

Marlborough Town Council



Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held Monday, 19, May 2025 in the Court Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

PRESENT	Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby	Chair
	Councillor Mervyn Hall	Vice Chair
	Councillor Emily Trow	Town Mayor (<i>ex officio</i>)
	Councillor Nicholas Fogg	
	Councillor Lisa Farrell	
	Councillor Mark Cooper	
	Councillor Kelvyn Shantry	
	Councillor Susannah O'Brien	
	Councillor Caroline Sadler	
	Councillor Abi Beaumont	
	Councillor Caroline Wrench	
	Councillor Jane Davies	Wiltshire Councillor – Marlborough West
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
	Emma Cook	Information Officer
ALSO		
PRESENT	Neil Goodwin	Marlborough.News
	42 members of the public	

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The **Chair** welcomed everyone to the meeting noting that it was lovely to see so many people present. Written questions had been received, including two about the planning application PL/2025/03165. Rather than deal with the George Lane proposals at public question time she would, with the Committee's agreement, move the item up the agenda and suspend Standing Orders so people could have their say.

Suffering from a heavy cold, she apologised for the quality of her voice and asked people to speak up if they could not hear her.

Dr Paul & Mrs Elizabeth Cooper asked

(1) what progress has the Planning Committee made to seek the installation of speed indicator devices on the A346 at Port Hill to warn traffic departing from and arriving at Marlborough to ensure that all vehicles adhere to the required speed of 30mph;

and could this be permanent?

(2) Will the Planning Committee be able to liaise with the police to seek penalties for drivers failing to observe the required speed limit?

The **Chair** confirmed point 1 would be covered under the action log item in the agenda. Point 2 was more complex, and a written response would be provided.

ACTION: written reply to explain timings for SID installation and options for Police speed check enforcement/penalties

26/25 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from **Councillors Sheppard, Luson and Morgan.**

27/25 DECLARATIONS

Councillor Sadler – agenda item 7(p) – planning application – non-pecuniary interest.

28/25 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

An updated printed agenda had been tabled for Members correcting the title of agenda item 9 to "George Lane Proposals".

29/25 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held 14 April 2025 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair

The **Chair** confirmed that the **Town Clerk** had followed up with the Highways Engineer about a small stretch of A4 High Street not included in the 20mph zone (Min. No. 450/24).

ACTION: forward the relevant email to Councillor Sadler

30/25 ACTION LOG

Members noted the updated action log. Verbal updates included:

#89: safe crossing point between Port Hill and The Common. The forthcoming positioning of a speed indicator device here was a start, but not enough. However it would provide evidence to back up further requests for safety improvements.

RESOLVED: to attend the Area Board to ask for advice on what can be done to move forward with establishing Community Speed Watch (#151)

ACTION: #184 – High Street short stay parking – contact Highways and ask for a progress update

31/25 PLANNING DECISIONS

Members noted the planning applications that had been determined by Wiltshire Council. Two potential sites for affordable or social housing had been lost with recent approvals for developments at Kelham Gardens and York Place.

ACTION: clarify the S106 contribution related to the York Place development

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) **PL/2025/03165** – Erection of retirement apartments (category II type) with communal facilities, car parking and substation to serve the development (demolition of police station) at Former Police Station, George Lane, Marlborough for McCarthy and Stone Retirement Lifestyles Ltd

This proposal had been brought to the Council's attention in December, and at a presentation by the developer's representatives the Town Council has made it clear this was not an appropriate development for the town.

The Chair asked **Councillor Farrell** to introduce the discussion acknowledging that she had worked very hard to gather information, as had other Councillors and staff.

Introduction

Councillor Farrell gave reasons why this development was not right for Marlborough, and why there was no need for another retirement complex:

- Marlborough was running out of housing for young people and families.
 - She had been told that one school may have to shut in the next five years because of dwindling numbers of children if we don't start building affordable houses for young families.
 - She counted up to 10 retirement developments already in the town, with 18 of the apartments available for sale as of today (source: Rightmove) showing owners were already struggling to fill them
 - A 2-bed McCarthy and Stone built apartment at Canning Place was listed for sale at £475,000. The developer had claimed that building these new apartments would free up 3-bed houses that the town was in need of.
- Councillor Farrell** did not know anyone in social housing who could afford to buy such a property.
- Housing associations continued to sell 3-bed properties to the private sector, depleting the stock further.
 - She was aware of young families where 4 children had to share one room, and many families in need of 3-bed properties with none available.
 - If young people were forced to leave the town, where would the workforce come from for our local shops?
 - There were 15 pages of objections already on the Wiltshire Council Planning Register with more to come
 - Whether the only way to stop the development would be for people to go to Wiltshire Council in person, objecting was not enough
 - Impact on infrastructure/services: the doctor's surgery was not coping with the number of patients now
 - The design of the building was not appropriate for the site – it is 3 stories high, and not in keeping with George Lane
 - The impact on traffic, where George Lane was already an issue
 - There were not enough parking spaces. The developers had claimed not many people would have cars, which she refuted.

