

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

14th July 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: M Herber Chairman
E Billington
E Cooper
Y Farrell
D Jones
C Slough
D Taylor

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

Public: 63 (56 virtual)

Apologies: Councillors: 0

13268 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

13269 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public were in attendance to discuss planning application CB/25/01901/FULL. Members agreed that this item should be brought forward and discussed as the first item under Planning Matters.

13270 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Cooper declared a personal interest, advising members that her daughter lives adjacent to the proposed site and overlooks the development area.

13271 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd June 2025.


It was requested that, for the sake of completeness, the wording 'Members agreed that no further comments would be made on this matter' be added to Minute 13267.

Members agreed the minutes subject to the aforementioned amendment.

Resolved: To agree the amended Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13272 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:



Planning application CB/25/01901/FULL was brought forward for discussion with members of the public.

CB/25/02000/SECM
(click for more details)

Modification of Section 106 Agreement attached to planning permission: CB/19/04220/OUT, CB/22/04525/VOC and CB/23/03551/RM. Modification requested, Viability concerns as detailed within the attached Viability Assessment.
Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ

Comments: Members noted that consultation memo 2742979 regarding affordable housing had stated that the viability assessment was required to be sent for independent review at the cost of the applicant; however, neither the assessment nor the review appeared on the website.

The applicant had requested a reduction in the SANG contribution relating to the Beechwood conservation area. The provision of the SANG site to support the development was a legal requirement.

HRTC raised an objection to this application on the grounds of insufficient information being available.

CB/25/01901/FULL
(click for more details)

Erection of 5 commercial units (Class E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) with associated access from Bedford Road, car parking, service yards, drainage and landscaping.
Land rear of Cresswell Edge and Seaton Crescent, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis

Houghton Regis Town Council objected in the strongest terms to planning application CB/25/01901/FULL, on the following grounds:

Conflict with Adopted Plans

The site is not designated for employment use in the Central Bedfordshire Council Local Plan, Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan or the Houghton Regis North Framework Plan. The proposal is therefore contrary to planning policy, particularly Policy BE1, which restricts employment development to defined zones such as Thorn Turn and Junction 11a. Approval would set a precedent that undermines these plans.

Residential Amenity and Quality of Life

The proposed development would result in significant harm to nearby residential properties, including those on Cresswell Edge, Seaton Crescent, and Alnwick Grove. It was noted that the units would be positioned very much closer to residential properties than those at the Thorn Road location at the western edge of Bidwell West, which had caused considerable disgruntlement, and that they would be built to approximately the same height,

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making them much more overbearing. Concerns raised include increased levels of noise, light pollution, visual intrusion, and a loss of privacy. Several residents, including those working from home or with specific health or educational needs in the household, expressed that the impact of this development would be considerable and disruptive.

Traffic and Highway Safety

The scheme proposes 233 car parking spaces, additional motorcycle and HGV parking, and could generate upwards of 700 vehicle movements. Bedford Road already accommodates multiple access points and is not suited to a further increase in volume, particularly involving HGVs. Residents highlighted the dangers posed to children walking to school and to the wider pedestrian and cycling community.

Ecological and Environmental Impact

The site currently functions as a green buffer and supports a range of local wildlife. Concerns were raised about the loss of habitat and the undermining of wildlife corridors created during the construction of the A5. One resident has been monitoring the site since 2017 and believes the ecological report provided with the application does not reflect the full picture.

Public Right of Way

The proposal includes the diversion of a Public Right of Way through an industrial estate, which contradicts Policy GSR5. This change would significantly diminish the amenity of the route and deter pedestrian use.

Lack of Demonstrable Employment Need

It was noted that the Baytree development in Dunstable has already met and exceeded employment land provision targets. In addition, there are vacant industrial units within the surrounding area, calling into question the need for further development of this nature.

Impact on Property and Future Investment

Residents expressed concern about the impact on property values, future mortgage viability, and the effect of the development on the perception of the area. One resident, having moved from Borehamwood, stated they were explicitly told the land would remain as green open space at the time of purchase.

Community Sentiment and Engagement

Over 1,000 signatures have been collected via a petition opposing the application. Residents feel the application has not been transparent, with certain roads such as Alnwick Grove omitted from the plans. Many feel misled and strongly oppose the

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introduction of industrial use within what was marketed as a family-oriented development.

Public Transport and Accessibility

Public transport links in this part of Houghton Regis are minimal, raising further concerns around the sustainability of the proposed development and the increased reliance on car and HGV travel.

General Overdevelopment and Unsuitable Use

Residents and community representatives stressed that this proposal represents overdevelopment and would fundamentally change the character of this part of Bidwell West. It was emphasised that the site was always intended to function as a green buffer between residential properties and the major road infrastructure to the west and north of the site.

Conclusion

Members of the community, supported by representatives of the Bidwell West Community Association, strongly object to Planning Application CB/25/01901/FULL. It is considered inappropriate in both scale and use, inconsistent with local planning policy, and likely to result in lasting harm to the amenity, safety, and wellbeing of residents.

It was requested that the Town Council reflect the strength of local opposition in its own representation to Central Bedfordshire Council and continue to support the community in resisting this application.

CB/25/01728/RM

(click for more details)

Reserved Matters: following Outline Application

CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans.) Reserved matters sought for appearance only to bandstand Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire.

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

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An application on the delegated authority list was referred to members for discussion, as it was determined that further discussion was warranted.

CB/25/01963/FULL
(click for more details)

Erection of single storey timber frame rear extension to create a storage area and a covered sitting area, with new door, and steel corrugated roofing
8 Ashington Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6RQ

Objection – Ashington Way (Retrospective Planning Application)

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

Proximity to boundary: Structure is built very close to the boundary of No. 10 Ashington Way, raising concerns about overbearing impact and loss of amenity.

Negative visual impact: The structure is clearly visible from the road and appears to be faced in plywood. It is unsightly and out of keeping with the surrounding residential area.

Poor design and materials: Non-standard construction with a proposal for a faux brick fascia, which does little to improve its current appearance.

Inappropriate use: The stated use as a 'multimedia wall' may indicate a more intensive, non-typical domestic use. The overall design and appearance of the structure are not in keeping with the character of the surrounding residential properties.

Retrospective nature: The building is already completed, preventing proper consultation and setting an unhelpful precedent.

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.58 pm

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Dated this 4th day of August 2025

Chairman

Chairman