

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

9th December 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: M Herber Chairman
E Billington
J Carroll
E Cooper
D Jones
C Slough

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

Public: 15

Apologies: Councillors: D Taylor

13056 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Taylor.

13057 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public present at the meeting agreed to discuss the demolition of Vane Cottage, concerns raised were:

- The developer had not submitted a plan
- Enforcement officers had been called in to halt unauthorised clearance work of trees and internal features
- There had been no independent structural survey of the building to establish the necessity for demolition
- This was an historic Grade II listed building within a conservation area; therefore, demolition of the cottage and its curtilage should be a last resort
- This was an application to demolish and promises to rebuild provided no satisfactory guarantees regarding a replacement structure

13058 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13059 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 28th October 2024.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 204 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13060 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/24/03182/LB
(click for more
details)

Listed Building: demolition of dwelling
Vane Cottage, Park Road North, Houghton Regis, Dunstable,
LU5 5LD

Comments: Members were advised that there had been significant objections to this application over several social media platforms, it was believed that a petition had been organised by a local resident.

This application had been called in by Councillor Hamill, Houghton Regis East Ward Councillor.

Members were advised that any comments were to be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council no later than 13th December 2024.

Members agreed with the points raised by members of the public and added the following:

- The application form for demolition stated that work had not started, but it had
- The structural report and planning statement demonstrated no appreciation of heritage assets nor experience of dealing with these issues
- There was insufficient information from experts - including a structural engineer - to warrant 'exceptional circumstances'
- Demolition would be in contravention of the Neighbourhood Plan

Members referenced the various reports objecting to the demolition and highlighted the following observations:

20th Century Society

The application fell short of the necessary detail. There was no heritage statement regarding the building's significance.

Council for British Archaeology

There was no understanding or appreciation of the significance of the building. A structural survey was required and the application needed to be withdrawn or refused.

Historic Buildings & Places

The submission failed to provide evidence that the issues could not be rectified and repaired. Demolition was a last resort.

QJJ.

Historic England

There was a lack of supporting information, and the submission did not meet the National Planning Policy Framework.

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

The survey had been carried out by someone unfamiliar with historic timber-framed buildings.

The CBC archaeologist had also noted that demolition would have a negative impact on surviving archaeological remains and the application had not been accompanied by an Archaeological Heritage Statement.

Members noted that there had been no comment from the Chiltern Beechwood Conservation Area and questioned whether, since Vane Cottage fell within its jurisdiction, they had been contacted. Similarly, there had been no comment on the CBC website from the Conservation Officer.

Members of the public sought assurance that adequate measures would be taken to avoid damage to the property while the application was resolved.

It was questioned whether CBC had failed to follow procedure and if so, could Houghton Regis Town Council take any form of action. Members emphasised the need for fact checking before pursuing this route and suggested this was possibly for a ward councillor to investigate

Houghton Regis Town Council raised objections to this application on the grounds of:

1. **Heritage Significance: Vane Cottage is a critically important 17th-century vernacular building that:**
 - Represents a rare example of local historic architectural construction
 - Retains substantial original historic fabric, including timber framing and brickwork
 - Makes a significant positive contribution to the Houghton Regis Conservation Area
 - Holds national significance through its Grade II listing

2. **Inadequate Supporting Documentation: The application fundamentally fails to meet national planning policy requirements, specifically:**
 - Lacks a comprehensive Heritage Statement/Statement of Significance

- Does not provide a detailed structural survey by a conservation-accredited engineer
 - Fails to demonstrate that repair is impossible or uneconomically viable
3. **Structural Concerns: The submitted structural survey is critically flawed:**
- Appears to be conducted by someone unfamiliar with historic timber-framed buildings
 - Does not adequately explore the causes of structural issues
 - Suggests demolition without exploring repair alternatives
 - Potential issues likely stem from:
 - Prolonged vacancy
 - Lack of heating and ventilation
 - Inappropriate moisture-impermeable materials
 - Potential recent site disturbances
4. **Policy Non-Compliance The application contravenes multiple national planning policies, including:**
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 200, 205, 206, and 207
 - Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
 - Fails to give "great weight" to the conservation of a heritage asset
5. **Unauthorised Works: There are serious concerns about unauthorised works already undertaken:**
- Evidence suggests internal stripping without Listed Building Consent
 - Inappropriate materials (like non-breathable insulation) have been introduced
 - The site appears to have been prepared for demolition without proper consent

WJ

[CB/24/01493/FULL](#)
(click for more
details)

Removal of the existing 8-metre-high monopole and erection of a new 20-metre-high monopole with a wraparound cabinet at its base supporting 9 no. antennas. Removal of 2 no. cabinets and their replacement with 2 no. new cabinets and ancillary development.

Land on the West Side of Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, LU5 5RY
EE Ltd.

Comments: As this was a replacement structure for one already on site, it was not felt an objection could be raised to this application. Members were concerned at the proliferation of monopoles around the town and suggested company collaboration/sharing could alleviate the issue.

A recorded vote was requested:

Approval of this application was voted for as follows:

Proposed by: Cllr Jones

Seconded by: Cllr Billington

In favour: Cllrs Billington, Cooper, Herber, Jones and Slough

Against: Cllr Carroll

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

[CB/24/03338/FULL](#)
(click for more
details)

Single storey rear extension following demolition of conservatory.

80 Coopers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5US
Mrs Robertson

Comments: Members noted that this application had been submitted earlier as 24/02767 and Houghton Regis Town Council had raised no objections. The application for the extension had ultimately been refused as it was said to impinge on the openness and green of the area. The plan had subsequently been amended and remained within the boundary wall.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

[CB/24/03322/FULL](#)
(click for more
details)

Loft conversion with rear and front dormers

42 Osier Grove, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 7AB
Mr D Livizoru

Comments: Building compliance, regarding sound insulation and alternative ventilation, was the only requirement listed on the application. Members highlighted, however, that the installation of dormer windows was proposed for both the front and the back of the property, with additional windows in the end walls. It was felt that this would have a significant impact on the privacy of neighbouring residents.

Houghton Regis Town Council objected to this application on the grounds of adverse impact on the privacy of neighbouring properties.

Noted:

[CB/24/03040/GPDE](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Prior Notification of Householder Extension: Single storey rear extension, 6 m beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling, maximum height of 2.95 m & 2.61 m to the eaves. Erection of single storey rear extension with rooflights.
5 Meadow Lane, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HG

[CB/24/03121/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Condition 12 against planning permission ref. CB/22/03938/FULL (Demolition of Existing barn and garage, provision of the garage to the existing Listed Building, conversion of Listed Barn into a dwelling and construction of eight new dwellings with associated garages and new access road) Verification Validation report parts 1,2 & 3
Red Cow Farm Cottage, 6 Buttermilk Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6UN

[CB/24/03282/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Conditions 3, 4, and 8 against planning permission CB/23/01279/FULL (Existing two storey side extension to form a new one bed dwelling to include a single storey rear extension, associated car parking, fencing and refuse storage)
1 Leaf Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5JG

[CB/24/03317/NMA](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/22/02493/FULL (Proposed Two Storey Front & Side and Single Storey Rear Extensions) amendment sought to change in walls material from bricks to match existing, to Bexhill Red Ashdown to all new walls and also to replace existing external skin to front house wall.
10 East Hill Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5EQ

[CB/24/03413/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Condition 5 against planning permission ref. CB/24/02648/FULL (Change of use from the existing 16 bedroom care home C2 use to the proposed children's care home C2 use with independent educational facility at ground floor for residents only)
Hillside, Chalk Hill, Dunstable, LU6 1RT

[CB/24/03398/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#) Discharge of Conditions 7, 9, 14, 15 and 17 against planning permission ref. CB/22/04525/VOC (Removal of condition 10 and Variation of conditions 13, 15 and 21 of planning permission CB/19/04220/OUT (Outline Application for Residential Development for up to 100 Dwellings with all matters reserved, except access) vary condition 13 from the requirement of 14 mainstream housing together with 9 units for care/support to 13.72% of total units suitable for the elderly and condition 21 to be amended to "The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 13060as2.15 Rev D (in so far as it relates to the means of access)")
 Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

[CB/23/03551/RM](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#) Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/22/04525/VOC (Outline Application for residential development for up to 100 dwellings with all matters reserved, except access.) Full details of reserved matters for 76 dwellings including appearance, landscaping, scale and layout pursuant to outline consent CB/22/04525/VOC.
 Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ

[CB/23/03448/FULL](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#) Revised scheme: Demolition of existing outbuildings whilst retaining the existing dwelling. Erection of 26 dwellings with access road and sewers.
 Red Cow Farm House, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable,
 LU5 6JP

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13061 CB/24/00677/FULL - LAND BETWEEN ARENSON CENTRE AND FOSTER AVENUE, ARENSON WAY, HOUGHTON REGIS, DUNSTABLE

Construction of 10 industrial units (Use Class B2) with associated parking, access, landscaping, ancillary infrastructure and upgrading of public rights of way.

Notification was received from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the above application, with comments requested by 15th November 2024.

Members were requested to provide comments via email ahead of the deadline date. Based on the responses received from councillors, the below comment was submitted.

Houghton Regis Town Council raises an objection to this application on the grounds that this parcel of land is designated as a Local Green Space in the recently approved referendum and adopted Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan (NHP).

Policy GSR3 of the NHP, Local Green Spaces, states that inappropriate development within the Local Green Spaces will not be supported except in very special circumstances.

The Town Council is not aware of the existence of any "very special circumstances" in this case.

Members noted that this application had been reviewed by Central Bedfordshire Council and had been refused.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.55pm

Dated this 6th day of January 2025

A. J. Jones

Chairman