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## Planning Committee

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 15 August 2024 from 7.00 pm - 7.54 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Andy Booth, Lloyd Bowen (Substitute for Councillor Julien Speed), Ann Cavanagh (Substitute for Councillor Kieran Golding), Simon Clark (Chair), Angela Harrison (Substitute for Councillor Hayden Brawn), James Hunt, Peter Marchington, Chris Palmer (Substitute for Councillor Mike Baldock), Richard Palmer, Hannah Perkin (Substitute for Councillor Ben J Martin), Paul Stephen, Terry Thompson, Angie Valls, Karen Watson and Tony Winckless.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Andy Byrne, Philippa Davies, Simon Greenwood and Megan Harris.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Mike Baldock, Hayden Brawn, Derek Carnell, Kieran Golding, Elliott Jayes, Claire Martin, Ben J Martin and Julien Speed.

173 **Election of Chair for this meeting**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, nominations were sought for a Chair for this meeting.

**Resolved: That Councillor Simon Clark be Chair for this meeting.**

174 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

175 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 July 2024 (Minute Nos. 103 – 116) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

176 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Andy Booth declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 2.1, 23/505752/FULL, Land to south of Ridham Avenue, east of Swale as he had discussed the application in his role as Chair of the Planning Applications Committee at Kent County Council. Councillor Booth said that he had not made up his mind on the application and would consider it with a clear and open mind.

177 **2.1 - Land to South of Ridham Avenue, East of Swale Way, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 2SG**

**PART 2**

Applications for which **PERMISSION** is recommended

<b>2.1 REFERENCE NO - 23/505752/FULL</b>
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<b>PROPOSAL</b> Construction of a battery energy storage facility to provide up to 249 megawatts of storage capacity including electrical plant and equipment, landscaping
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and associated works.		
<b>SITE LOCATION</b> Land to South of Ridham Avenue, East of Swale Way, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 2SG		
<b>WARD</b> Kemsley	<b>PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL</b> N/A	<b>APPLICANT</b> Ouse Energy Ltd <b>AGENT</b> N/A

The Planning Consultant introduced the application as set out in the report and advised that there were no further updates to the information already in the report.

Mark Pearce, the Applicant, spoke in support of the application.

The Chair moved the officer recommendation to approve the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Andy Booth.

The Chair read out a brief statement from one of the Ward Members who had sent his apologies and who had called the application in for the Planning Committee to determine. The Ward Member explained that a resident had contacted him with concerns about the potential fire risk at the site and also loss of commercial land. The Chair said it was disappointing that the other Ward Member was unable to attend the meeting.

The Chair invited Members to make comments and points raised included:

- This was a good location for this type of use, being on scrubland and close to Swale Way for access;
- clarification sought on the new footpath; and
- concerned with flooding that sometimes occurred on the site.

Councillor Tony Winckless moved the following addendum: That the units on the site be painted green so they blended in with the landscape. This was seconded by Councillor James Hunt. In response, the Planning Consultant drew Members’ attention to paragraph 4.4 in the report where the Council’s Urban Design officer had recommended that the units be painted green, and Condition (21) secured details of the paint finish. As such, the proposer and seconder withdrew the addendum.

The Planning Consultant explained that the footpath would be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

Further comments included:

- Minded to support the application, although did had some concerns with fire risk, but noted that Kent Fire & Rescue raised no objection;
- further clarification sought on the potential use of the land for other businesses, and evidence of why there had been a failure to secure employment opportunities at the site;
- concerned that this site was in close proximity to other developments, rather than

being in a rural setting;

- clarification sought on the life span of the proposed use;
- was there a battery safety management plan for the site?;
- this was a well-written report;
- considered the application could have been dealt with via delegated powers to officers;
- some residents wished this decision to be made by elected Members;
- there were no planning reasons to turn this application down; and
- welcomed the wording in condition 15 (archaeological programme of works).

In response, the Planning Consultant said the Economic Development Officer did raise concern with the land not being used for employment space, and he acknowledged that the reasons for this not going forward was anecdotal, rather than evidence based. He added that the lifespan for the development was at least 25 years and a battery safety management plan would be secured by condition and would be subject to consultation with Kent Fire & Rescue.

Councillor Andy Booth moved the following amendment: That part of condition (11) (low frequency noise) be amended to read: The assessment will be a measurement ~~or a calculation~~ to demonstrate internal levels. This was seconded by Councillor Richard Palmer. On being put to the vote the amendment was agreed.

**Resolved: That application 23/505752/FULL be approved as per the recommendation in the report with an amendment to condition (11) to read: The assessment will be a measurement to demonstrate internal levels.**

178 **2.2 - 64 Maylam Gardens, Borden, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1GB**

<b>2.2 REFERENCE NO - 24/500984/FULL</b>		
<b>PROPOSAL</b> Loft conversion into habitable space including 3no. front dormers and 2no. rear dormers and rooflight. Garage conversion into habitable space ancillary to the main dwelling.		
<b>SITE LOCATION</b> 64 Maylam Gardens Borden Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1GB		
<b>WARD</b> Borden and Grove Park	<b>PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL</b> Borden	<b>APPLICANT</b> Mrs Rukiat Abudu Abudu <b>AGENT</b> Architectural Design & Builder

The Senior Planner introduced the application as set out in the report and advised that there were no further updates to the information already in the report.

The Chair moved the officer recommendation to approve the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Andy Booth.

The Chair invited Members to make comments, and points raised included:

- The design fitted in with the streetscene;

- considered there was sufficient parking on the driveway after the proposed conversion of the garage;
- three parking spaces were not enough for a 7-bedroomed dwelling;
- there would be issues with on-street parking on the narrow roads;
- this was a well-designed application;
- there were no grounds to refuse the application;
- the application complied with the Council's Parking Standards;
- clarification sought on the parking spaces that would remain;
- would there be any soundproofing on the adjoining wall of the garage?;
- a representative from Borden Parish Council should have attended the meeting as they had called-in the application;
- the impacts of a 7-bedroomed dwelling could be detrimental to the highway; and
- suggested solar panels be added to the rear of the property.

In response, the Senior Planner explained whilst three parking spaces were shown on the proposed plan, after measuring the driveway it was concluded that four vehicles could park on it. She explained that there would be no sound proofing to the garage as the adjoining garage was not a habitable space. The Senior Planner added that, as set out in condition (4) to the application, the garage could only be used for uses ancillary to the main dwelling.

The Team Leader explained that the applicant would be required to apply for building regulations and these would ensure that the modifications would be made to the correct standard with regard to sound proofing.

***Resolved: That application 24/500984/FULL be approved as per the recommendation in the report.***

#### Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel