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

2. Foul water - that foul water infrastructure is completed and tested to be adequate by Southern Water prior to the occupation of properties.
3. The appropriate Public Health body confirm that due to a lack of an adequate drainage system in the area the proposed improvements in 1 and 2 above will, beyond reasonable doubt, mitigate the Public Health issue potentially caused by the application.
4. KCC Highways to confirm;
 - why junction from the Marden Rd can not be from the mini roundabout
 - that the Crossroads will be able to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the application
 - to confirm that Clapper Lane is not an appropriate route for traffic from this site it is poorly maintained, dangerous and regularly floods.
 - that the attenuation tanks will with stand the construction of a road and the movement of traffic across them
5. Allotments - There is a strategic lack of allotments in Staplehurst, therefore request the provision of allotments – to the same standard as Hen and Duckhurst Allotments - to be managed by Staplehurst Parish Council for the residents of Staplehurst
6. Environmental Impact Assessment is required
7. Protection of ancient hedge
8. Environmental improvements
 - Fixture and fittings to allow retrospective Solar panels to be fitted by the home owner
 - EV charging points per property
 - Water butts per property
 - Bat / bird boxes
9. Proposed ongoing management and maintenance Residents Management Company.
 - That the internal roads / drainage / footpaths / streetlights are constructed to KCC standards and inspected and signed off by KCC / MBC (or Unity Authority) qualified staff that the work has been done to the correct standard, copy of warranties / guarantees are provided before handover to the Residents Management Company; and the handover cannot proceed until this is completed.
 - That any items such as Swales / open space / Play areas are constructed to national standard inspected and signed off by KCC / MBC (or Unity Authority) qualified staff that the work has been done to the correct standard, copy of warranties / guarantees are provided before handover to the Residents Management Company
 - That Residents Management Company management fees are transparent and properly itemised and administration fees are highlighted before handover to the Residents Management Company

Section 106 contributions should be allocated to Staplehurst Primary School (Education), Staplehurst Medical Centre (Health) Staplehurst Roads (KCC Highways) and Staplehurst Buses routes (KCC Highways) Community Facilities (Staplehurst Community Centre)

Lawful Development Certificate - NA

Tree Preservation Orders

Application: 26/500814/TPOA: Staplehurst Manor Nursing Home Frittenden Road Staplehurst Kent TN12 0DG Proposal: TPO application to two (T6 & T7) Dead ash trees at risk of failure to remove all 4 stems, leaving the larger 2 stems at a height of 5-6 meters, one (T8) tree to Remove large dead limb that overhangs 2 parking bays , one (T55) tree to Remove remaining poplar stem, one (T47) failing yew tree to Section dismantle to ground level and to one (T45) Horse Chestnut to crown lift o 5-6 m all around as vans are causing damage to lower limbs

Cllr McLaughlin proposed, and Cllr Sharp recommended to defer to Tree Officer.

DECISIONS: (for noting)

26/500734/ENCSCR – Land North of Staplehurst Station Rd, Staplehurst, TN12 0RD

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

Environmental Screening Opinion: Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved except access) for the erection of up to 300 dwellings, parking, open space, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure / MBC Granted

In simple terms MBC agreed with the developer that an EIA is not required. We usually just note decisions however; we wish to query this decision due to the following factors;

Inaccurate information - the planning application title is nonsensical and inaccurate.

Inaccurate information – Water from the land drains into gully’s that are managed by Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board and drain into River Beult. The Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board should have been consulted.

Limited consultation – under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 consultation should be at least 21 days, with an Environmental Scoping Report the statutory consultees are:

- Historic England
- Natural England
- Environmental Agency

None of the statutory consultees have commented on the Environmental Scoping Report. At best this seems a decision made in haste.

Cllr sharp proposed, and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to challenge the decision on the above grounds – agreed unanimously

Public Forum.

A resident raised the point about 26/500660/FULL that two accesses for vehicles are being made in the protected hedge on to the site and is the existing attenuation tank (from Hen and Duckhurst) strong enough for a road to across over it?

Meeting closed.....8.30pm

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....