



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr D Jones**
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

Tel: 01582 708540
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Date: 29th September 2026

To: Members of the Planning Committee

Cllrs: D Jones (Chair), E Billington, J Carroll, E Cooper, S King, C Slough, Vacancy

(Copies to other Councillors for information)

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **Planning Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on **Monday 5th October 2026** at **7.00pm**.

Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting may do so in person or remotely through the meeting link below.

To attend remotely through Teams please follow this link: [MEETING LINK](#)

All attendees are reminded that this meeting must be conducted in a respectful and considerate manner. Comments should remain appropriate and non-defamatory, as behaviour that undermines dignity, respect, or integrity will not be permitted

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED¹

Agenda

- 1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**
- 2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

In accordance with approved Standing Orders 1(e)-1(l) Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

¹ This meeting may be filmed by the Council for subsequent broadcast online and can be viewed at <http://www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk>

Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.

The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.

The total period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes and an individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

Members are invited to submit any requests for Dispensations for consideration.

4. MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd August and 14th September 2026.

Recommendation:

- 1. To approve the amended Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd August 2026 and for these to be signed by the Chairman, approval having been deferred at the meeting held on 14th September 2026.**
- 2. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2026 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

5. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) To consider the following applications:

[CB/26/01916/FULL \(click for more details\)](#)

Single storey front extension and two storey side extension.
72 Cemetery Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5DE

For noting

[CB/26/02407/LDCP \(click for more details\)](#)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed. Change of Use from Use Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) to Use Class (C4 small HMO)
4A Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5DJ

[CB/26/02688/DOC \(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Conditions 18 and 19 against planning permission
ref CB/21/03369/FULL
Hand Post Field north of Thorn Road Houghton Regis

[CB/26/02739/DOC \(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Condition 8 against planning permission ref.
CB/12/03613/OUT
Phase 3 Parcels 1 and 2, Houghton Regis North site 1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis

[CB/26/02923/NMA \(click for more details\)](#)

Non-material amendment to planning permission
CB/24/01505/RM. Variation sought to remove the "drive through" connection between plots 33 and 34

Parcel 5 Houghton Regis North 1 Sundon Road, Houghton Regis,
LU5 5GX

(b) Decision Notices

Permissions/Approvals/Consents:

None at time of going to print.

Refusals:

None at time of going to print.

Withdrawals:

None at time of going to print.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The following planning applications have been received for consultation and fall within delegated authority. In accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference, these items do not require discussion unless a member has requested they be referred to committee.

[CB/26/01354/FULL \(click for more details\)](#)

Members are advised that this property is in Dunstable.

Erection of a detached bungalow with solar panels to the roof,
following demolition of the garage
48 Olma Road, Dunstable, LU5 5AF

[CB/26/02295/FULL \(click for more details\)](#)

Single storey rear extension and garage conversion
100 Houghton Road, Dunstable, LU5 5AE

[CB/26/02508/FULL \(click for more details\)](#)

Raising approved rear dormer height to match adjoining dwelling
dormer height
44 Leafields, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LX

7. GOVERNMENT REFORMS TO PLANNING COMMITTEES AND THE NATIONAL SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Pages 15 - 39

Members will find attached a report outlining the Government's reforms to planning committees and the National Scheme of Delegation, which will come into effect on 31 October 2026.

- Recommendation:**
- 1. To note the Government reforms to planning committees and the National Scheme of Delegation, which come into force on 31st October 2026.**
 - 2. To note the implications for HRTC when responding to planning applications and the revised arrangements approved by Central Bedfordshire Council in preparation for implementation of the National Scheme of Delegation from 31st October 2026.**

8. CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – VANE COTTAGE

Page 40 – 41

Members will find attached a copy of the response received from Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to the information requested regarding Vane Cottage

The correspondence is provided for Members' information.

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 3rd August 2026 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman
E Billington
E Cooper
S King
C Slough

Officers: Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 12 (3 virtual)

Apologies: Councillors: J Carroll

13659 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Carroll.

13660 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public attending the meeting agreed to their questions being addressed under the relevant agenda item.

13661 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13662 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 13th July 2026.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2026 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13663 PLANNING MATTERS

Members were advised that there were no planning matters for consideration.

