

Minutes of the Meeting of Planning and Transport held in Rickards Hall on 14 September 2026 at 7:30 pm

Present: Cllrs. Jon Aldridge (*Chairman*), Angela Baker, Alan Layland, Margot McArthur, Angela Read (*Vice-Chairwoman*)
 In attendance: The planning officer, no members of the public and no members of the press.
 The meeting started at 19.30

1 To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr M Gemmell Smith, Cllr S McGregor, Cllr V Parker, Cllr J Streets, Cllr M Stockdale and Cllr Todd.

2 Declaration of Interests or Predetermination, including interests not already registered

None.

3 Public Questions and Statements

None.

4 To receive, approve and sign the minutes of the Planning and Transport Meeting held on 17 August 2026 (pages 2023-148/1-4).

5 Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere

None.

6 Planning Applications to Be Considered

6.1 25/03235/FUL - Land North Of Warsop Trading Estate Hever Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5DJ

Recommendation: *Members objected to this application and wished to repeat their previous comments with additional objection and an attached photo:*

- *The proposal is, on the evidence of the application itself, the same scheme as application 23/02183/FUL, which Sevenoaks District Council refused, and which the Planning Inspectorate subsequently dismissed at appeal on 25 November 2024 (Appeal Ref APP/G2245/W/24/3340877, Inspector David Smith BA(Hons) DMS MRTPI). It is the same floor area and the same plan numbers, re-submitted within 2 years of the previous decision.*
- *The Inspector upheld four distinct harms: loss of Green Belt openness, harm to the character and appearance of the area, net loss of biodiversity, and harm to users of the public rights of way. The applicant has attempted to address only one of these four — biodiversity — by adding a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric calculation and re-describing part of the scheme as a "habitat creation area". The Green Belt, character and public-rights-of-way objections appear to have not been addressed, and the appeal decision on those three grounds applies with undiminished force. The Edenbridge Planning Committee does not accept that the new BNG material overcomes the biodiversity objection either.*
- *The site lies wholly within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which begins immediately outside the urban confines of Edenbridge. The proposal is inappropriate development by definition, to which substantial weight must be given. Beyond the harm in principle, the Inspector found a significant loss of openness — one of the essential characteristics of the Green Belt. The building would have an internal floor area of 428 sq. m over two storeys and is "fairly substantial"; sited away from other buildings, it would intrude significantly into the unspoilt fields on the periphery of the town and would encroach into the countryside, undermining a core purpose of the Green Belt (NPPF, the five purposes of the Green Belt).*
- *The Inspector concluded that the development would have a major urbanising*

impact on its immediate surroundings and would seriously erode the intrinsic qualities of this attractive area of countryside. The building, hard surfacing, parked cars and associated paraphernalia would be visible from footpaths SR612 and SR613, and the new access would require removal of roadside hedging, "opening up" views from Hever Road. The boundaries do not follow existing features and would "carve up" the land in an unnatural manner. It would also directly impact these Key Views explicitly identified ("views of the fields and river... should be retained") in the Edenbridge Character Assessment.

- This harm conflicts with Policy EN1 of the Allocations and Development Management Plan, which requires development to respect the character of the site and surroundings, and with Core Strategy Policies SP1, SP5 and SP7. The site also sits within the Eden Valley Landscape Character Area and immediately east of Character Area C3.4 of the Edenbridge Residential Character Area Appraisal, whose guidance emphasises respecting building lines, the sense of enclosure and the open views across the fields — none of which this isolated, set-back, flat-roofed building respects.
- The site lies directly within the River Eden Local Wildlife Site (SE20) and within the Medway and Low Weald Greensand & Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Surveys identified breeding birds, hedgehogs, badgers, invertebrates, foraging and commuting bats, and the potential presence of otters and water voles.

The Inspector accepted that the scheme would cause a net reduction in biodiversity: the applicant's own Feasibility Study indicated a 66% loss in the biodiversity value of the site's area habitats, and although a large percentage gain in hedgerow was claimed, the new hedgerows would not replicate the value of the scrub to be lost.

The applicant has, for this application, submitted a Biodiversity Net Gain metric calculation. The Town Council does not accept that this overcomes the objection, against the direct, permanent loss of part of a designated Local Wildlife Site and the qualitative fact that replacement hedgerow does not carry the same ecological value as the established scrub it displaces. Therefore, there would be a conflict with Policy SP11

Two public footpaths are affected. SR612 runs directly through the site, on the very line of the proposed building, and would require diversion; SR613 runs adjacent to the proposed access road. The Inspector found that any diversion would run tight against the building and car park and would cross the access road, so that the experience of footpath users would be "totally changed" from a pastoral setting to one dominated by built development. He treated this as a further, distinct objection to the scheme.

- Further concerns of the Town Council:
 - The site is known to be susceptible to periodic fluvial flooding from the immediately adjacent River Eden. Even if the building can be elevated above this, floodwaters would isolate residents from the town. **A photo is attached of recent flooding on the site.**
 - The edge-of-town location for this facility and close proximity to the river. Young vulnerable people would be cut off from Edenbridge Town and the district.
 - Access to the site from Hever Road would be from a bend on a narrow road **opposite the granted access point to 25/03241/OUT (135 homes).** Hever Road is already heavily parked-on, and additional junction and demand would require road improvements that have not been forthcoming. The proposed access is not suitable for traffic or pedestrians onto Hever Road.
- The proposal is to house vulnerable young people exiting the care system. The Town council expressed concern that:
 - This site is fundamentally not suited to housing vulnerable young people due to the size and limited facilities of Edenbridge itself. The limited public transport options would place additional burdens on young residents.
 - Housing vulnerable people in an isolated facility susceptible to flooding is

ill-considered.

