

AT A MEETING OF FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE held in the Guildhall, on Monday 23rd February 2026

Present: The Mayor Cllr Josh Rowlands, Cllrs P Cook, R Crayford, C Gibson, T Martin and R Newman

In attendance: Adrienne Begent (Deputy Town Clerk)

James Froster and Katherine Munro representing Fernham Homes attended the meeting and briefed members on their proposal for Abbeyfields.

340. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs L Coniam, R Crayford and H Perkin

341 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

342 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr T Martin seconded by R Newman and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of Faversham Town Council Planning Committee held on 9th February 2026.**

Cllr R Crayford abstained

343. PLANNING SCHEDULE

The Planning Schedule dated 9th February 2026 was noted.

344 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

It was: **RESOLVED that recommendations be sent to Kent County Council (KCC) and Swale Borough Council (SBC) as set out Planning Schedule 23rd February 2026.**

345. ACTIVE TRAVEL SUBMISSION – 23/505533/EIHYB

Members noted the additional submission that had been submitted by FTC's Active Travel Committee on 23/505533/EIHYB. Appendix 1

346. EE Mast (Corner of Lower Road and Ospringe Road, Faversham)

The following motion was proposed by Cllr R Crayford, seconded by Cllr J Rowlands:

The Town Council's Planning Committee notes with concern EE's continued intention to erect a telephone mast at the corner of Lower Road and Ospringe Road in Faversham, despite previous objections raised by local residents.

The Planning Committee further notes that EE is now asserting that the proposed mast falls under permitted development rights, thereby avoiding the requirement for planning permission. This approach significantly reduces opportunities for public scrutiny and bypasses meaningful engagement with the community.

The Planning Committee believes that:

- Residents of Faversham, particularly those in St Ann's Ward, have a right to adequate consultation on developments that directly affect their neighbourhood.
- Ward councillors should be engaged early and transparently in discussions regarding infrastructure proposals of this nature.
- EE's current approach demonstrates insufficient regard for local opinion and undermines public confidence in the consultation process.
- There is a real danger that this approach could be replicated in other parts of the town, setting a precedent that allows similar installations to proceed without proper consultation or oversight.

The Planning Committee therefore resolves to:

- Write formally to EE expressing strong objection to the company's approach and highlighting the lack of adequate consultation with local residents and ward councillors.
- Publicly call out EE's failure to engage appropriately with the community on this matter.
- Request that EE pause any further action relating to the proposed mast until a full and open consultation has taken place with residents, ward councillors, and relevant local authorities.
- Coordinate a local campaign to ensure residents' voices are heard, enabling the community to express its concerns collectively and effectively.

It was proposed by Cllr R Crayford seconded by Cllr J Rowlands and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the motion with the following two amendments:**

- Support any local campaigns led by residents to ensure their' voices are heard, enabling the community to express its concerns collectively and effectively.

- That a letter is sent to SBC requesting that they formally challenge EE's approach and lack of public consultation and ask that the Town Council is kept informed on future developments.

The meeting ended at 19.47

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questions directed at Fernham Homes concerning their proposal for Abbeyfields:

Mr Kenny Hughes

Since 2016 there has been a decline in Bats in the area because of light pollution, other wildlife will also have been affected. This proposal will result in further loss.

Fernham Homes (FH):

There will an ecology survey which will include bats and appropriate mitigation put in place

Cllr Laura Coniam

Previous ecological survey was limited to the field and did not include hedgerows, resulting in low records of species.

FH:

The surrounding hedgerows will be included in the survey

Mrs Ann Furedi

This site is not in the local plan and local residents are 100% against. The provision of allotments does not compensate for loss of open space used by residents including dog walkers and children. The town won't want to lose this open space.

Access is impossible, East Street is already a nightmare. Abbeyfields itself is small and private.

FH:

This is not an open space it is an arable field

Mr Kevin Tiernan

This has been an open space for more then 20 years and there covenants from 18/1900's to prove it.

FH:

The Right of Way will incorporated in the proposal They have had pre app discussions with KCC who are happy with the number of units.

Cllr Peter Cook

Faversham has grown by 25% over the last 10 years. Other developments including the Duchy at South East Faversham are on the table. There will be hostility from the town towards development of this site.

The NPPF states that development should be sustainable. There is limited employment in Faversham, the Duchy proposal is the exception in providing employment opportunities. People will therefore need to travel to work.

It is easy to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain on a large site, but this won't improve the local environment.

Abbeyfields is privately owned by multiple parties. There are limitations on rights of easement. Will you share your consultation and legal discussions?

FH:

KCC was happy with the proposal in 2020, maybe they would share their legal advice.

Fernham Homes have been told they have a legal right to access but they will not be sharing this opinion.

Mr Kevin Tiernan

The access point at Abbeyfields and Whitstable Road is three times wider than the rest of Abbeyfields. This is all KCC are concerned with.

FH:

KCC will need to be happy with the width of all roads and junctions on the site.

Mr Richard Deveson

Has been a resident of Abbeyfield for over 25 years. He has seen proposals for the site increase from 50 houses to this (180). Attwood has tried to buy the right of access from residents

Cllr Rob Crayford

Is shocked to see this proposal launched again after it being turned down by SBC and following the making of the NHP.

FH:

Ham Farm was successful at appeal, so this is the same situation,

Cllr Rob Crayford

You have come here to find out what the community says but the NHP says no,

FH:

We don't need to be here

Mr Harry Hilden

FTC, SBC and the Local MP are call against this proposal. The infrastructure can't cope. The only one to benefit will be the developer. Take your idea to a town and leave the countryside alone.

Cllr Charles Gibson

Abbeyfield was not included local plan list and therefore will not be in the local plan.

Asked if Fernham Homes had looked at the critical junctions in the NHP

FH:

Transport Consultants are looking at the junctions

Mrs Lesley Seager

Are KCC happy with the proposal?

No Council has jurisdiction over Abbeyfield, they cant tell people to use it or comment.

We will block the road.

Mr Stuart Davison

Your proposing 240 houses, 70% of these wont go to first time byers or locals. How much will be housing association?

FH: 35-40% will be housing association.

Mr Stuart Davison

No more planning permission should be considered or granted until community infrastructure is in place.

Cllr Robert Newman

Agrees with what he is hearing. Objects to the building on farmland locally and nationally. The planning system if ridiculous and the grounds to object to proposals are restricted. SBC are risk adverse as they have previously had to pay costs at appeal.

Cllr Peter Cook

Wrote the proof of evidence for Ham Road and attended the six day appeal and was cross examined. It was allowed by Planning Inspector.

Judicial Review on grounds that the Planning Inspector was legally wrong to make the decision he made.

I asked for the Grampian Condition (concerning drainage over some else land to be placed).

Easement here is for agricultural use which would be void if there was a change of use.

Residents of Abbeyfield are the owners of the road and Fernham Homes must therefore consult them.

Cllr Trevor Martin

It proved hard to find social housing provider to take on the houses at your previous development on Love Lane. Do you have one for this site and what is the mix.

FH:

90% Social Rent and 10% Shared Ownership.

Have not yet started discussions with potential housing associations

Mr David Taylor

25/502032/FULL - Land to the rear of 10-11 Market Street Faversham

Raised concern regarding the proposed surface water drainage arrangements, specifically the intention to discharge surface water into an existing combined sewer at an attenuated rate of 1 litre per second. It was stated that no clear evidence had been provided to confirm that Southern Water has sufficient sewer capacity to accommodate the additional discharge.

It was further suggested that the proposal may conflict with current initiatives (Clean Rivers and Seas) aimed at reducing combined sewer overflows and limiting surface water entry into the combined system. Additional concerns were expressed regarding the lack of clarity over foul drainage arrangements and the provision of staff welfare facilities.

Mr David Taylor

26/500403/REM - Land at Preston Fields (South) Salters Lane

Questioned the adequacy of the proposed drainage arrangements and whether sufficient evidence had been provided to demonstrate that the

existing sewer network has capacity to accommodate additional discharge without increasing the risk of flooding or combined sewer overflows.

Concern was also expressed that details relating to foul water disposal and any associated operational facilities were not clearly set out within the application. It was suggested that further clarification from the applicant and confirmation from the relevant statutory should be requested.