Noted:

[CB/26/01886/LDCP](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: A mobile home, with roof light, for ancillary use to the main dwelling house
7 Douglas Crescent, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5AS

CB/26/02060/DOC (click for more details)	Discharge of Condition 21 against planning permission ref. CB/25/03234/RM Land to the North and East of Houghton Regis, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis
CB/26/02178/GPDE (click for more details)	Prior Notification of Householder Extension. Single storey rear extension, 3.5m beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling, maximum height of 3.5m and 2.6m to the eaves 11 Woodlands Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LJ
CB/26/02274/NMA (click for more details)	Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/23/03551/RM Amendment sought: Revised boundary treatments. Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ
CB/26/02159/DOC (click for more details)	Discharge of Conditions 20 against planning permission ref. CB/25/03234/RM Parcels 7 & 8 in Area 4 at Linmere, Houghton Regis North, Dunstable
CB/26/02156/DOC (click for more details)	Discharge of Conditions 14 against planning permission ref. CB/25/03234/RM Parcel 7 & 8 Linmere, Houghton Regis North, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13664 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Members were advised that there were no planning applications which had been determined using delegated authority to report at this meeting.

13665 [CB/26/00932/FULL](#) - LAND ADJ VANE COTTAGE, PARK ROAD NORTH, HOUGHTON REGIS

Members were advised that notification had been received from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding CB/26/00932/FULL.

Central Bedfordshire Council had received the amendments below in respect of the application of the above property.

Amendments to dwelling types (now detached), landscaping and parking areas following consultee responses from Tree Officer, Ecologist and Landscape Officer. Application was

now supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement as requested by the Sustainable Drainage Officer.

An extension to the deadline of 30th July had been granted to allow submission of the Planning Committee's comments.

Members remained unaware of the results of the enforcement order regarding the unauthorised felling of trees, or whether the case continued to be pursued. HRTC had requested further information at their meeting on 11th May 2026 (Minute 13534) but had not received a response. It was thought that this information should be made available prior to a decision being made.

Members had received correspondence from members of the public: one had withdrawn their previous comments and now supported the application; the other, from residents of a neighbouring property, was in support of the revised application. The communication in support of the application was read out to Members. Members were minded, however, to repeat their strong objection made on 11th May and highlighted the illegal tree felling.

While the issue of inadequate internal spaces had been addressed, Members noted the plans showed an increase from 3-bedroom to 4-bedroom properties; therefore, extra parking spaces would be required.

While Members remained strongly opposed to the plan, preference for design option 3 was expressed in the event of approval from CBC.

Members enquired whether it was possible to make a Freedom of Information Request regarding the progression of prosecution, the Head of Democratic Services confirmed they would seek further information on this matter.

Members agreed to re-submit their earlier objections as below:

Houghton Regis Town Council strongly objected to this application on the following grounds:

- *The land was in a conservation area and formed part of the historic curtilage of a listed building*
- *Development would be inappropriate and detrimentally impact the historic character, setting and significance of a heritage asset*
- *The placement of two houses on this site constituted overdevelopment and would be visually obtrusive.*
- *The proposed houses appeared to have small internal spaces for the proposed properties.*

Members highlighted that the original application stated two x three-bedroom properties, the revised application now stated two x four-bedroom properties, as such would require an additional parking space.

Resolved: **To note the amendments and consider any comments for submission to Central Bedfordshire Council.**

13666 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - SUBMITTED SITES CONSULTATION

Members were advised that Central Bedfordshire Council was consulting on sites submitted through its previous Call for Sites exercise as part of the preparation of the emerging Local Plan.

Members were invited to consider the submitted sites and whether the Town Council wished to submit comments in response to the consultation.

Members had been provided with a report which provided further information, and a location map showed the submitted sites.

The Chair suggested that comments from members of the public were taken at this time. Compatibility of the proposals with the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan would be examined and these factors would be incorporated into HRTC's response.

A member of the public responded to the submitted sites with reference to the Neighbourhood Plan, outlining the detrimental impact to each of the following:

Section: Site 135341 French's Avenue to Maidenbower

Full Representation: This site is adjacent Maidenbower Ancient Monument and its development will negatively affect the cultural value of this hill-top site. Buildings will obstruct the wide views to the east, north, west and south-west which are special features of the character of the town as stated in the Neighbourhood Plan. (7.10 and 7.11, and 12.19, 13.4, 13.5, 13.6 and 13.7 as shown on the Policies map Annexe 1.) Protected Natural Features are in Policy BNF1. Development will also endanger the wildlife at Maidenbower which traverse the site to access Sewell Quarry and Nature Reserve, and Suncote Pits for foraging

Section: Site 136530 Sewell Lane land in Barley Brow CWS

Full Representation: Sewell is a Conservation area, and this site is wooded and part of the Barley Brow CWS. It rises steeply and also has an historic roadway running through it, paved in parts, used to bypass the chalk cutting in wet weather, and as such is unsuitable for building on as well as being an important part of the whole area for wildlife. Sewell Lane is narrow, single lane, the single entrance/exit awkward with poor visibility, and not capable of being widened, therefore the road cannot cope with more traffic from more dwellings.