- Lots of people attended a drop-in consultation at St Mary's Church Hall to object. However, the developers did not appear interested in talking to people who had objections, just any enquiring about the apartments. Neither had they replied to people who wrote to object. They had been promoting the apartments to people not yet in their 60s.
- There were two McCarthy and Stone developments in Marlborough. With Canning Place they had avoided paying S106 money so there was no infrastructure improvement or mitigation available to offset the impact of the development
- What was the point of a Neighbourhood Plan if we cannot protect our own town; it would be up to Wiltshire Council to decide whether it goes ahead

Public Comments

During a suspension of Standing Orders the **Chair** invited members of the public to speak and list their objections. Eight people came forward and points raised, and written questions, included:

- How much clout does the Neighbourhood Plan carry, and had it been tested with Wiltshire Council? **Councillor Hall** explained the plan is a legal document and does have the power to stop planning applications. However, it can be overridden by certain arguments. One example is a developer claiming it is not economic to build affordable housing, and this happens quite often, particularly with brownfield sites. An example was Kelham Gardens, where the plan specified up to 10 dwellings with 40% affordable: the developer used an economic argument despite Councillor Hall attending the Eastern Area Planning Committee to object. The Neighbourhood Plan is the strongest legal objection we have on the grounds that the plan looks for developments for affordable housing and states that Marlborough does not need more retirement housing.
- The number of parking spaces was ridiculous (18 spaces for 17 x 1-bed and 13 2-bed apartments) plus staff, carers, visitors and deliveries. Town Mill was given as an example, where each property had one space but that was still not enough, causing overspill to surrounding, already-congested areas.
- **Mrs Compton** offered to lie down in front of the diggers if required, and the **Chair** offered to hold her hand
- In addition to young people and families, older people who couldn't afford to buy properties were not catered for either with a supply of affordable rental or social housing
- Marlborough families were being divided by distance with younger generations having to move away from the town to more affordable areas. This was not a new problem and had been happening for three decades because of the reducing number of affordable homes and rising house prices.
- Residents asked where the Eastern Area Planning Committee would be held – it was confirmed as Devizes Corn Exchange. Dates would be announced in due course.
- The increase in traffic at George Lane from these extra vehicle movements. George Lane was already a bottleneck and would soon be included in the town's 20mph zone.

- Was it right to assume that the police had to get as much money as they can for the site, or could they be asked to step down and look at the greater good for the community? The **Chair** agreed that as a public body, accountable to the public, the Town Council should be entitled to ask them their criteria for selling this site, and whether there was any obligation for them to provide some sort of public benefit.
- Whether residents should write to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to ask him to reconsider this development (and could the Town Council or Marlborough.News provide a link?)
- It was difficult to buck the market. When Rogers Meadow was built, affordable houses were offered to tenants on the wait list at 50% of list price: many then sold them at full price and moved on.
- Housing associations had inherited council houses. Did they not have a responsibility to provide affordable housing? They have been selling them off: it was hoped Councillors could shame them about this. **Councillor Farrell** had recently attended a meeting at Wiltshire Council to make this point very forcefully and the Town Council regularly contacted the associations and Wiltshire Council about the issue. Sadly, there was no obligation to provide housing here, just to look after their overall stock. The Town Council had already declared a housing emergency and agreed to object to any development over 5 dwellings that did not have affordable elements.
- A written question received from Elizabeth Wight had reinforced the objections made at the meeting.

Councillor Davies

- **Wiltshire Councillor for Marlborough West. Jane Davies** has called the application in for discussion at the Eastern Area Planning Committee.
- She explained that planning is decided locally but was part of a national framework, which was weighted in favour of developers. They often gained permission then ‘banked’ land, leading to the authority not having a required 5-year land supply.
- The Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan states what the community wants and needs and also allows the Town Council to receive S106 payments. The developer has already submitted a financial viability report stating it will only just make the boundaries of what they say is affordable for them to build.
- Most decisions are made under delegated authority by the Planning Officer. By calling it in the application will go before a panel of Councillors to decide, all of whom have training in planning. If the Officer feels there are no legitimate planning grounds to turn down the application, the Committee will be our opportunity to stand up and speak. **Councillor Davies** can speak for as long as she likes and will make the town’s case robustly mentioning all the points people have raised, and she can take a representative from the Town Council and a couple of members of the public to speak. **Councillor Farrell** had been invited to attend Full Council at Trowbridge and had spoken eloquently, and she would come along to speak knowledgeably and from the heart at Committee.
- **Councillor Davies** was semi-optimistic that the Committee would turn down the application based on inadequate parking and the Neighbourhood Plan but

warned that the developer would have prepared for this: past applications such as the one at Kelham Gardens were examples of where strong objections had failed to prevent the loss of potential affordable developments. She warned that even if the Committee did turn down the application the developer could still appeal to the Planning Inspector.