- *An Article 4 Notice was served on the site in 2020.*

6.2 26/00107/FUL - Land West Of Kettle Cottage Hilders Lane Edenbridge Kent TN8 6LG

Recommendation: *Members maintained their previous objections to this application and made additional comments:*

Members expressed health and safety concerns about the unmade footpath immediately adjacent to an unlit country road, expecting considerable uplift in traffic under the local plan. Members also questions the viability and safety of footpath SR597 as a route into town in the dark and during the winter.

Members are not satisfied that the footpath access has been fully resolved and would prefer to see a proper pavement along Hilders Lane, especially the more dangerous parts of Hilders Lane.

Members requested that further measures are proposed with a view to the Health and Safety aspect of the the footpath access.

6.3 26/01962/HOUSE - 6 Eden Villas Mill Hill Edenbridge Kent TN8 5DG

Recommendation: *Members supported this application.*

6.4 26/02226/HOUSE - Wayfarings Swan Lane Edenbridge Kent TN8 6AL

Recommendation: *Members supported this application.*

7 For Information

7.1 26/01964/DETAIL - Oast Farm Lydens Lane Hever Kent TN8 7EP

Noted.

7.2 26/01940/DETAIL - Farm Buildings West Of Stable Court Lingfield Road Edenbridge Kent

Noted.

7.3 26/01650/DETAIL - Land Rear Of 130 - 132 High Street Edenbridge Kent TN8 5AY

Noted.

7.4 26/01955/DETAIL - Town Station Coal Yard Station Approach Edenbridge Kent TN8 5LP

Noted.

7.5 26/01954/DETAIL - Town Station Coal Yard Station Approach Edenbridge Kent TN8 5LP

Noted.

7.6 26/01935/DETAIL - Town Station Coal Yard Station Approach Edenbridge Kent TN8 5LP

Noted.

7.7 26/02099/DETAIL - 2 High Street Edenbridge Kent TN8 5AG

Noted.

- 7.8** **26/02098/DETAIL - 2 High Street Edenbridge Kent TN8 5AG**
Noted.
- 7.9** **26/02062/DETAIL - 2 High Street Edenbridge Kent TN8 5AG**
Noted.
- 7.10** **26/01716/LDCPR - Broadlands Honeypot Lane Edenbridge Kent TN8 6QJ**
Noted.
- 7.11** **26/02026/LDCPR - Gardiner Business Park Little Browns Lane Edenbridge Kent TN8 6LH**
Noted.
- 8** **SDC Planning Decisions**
- 8.1** **26/01783/PIP - Land West Of Gabriels Farmhouse Marsh Green Road Marsh Green Edenbridge Kent TN8 5PP**
Noted.
- 8.2** **26/01549/HOUSE - 31 Westways Edenbridge Kent TN8 6AA**
Noted.
- 8.3** **26/00904/LBCALT - Windmill House Mill Hill Edenbridge Kent TN8 5DA**
Noted.
- 8.4** **25/03353/FUL - Chiswell Farm Shernden Lane Marsh Green Edenbridge Kent TN8 5PR**
Noted.
- 8.5** **26/01429/HOUSE - 1 Bell View Marsh Green Road Marsh Green Edenbridge Kent TN8 5PU**
Noted.
- 8.6** **26/01292/LBCALT - Eden Cottage Mill Hill Edenbridge Kent TN8 5BU**
Noted.
- 8.7** **26/01292/LBCALT - Eden Cottage Mill Hill Edenbridge Kent TN8 5BU**
Noted.
- 9** **Planning Applications Considered Outside of A Meeting**
- 9.1** **26/01451/HOUSE - 37 Stangrove Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5HT**
Ratified.
- 9.2** **26/01641/FUL - A W Champion Ltd Unit P And Part Unit Q Fircroft Way Edenbridge Kent TN8 6EL**
Ratified

9.3 26/00859/FUL - Sontay Ltd Four Elms Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 6AB

Ratified

10 Consultations

10.1 National Highway & Transport (NHT) Survey 2026-27

Members were keen to take part in this survey and to promote it through our website and Facebook

11 Sevenoaks District Council Emerging Local Plan

Members confirmed the draft documents as presented in councillors' shared folder and reconfirmed delegated authority to Cllrs Aldridge, Baker and the Town Clerk to finalise all responses to appropriate policies for submissions representations to Reg 19

and:

1. Members confirmed the infrastructure development policy/programme of works.
2. Members agreed to give delegated authority to Cllrs Aldridge, Baker and the Town Clerk to confirm submission policy.

11.1 Sevenoaks District Council Draft Community Infrastructure Levy charges - closing date 17 September

1. Members agreed to provide their views on the proposed changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule. .
2. Members authorised the Town Clerk, in consultation with Cllrs Baker and Aldridge, to prepare and submit a response to SDC's Draft CIL Charging Schedule consultation on behalf of the Town Council.

12 Other Planning Business

None.

12.1 Water Quality Report to Edenbridge Town Council

Members accepted the Water Quality Report to Edenbridge Town Council and agreed that is a very useful document and thanked the volunteers' work in providing this.

13 Press Release

National Highway & Transport (NHT) Survey 2026-27

14 Date of Next Meeting 5th October 2026

The meeting ended at 20.00