Section: Site 136564 Adjacent Chalkpit CWS and SSSI

Full Representation: My objection is because this site is adjacent to, and could be within the boundaries of, Houghton Regis Chalkpit County Wildlife Site and SSSI. The site is steeply sloping, occupied by residential properties, surrounded by good wildlife habitat, and accessed only by a steep narrow lane from the A5 at Chalk Hill. It is totally unsuitable for large trucks to manoeuvre, and join the traffic on the A5. The whole area is criss-

crossed by the tracks of wildlife foraging and denning, and the trees are a haven for birds, being contiguous with the Sewage Farm which also supports wildlife.

Section: Site 136597 Land North of Sewell to A505

Full Representation: This site is on the north-facing escarpment which is drained by many chalk streams running into Ouzel Brook. Risk of flooding is therefore high (Flood Zone 2). Access would be very difficult as the level of the roads around is higher than the land, and Sewell Lane not suitable for access, being single lane. Putting employment next to a Conservation Area is incongruous and would be damaging to the value of the Hamlet of Sewell, due to noise, traffic, and disruption of agricultural views north.

Section: Site 136641 Dog Kennel Down eastern arm

Full Representation: This site has twice been refused planning permission for employment use for a variety of strong reasons. It is a County Wildlife Site, part of Dog Kennel Down and supports wildlife when allowed to develop naturally. To quote from the Neighbourhood Plan Green Spaces Designation: "The site, including its eastern section, is important for chalk meadow flowers, pyramidal orchids in particular. The site contributes considerably to the biodiversity of South Bedfordshire." This site should be managed for nature and recreation, a break from the rest of the industrial sites around it where people can connect with nature.

Representatives from the Friends of Windsor Drive voiced concern that Windsor Drive (WD), while not one of the submitted sites, had been the subject of some discussion within CBC. It was felt that there was a need for transparency regarding the future objectives for Windsor Drive.

It was reported that the CBC website was confusing and did not provide an obvious means of response. It was further observed that under FAQs it was stated that comments were not required at this stage; however, this guidance related to an earlier phase of the process. There was also concern that sites had been categorised by CBC wards, rather than parishes, which had resulted in a 255-hectare area in the parish of Chalgrave to be listed under Heath and Reach.

The Chair acknowledged that there were inconsistencies and omissions in the consultation process. It was further noted that a communication from a CBC Executive councillor indicated that sites not included on the Call for Sites could nonetheless be introduced for consideration because they were within the settlement envelope.

The Friends of Windsor Drive put the following questions to the Planning Committee:

1. Do the FoWDCOS [Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space] still have the support of HRTC in keeping WD as an Open Space for the Community. Will you stand with us and work with us against any attempt to develop this land?
2. CBC have renewed their interest in developing WD, not necessarily through the call for sites process at this stage, meaning, for example, they could move to sell

WD. Should that happen, the Asset of Community Value status would mean a community bid could take place. Would HRTC be interested in supporting such a bid?

3. We first became aware of CBCs renewed interest in WD on the 11 June, were HRTC approached by CBC about their renewed interest before that date. If so what was your response?
4. At this stage there is no mention of WD on the call for sites survey, it may be added during the next stage. Are you aware of any plans CBC may have to progress their renewed interest in WD?
5. The residents are confused by the current surveys, finding them difficult to navigate. Have HRTC considered a social media post clarify what residents are being asked to comment on pertaining to HR.

Members of the public believed the proposals would overwhelm Sewell, which had a cluster of listed buildings and was a local beauty spot for nearby communities to visit.

Members of the public highlighted that Houghton Regis had already accommodated a substantial percentage of housing within the region and further development was being proposed. Members agreed with these concerns and emphasised that further development would result in the loss of yet more green space in Houghton Regis and increase pressure on infrastructure that was already considered inadequate.

The Chair reviewed the following submitted sites:

- Section: Site 135302 Windy Willows – had previous approval for housing
- Section: Site 135341 Top of French's Avenue – Green Belt land and potential impact on Maidenbower site
- Section: Site 136350 Bretheren Church Site – this had been included in the 2021 Local Plan for 25 units but had been reviewed and rejected on this occasion
- Section: Site 136530 Sewell Land – Green Belt land. Appeared to have been filtered out
- Section: Site 136564 Grendall Lane - this was formerly the proposed cemetery site and local dwellings would be impacted. Appeared to have been filtered out
- Section: Site 136596 Part of Linnere – a residential area but was now suggested for employment use. An old plan had proposed a local centre and school at this site.
- Section: Site 136597 Corner of Leighton Buzzard bypass and the A5 - proposed for employment use. Green Belt land containing springs and a tributary to the river Ouzel. Would also be detrimental to the views from the conservation area
- Section: Site 136641 Land between Foster Avenue and the Arenson Centre – a designated Green Open Space under the Neighbourhood Plan. Planning permission previously refused twice

In regard of the final site, 136641, which had been cleared, the Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the Head of Environmental and Community Services was conducting further investigation.

Cllr Billington had composed a Freedom of Information Request which was read out to the Committee. Members agreed that this should be submitted and members of the public requested that clarity on Windsor Drive was also sought.

The Chair confirmed comments would be gathered in order to provide a response to each site under consideration. The Council would not comment on sites which did not currently form part of the process; however, the Council remained aware of additional locations not under consideration at this stage - including the site listed as Heath and Reach - which would require further investigation.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To note the current Submitted Sites Consultation being undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council.**
 - 2. To submit comments on all of the submitted sites, except 135302.**
 - 3. To comment also on the site listed under Heath and Reach where a proportion of the land is situated in the parish of Houghton Regis.**
 - 4. To draw attention to the objectives and policies of the Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan as they relate to the submitted sites.**
 - 5. To submit the Freedom of Information Request relating to Windsor Drive and to request clarity on CBC's intentions for that site.**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.31

Dated this 24th day of August 2026

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 14th September 2026 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman
E Cooper
S King
C Slough

Officers: Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington
J Carroll

13692 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington and Councillor Carroll.

13693 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13694 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13695 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd August 2026 and 24th August 2026.

Members enquired whether any further information was available regarding the pursuit of the enforcement order relating to the unauthorised felling of trees (Minute 13665). The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that this item would appear on the next agenda.

Further amendments to the Minutes of 3rd August were requested. Members agreed to defer signing the Minutes until the next meeting on 5th October 2026.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th August 2026 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13696 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

[CB/26/02394/FULL](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Single storey front, side and rear extensions with rooflights, first floor roof space conversion, enlarge existing dormer with installation of a front brick wall, metal railings and access gate 47 Sundon Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LL

Comments: Members observed that the scale of expansion was extensive and questioned whether it constituted overdevelopment, noting that it would not be in keeping with neighbouring properties. A new pedestrian access point would require permission for installation and access via public amenity land. It was further observed that the proposed six-foot fence to the front of the site would detrimentally affect the street scene.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised an objection to this application due to the scale of the proposed fence and its impact on the street scene.

[CB/26/02481/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Erection of a two storey rear extension and installation of front gates.

9 Watervale, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6FY

Comments: Members noted that the property occupied a large corner site with a view intended for the benefit of the wider community. Members highlighted the following issues:

- The complicated nature of the design
- Whether the installation of gates was absolutely necessary
- The need to avoid compromising public amenity land
- The importance of ensuring that the street scene was not detrimentally impacted

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

(b) Noted:

[CB/26/02561/PADM](#)
(click for more details)

Prior Notification of Proposed Demolition. Demolition of single storey day centre

12 Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5QN

[CB/26/02457/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 4 against planning permission ref CB/25/03805/REG3

12 Hillside, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HR

[CB/26/02305/LDCP](#)
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Proposed, single storey rear extension 32 Churchfield Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HL

[CB/26/02654/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 8 against planning permission ref. CB/12/03613/OUT

Phase 4, Parcels 4 & 5 Houghton Regis North Site 1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13697 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Members were advised that there were no planning applications which had been determined using delegated authority to report at this meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.31pm

Dated this 5th day of October 2026

Chairman

DRAFT



Date: 5th October 2026

Title: Government Reforms to Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation

Purpose of the Report: To inform Members of changes to the delegation of planning decisions from 31st October 2026 and the implications for Houghton Regis Town Council.

Contact Officer: Louise Senior, Head of Democratic Services

1. RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the Government reforms to planning committees and the National Scheme of Delegation, which come into force on 31 October 2026.
2. To note the implications for HRTC when responding to planning applications and the revised arrangements approved by Central Bedfordshire Council in preparation for implementation of the National Scheme of Delegation from 31 October 2026.

2. BACKGROUND

The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 introduce a National Scheme of Delegation from 31st October 2026. The intention is to provide greater consistency over which planning applications are determined by officers and which may be considered by planning committees.

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) provided an All-Member Briefing in September 2026 outlining the changes and the implications for its planning decision-making arrangements.

Proposed amendments to CBC's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Development Management Committee Terms of Reference and associated governance documents were considered by its General Purposes Committee on 27 August 2026, with the proposed constitutional amendments subsequently considered by Full Council on 24th September 2026.

Further detail is provided in *Appendix A*, the Central Bedfordshire Council Member Briefing presentation on the National Scheme of Delegation and associated planning committee reforms.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The new arrangements divide applications primarily into two categories:

Schedule 1 – applications which must normally be determined by officers. These include householder applications, minor commercial development and minor residential development of up to nine dwellings on sites below 0.5 hectares, together with a range of other minor or technical applications.

Schedule 2 – applications which are also presumed to be delegated to officers but may be referred to committee where the statutory gateway test is met and both CBC's nominated officer and nominated member agree.

For a Schedule 2 application to be referred to committee, it must raise either an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area, or a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and other material considerations.

Implications for Houghton Regis Town Council

The principal change for HRTC is that an objection from a Town or Parish Council, or a ward councillor call-in, will no longer automatically require an application to be considered by CBC's Development Management Committee.

HRTC will continue to be consulted on relevant planning applications and can continue to submit objections and other representations.

Where HRTC considers a Schedule 2 application to raise a significant local issue, its response should clearly identify the relevant material planning considerations and explain the local significance. The decision on referral to committee will rest with CBC's nominated officer and nominated member.

The national guidance allows CBC to determine which Schedule 2 applications are put forward for consideration under the gateway test. CBC's revised arrangements set out the local process for operating the statutory gateway test. HRTC will therefore need to ensure that, where it considers a Schedule 2 application raises a significant local issue, its representations clearly identify the relevant material planning considerations and explain their local significance.

Other changes

Planning committees are limited to a maximum of 13 members. CBC's Development Management Committee already has 13 members.

A record must be kept of cases considered for committee referral, including the decision and reasons, with information reported regularly and made publicly available.

Applications called in but not determined by 31 October 2026 will fall under the new arrangements.

4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Members are asked to note the information contained within this report.

5. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

The report is relevant to the following Corporate Plan objectives:

- 1.6 – Protection and promotion of cultural and heritage assets.
- 1.7 – Strengthen Houghton Regis’s landscape character and agricultural heritage.
- 3.1 – Improve environmental quality and sustainability.
- 4.5 – Enhance the role of the Council.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- HRTC planning representations will need to reflect the new arrangements, particularly where an application is considered to raise a significant local issue.

Legal Implications

- The Regulations apply to local planning authorities, including CBC. They do not remove HRTC’s ability to comment on planning applications.

Crime and Disorder Implications

- There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the recommendations.

Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations.

Risk Implications

- There is a risk that Members or residents may expect an HRTC objection to result automatically in committee determination. Clear communication of the new arrangements will assist in managing this.

Equalities Implications

- Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- This report is informational, therefore no direct discriminatory impact has been identified.

Climate Change Implications

- There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations.

Press Contact

- There are no press implications arising from the recommendations.

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

- The reforms change the route by which applications may reach CBC's Development Management Committee but do not remove HRTC's role as a consultee. The key change is that an HRTC objection will no longer automatically result in committee determination. HRTC will therefore need to ensure that representations on relevant Schedule 2 applications clearly identify material planning considerations and explain the significance of the issues raised to the local area.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Central Bedfordshire Council All-Member Briefing Presentation

Appendix B: Summary of Key Changes and Practical Implications for HRTC

Government reforms to planning committees and the National Scheme of Delegation

All Member Briefing
14th & 24th September 2026

Jennie Selley – Head of Planning Delivery & Building Control

Milla Iyavoo - Deputy Monitoring Officer/ Deputy Solicitor for
the Council

Content:

- What is the National Scheme of Delegation?
- Why has the Government introduced it?
- The regulations
- What the statutory guidance tells us
- Position on ward member call in's made before 31st October
- Next steps

What is the National Scheme of Delegation?

- **The national scheme of delegation regulations set out which planning functions or applications go to committee for determination and which to officers.** This is currently set out in Part 3E of our Constitution.
- All local authorities in England need to amend their constitutions to align with the national scheme of delegation and a failure to do so may make them liable to judicial review.
- [The Town and Country Planning \(Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#)
- **The regulations come into effect from the 31st October 2026.**



What is the National Scheme of Delegation?

- Under the national scheme of delegation, current practices set out in local authority constitutions, such as the power for ward councillors to require cases to be called in for committee consideration or having trigger points for referral to committee if the Parish/Town Council object, will not be possible.
- Also applies to joint planning committees and minerals & waste authorities.

Why has the government introduced it?

“The government’s aim behind the national scheme of delegation is to ensure that there is greater clarity and consistency about the role of planning committees in planning decision making. Committees should focus on the key proposals that matter to an area, enabling other, often more minor and technical, decisions to be made by planning officers.”

The Regulations

The regulations set out the following two-tier approach to decision making:

- **Schedule 1** functions or applications, must be delegated to officers (unless they are own-interest applications)
- **Schedule 2** functions or applications, where there is a presumption in favour of officer delegation unless the nominated officer and nominated member agree the application should be referred to a planning committee.

Schedule 1 functions and applications (delegated to officers):

- Householder development
- Minor commercial development (< 1000 sq m)
- Minor residential development (up to nine dwellings on sites below 0.5 hectares)
- Section 73 applications where the related planning permission was a Schedule 1 planning permission
- Reserved matters where the outline planning permission is for fewer than 500 dwellings or less than 50,000 sq m of floorspace
- Discharge of conditions
- Prior approval applications
- Permission in principle applications
- Non-material amendments
- Section 106A applications where a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 1 planning permission
- Biodiversity Gain Plans
- Certificates of Appropriate Alternative Development
- Certificates of lawfulness of existing/proposed use or development, and certificates of lawfulness for proposed works to listed buildings

Schedule 2 functions and applications:

- Applications which are not householder, minor commercial or minor residential applications
- Section 73 applications where the related planning permission was a Schedule 2 planning permission
- Reserved matters applications relating to large outline permissions (500+ dwellings or 50,000+ sq m of floorspace)
- Section 106A applications where a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 2 planning permission
- Listed building consent (LBC) applications (including variation or discharge of conditions on an LBC, and Section 73 applications on planning applications connected to LBC applications)
- Advertisement consents
- Tree preservation order consents

The Gateway Test

A Schedule 2 application can only be referred to planning committee where both the **nominated officer** (in most cases the chief planning officer or equivalent) and the **nominated member** (in most cases the chair of the planning committee) agree that referral is appropriate and at least one of the following criteria is met:

- A. The application raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area.
- B. The application raises a significant planning matter, having regard to the development plan and other material considerations.

Statutory guidance on the gateway test

For the purpose of criteria A:

It is for the nominated officer and member to assess whether the development proposal raises a **significant economic, social or environmental issue for the local area**, providing an opportunity for local democratic oversight where necessary. What constitutes 'significant' will vary depending on the local area but examples could include:

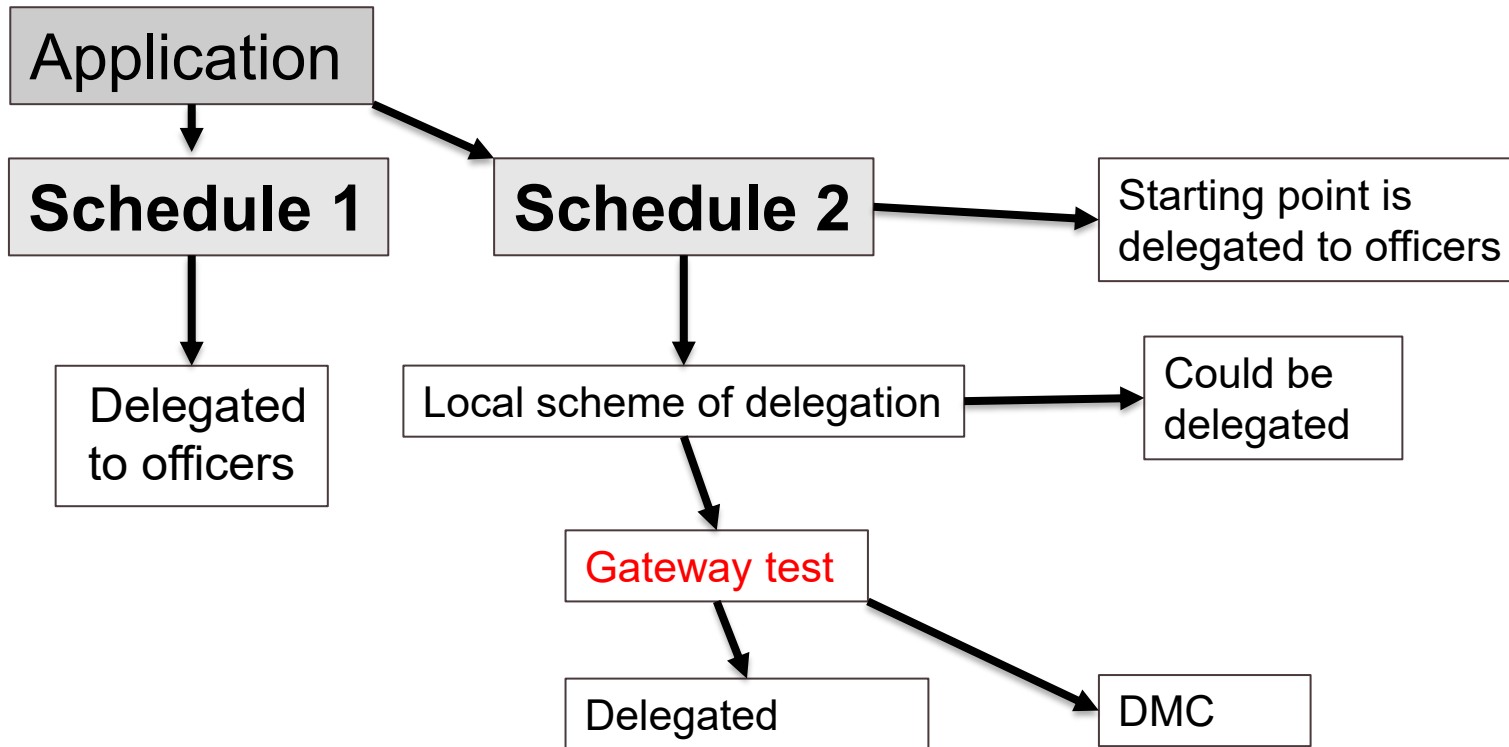
- an application for outline planning permission for a large multi-phase residential development allocated in the local plan
- an application for planning permission for change of use of a community shop in a rural area
- an application for planning permission or listed building consent for changes to a notable listed building in a town centre

Statutory guidance on the gateway test

For the purpose of criteria B , the following circumstances are unlikely to raise a **significant planning matter**:

- where the application for development broadly complies with a detailed site allocation and other relevant policies set out in a local or neighbourhood plan and national decision-making policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Significant planning matters may arise if new material considerations are raised by the application.
- where a specific planning matter (e.g. highways or flood risk) was initially raised by a statutory consultee as a concern, but the development proposal has been modified to make it acceptable in the view of the statutory consultee (unless the nominated officer has compelling reasons to consider otherwise).

Summary:



Own-interest applications:

- A key exception to the above is own-interest applications, which are applications made by the authority itself (whether alone or jointly with another person), a member or officer or where the authority, members or officers have an interest in the application.
- These applications may be referred to committee where the nominated officer and nominated member agree that referral is appropriate. The gateway test does not need to be satisfied in these circumstances.
- There will be appropriate safeguards where the nominated officer or nominated member has an interest in an application.

Transparency and reporting

- A record must be kept of the cases that the nominated member and officer have considered for referral to committee and the reasons for their decision.
- This will be reported to planning committee on a regular basis and made available on the Council's website.

Ward member call in's made before 31st October

- There are currently no transitional arrangements or government guidance setting out how existing called-in applications, or applications called in the lead-up to 31 October, should be dealt with when the National Scheme of Delegation (NSD) comes into force.
- Officers will make every effort to report called-in applications to DMC before 31 October. However, some called-in applications may not be ready for determination by this date, for example, where amendments or additional information are required or because the consultation period has not yet expired. In addition, some call-ins may be made too late to allow sufficient time for reports to be prepared and published for the 21st October DMC meeting.
- The latest possible date for a call-in, to allow officers to prepare a report for October DMC, is 30th September but for the reasons set out above a call in by this date does not guarantee that the application will be reported to DMC.

Ward member call in's made before 31st October

- Any called-in applications that have not been determined by 31 October will be considered under the new statutory arrangements, regardless of whether they were previously called in. This means that Schedule 1 applications will be determined by officers. For Schedule 2 applications that have been called in, any referral to committee will need to comply with the new gateway arrangements.
- Please contact the application case officer if you would like to know whether a particular called-in application is expected to be determined by DMC and/or if you are unsure whether it will fall under Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 for the new NSD arrangements after 31 October.

Size of planning committees

- A limit on the size of planning committees to 13 members.
- The Council's Development Management Committee already has 13 so no change required.

Next Steps:

- Report to Full Council on 24th September with amended scheme of delegation for approval.
- Copy of presentation sent to town and parish councils.

The background of the slide is a light gray surface covered with numerous small, light-colored wooden blocks. Each block has a dark gray question mark printed on its top face. The blocks are scattered across the entire area, creating a textured, repetitive pattern.

Questions?

APPENDIX B – SUMMARY

Area	New position from 31 October 2026	Practical point for HRTC
Schedule 1	Must normally be determined by planning officers.	An HRTC objection cannot move a Schedule 1 application to committee unless the own-interest provisions apply.
Schedule 2	Presumption of officer determination. Committee referral is possible only if the gateway test is met and the nominated officer and nominated member agree.	Where HRTC considers a proposal significant, representations should clearly identify material planning considerations and the local economic, social or environmental significance.
Ward member call-in	Existing arrangements that allow a ward member to require committee determination cannot continue where they conflict with the national scheme.	A call-in will no longer guarantee committee determination.
Town/Parish Council objection	Cannot operate as an automatic trigger requiring committee determination.	HRTC can still object and explain its planning reasons. Where HRTC considers a Schedule 2 application to raise a significant local issue, its representations should clearly identify the relevant material planning considerations and explain their local significance.
Own-interest applications	May be referred to committee by agreement of the nominated officer and nominated member without satisfying the normal gateway criteria.	Relevant mainly to applications involving CBC, its members or officers.
Transparency	Referral decisions considered by the nominated officer/member should be recorded, reported regularly and published.	HRTC can monitor CBC's published information to see how the new referral arrangements are operating.
Committee size	Maximum of 13 members.	CBC states its Development Management Committee already has 13 members, so no size change is required.



Mrs Louise Senior

Email: accesstoinfo@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 300 5765

Our ref: 11482353

Date: 7 September 2026

Dear Mrs Senior

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

I can confirm that the information requested is held by Central Bedfordshire Council. I have detailed below the information that is being released to you.

I am writing on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council's Planning Committee to request information concerning the unauthorised works undertaken within the grounds of Vane Cottage, Houghton Regis, which is located within a designated Conservation Area.

The Committee understands that significant works were carried out to the garden and that there was discussion of possible prosecution action by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Could you please confirm:

Q1. Whether Central Bedfordshire Council has investigated the works carried out at Vane Cottage.

A1. Yes.

Q2. Whether the Council has commenced prosecution proceedings against any individual or organisation in connection with these works.

A2. No.

Q3. If prosecution proceedings have commenced, the date they were initiated and their current status.

A3. Not applicable.

Q4. If no prosecution has commenced, whether the Council has concluded its investigation or if the matter remains under consideration.

A4. The investigation has concluded.

Please quote the reference number 11482353 in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original request. We are not obliged to accept internal reviews after this date. Internal review requests should be made in writing.

If you wish to request a review of this response, please contact us either by email (accesstoinfo@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) or in writing to the reply address detailed below.

Information Governance
Resources
Central Bedfordshire Council,
Priory House, Monks Walk
Chicksands, SG17 5TQ

If you are dissatisfied with the Council's response you may submit a response under the Council's [Data Protection Complaints Procedure](#). Complaints can be submitted to accesstoinfo@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or by replying to this message.

If we are unable to resolve your complaint you also have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's for an independent review.

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.org.uk

I will now close this case as of today's date.

Yours Sincerely

Simone Ogle
Information Governance Practitioner