- Other routes to consider were that bad publicity may put the developer off, and it was also worth contacting the Police and Crime Commissioner. She understood there was a plan for a new police station to be built near Salisbury and this may be why smaller stations were being sold off, even though there was a perfectly adequate headquarters in Devizes.

After Standing Orders were reinstated, Members discussed:

- It was important to object, and in large numbers as a united town
- The Chair, staff and Councillors had done a lot of research which would be pulled together to supplement the points raised this evening. Even if they did not have the same legal validity as the Neighbourhood Plan, they were still valid reasons: in a democracy everyone has a right to be heard and the Chair was determined to do that. She asked all of Marlborough, not just those present tonight, to join her.
- To collate Councillor and staff research, including:
 - The developer's own Statement of Community Involvement which clearly states that residents do not want another retirement complex
 - Government Policy. As an example, in July 2024 a Government news story stated "our new housing targets will make sure local authorities plan for the homes that are proportionate to the size of existing communities, with an uplift in areas where house prices are the most out of step with local incomes"... and "...we are committed to delivering the biggest boost to affordable and social housing in a generation".
 - References to similar applications that had been successfully refused (e.g. in Thame and Evesham)
- The developer S106 contribution to offset the lack of affordable housing was £520,000
- An objection on the grounds of overdevelopment: the proposal consumes most of the site and in size and scale is out of character with the area
- Whether to raise a public petition objecting, and submit it to Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Police
- An objection on the grounds of inadequate parking, considering the needs of not just residents but visitors, staff, carers and deliveries
- An objection on the grounds of the impact of increased traffic in an already congested street
- The site was being sold by Wiltshire Police: it had not yet been sold to the developer and the police authority could still pull out. The decision maker is the Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson – an elected official
- Whether the Town Council should make an appeal to the PCC now to cut off the development at this stage
- The police had already closed and sold 23 police stations around Wiltshire – would their priority be money above what was right for the community?

People who didn't live here were making decisions for the town, families and young people that would affect their future

- Noted that Wiltshire Council was able to develop social housing in its own right through a development company
- Whether the Town Council should actively look for a not-for-profit potential buyer who would be prepared to build affordable housing
- Timescales: the closing date for comment on the application is 23 May. The Officer will make a decision after this: depending on that decision, the application would then be discussed at the Eastern Area Planning Committee.
- Whether to ask for a delay in the decision until Councillors had completed their research.
- That there is a newly elected Wiltshire Council and it was hoped it would listen to local democracy and not pass this application
- The Town Council was able to object on many grounds, and having the public so clearly behind it should carry a lot more weight so it was wonderful that so many people were here this evening to voice their opposition

ACTION: collate all relevant research

RESOLVED: (i) to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to ask for more information about the proposed development and its criteria for selling the site, and invite him to attend a public meeting to explain his thinking on the matter

RESOLVED: (ii) to create and publicise a petition

RESOLVED: (iii) to seek an alternative not-for-profit buyer who would be prepared to build affordable homes

RESOLVED: (iv) that Marlborough Town Council strongly objects to this application on the grounds that:

(a) it contravenes the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan

(b) does not meet the community need for social housing

(c) is an overdevelopment of the site

(d) the design is out of character with the area

(e) there is insufficient parking given the semi-rural location and the impact of displaced parking and increase in traffic on the already saturated George Lane (contrary to CP 60 and CP 61)

The **Chair** thanked everyone for attending, they had clearly shown that Marlborough does not want this development. She appealed for as many people as possible to attend the Committee should it reach that stage: she offered to pay for a coach if required.

Members of the public and Councillor Davies left the meeting.

Councillor Hall (Vice Chair) took over the Chair while Councillor Cleasby remained at the meeting

- b) PL/2025/11675** – Refurbishment of boarding house including extensions to the south west and north west wings, increasing the roof height and reconfiguration of the main entrance, energy efficiency upgrades, new ramped access to the main entrance, and external hard and soft landscaping at C2 Boarding House, Marlborough College
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- c) PL/2025/02665** – Underpinning to the south elevation of 2, 3 and 4 Pewsey Road. Window replacement and repairs to windows, roof and chimney at Pewsey Road, Marlborough for Marlborough College
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- d) PL/2025/03473** – Conversion of a room within the squash court building from its current use as a general storeroom into a plant room to house new heating and hot water plant to service the boarding house at Preshute House, Preshute Lane, Manton for Marlborough College
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- e) PL/2025/03497** – Full roof replacement including lead valleys and hips. Remedial work to chimney, refurbishment of timber fascias, removal/refurbishment/replacement of soffit boards. Decoration of all rainwater goods and replacement if required at The Priory, High Street, Marlborough for Aster
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- f) PL/2025/03608** – Provide a window and opening into the north-west wall of the ground floor sitting room at Pear Tree Cottage, Angel yard, Marlborough for Louise Norton
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- g) PL/2025/04004** – Replacement windows to front elevation at Kingsbury Hill House, 34 Kingsbury Street, Marlborough for Mrs H Russell
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- h) PL/2025/03488** – Two storey side extension at 1 Police Houses, Five Stiles Road, Marlborough for Mr & Mrs Richard McColl
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application subject to a condition that the bathroom window is frosted glass
- i) PL/2025/03487** – Installation of air source heat pump at Maylong, Five Stiles road, Marlborough for Mr Michael Jones
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- j) PL/2025/03581** – First floor extension over existing single storey ground floor extension to create new upstairs bathroom at 7 Reeds Ground, Marlborough for Mr Geoffrey Atkins
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application

- k) **PL/2025/03667** – Rear extension and garage conversion at 31 Edwards Meadow, Marlborough for Catherine Pollard
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- l) **PL/2025/03746** – Single storey rear extension, including alterations at Highbanks, 64 London Road, Marlborough for Mr & Mrs Harrigan-James
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- m) **PL/2025/03747** – Double storey rear extension and associated works at 14 Golding Avenue, Marlborough for Mr J Simon-Williams
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application subject to conditions relating to the window arrangements to prevent loss of privacy and preventing use of an adjacent private car park
- n) **PL/2025/03831** – Single storey lean-to rear extension at 23 College Fields, Marlborough for Mr & Mrs Lawrence
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- o) **PL/2025/04098** – Extensions to dwelling/garage and internal and external alterations at Merlins View, Granham Hill, Marlborough for P Kane and J Wray
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application
- Councillor Sadler did not vote on the following item*
- p) **PL/2025/04195** – Internal alterations with change to fenestration and external brickwork at 24 Thomson Way, Marlborough for Mr & Mrs Simon Baldock
RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council has no objection to this application

33/25

WORKS TO TREES

No applications had been submitted.

34/25

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT GEORGE LANE

Members noted a newsletter received from McCarthy and Stone.

35/25

SEALED TRAFFIC ORDER

Members noted that a sealed traffic order had been issued confirming the extension of a 40mph limit at Frees Avenue to a point 525 metres beyond the entrance to Marlborough Cemetery.

36/25

CONSULTATION

Members noted a consultation on draft “Setting of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document”.

Consultation documents were available online and hard copies were available at Marlborough Library. The closing date is 27 June.

Members were urged to look at this consultation and deferred a decision about making a corporate response to the Planning Committee meeting on 9 June.

ACTION: Add to the agenda for 9 June

37/25 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES (SID)

Members noted the most recent data reports downloaded from the Town Council's SIDs at George Lane (26 March to 8 April) and London Road (9 to 23 April).

38/25 TOWN CENTRE WORKING PARTY

Members considered the Town Centre Working Party (TCWP) membership for 2025-26 and the terms of reference.

RESOLVED: that TCWP membership shall comprise **Councillors Cleasby, Hall, Morgan, Sadler, Shantry** plus the **Town Clerk, Wiltshire Councillors** and **Caroline Thomas**; that the Chair shall be decided at the first meeting; and to delegate updating the terms of reference to the working party

ACTION: Invite Wiltshire Councillors and Caroline Thomas to join the Town Centre Working Party

39/25 TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES

Members noted Orders issued by Wiltshire Council to close temporarily:

- The Parade (part) from its junction with New Road to its junction with Kennet Place from 16 to 27 June 2025 to enable Wales & West Utilities to carry out gas main replacement and associated works
- The Parade (part) from its junction with A4 New Road to outside No 8 The Parade on 14 June from 08:00 to 23:30 in the interests of public safety during the Parade Festival

The meeting closed at 8.37 pm

Signed:
Chair

Date: