

# Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council

## Minutes of the Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 7.30pm in the clubhouse building at Genn Park

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chair)  
J. Green  
A. Dawes  
L. Date  
R. Martin  
A. Humphries  
E. Steyl

Parish Clerk  
29 members of the public

1. Apologies: None
2. Filming of meetings :  
One member of the public stated that she would be audio recording the meeting.
3. Notification of late items for the agenda : None
4. Declaration of interests : None
5. Approval of minutes of the planning meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025  
The minutes of the planning meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were approved.
6. Applications considered :
  - 25/502321 13 Joywood, Boughton Monchelsea**  
**Erection of single storey rear extension including 3 no. rooflights**  
No objection / comment
  - 24/504110 The Lodge, Boughton Mount, Boughton Lane, Boughton Monchelsea**  
**Demolition of double garage, store and outbuildings. Erection of 1 no. self-build two storey dwelling with associated access, parking, landscaping, provision of secure cycle parking facilities and rebuild of a section of the boundary wall (NOTIFICATION OF APPEAL**  
No further response
  - 25/502235 Land rear of 58 Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea**  
**Demolition of existing stables and shed, and erection of 18 no. extra care retirement bungalows (Class C2) comprising 7 no. semi-detached pairs (14 no. total) and 4 no. detached bungalows and a single storey rear extension to existing clubhouse, communal garden to include timber pavilion, with associated landscaping, access roads and parking**

Cllr Smith stated that the Parish Council had produced a draft response to the application and summarised this for the benefit of members of the public in attendance. Following discussion and questions from the public the following response to the application was agreed.

The Parish Council wish to see the above planning application refused for the following planning reasons. If MBC are minded to approve it we wish to see the application reported to MBC planning committee for decision.

1. MBC commissioned a Settlement Hierarchy Review which was carried out in 2021. In carrying out the settlement reviews, information was considered within the following four general factors – connectivity, economy, facilities and scale. Overall, there has been no improvement in these factors since the review was carried out. In fact, there has been a decline in services as although Bocton café has opened, the bus service has significantly declined and the hairdressers has closed down.
2. Government planning inspector, David Spencer BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI made a final report to Maidstone Borough Council on the Maidstone Local Plan review on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024. This report included the following statement '**Given the positive allocation of land at Boughton Monchelsea, the settlement is not identified for additional housing growth which would be justified but Policy LPRSP8 should reference the allocation at Campfield Farm and MM36 would do this, ensuring the Plan would be effective in this regard**'. This statement was made in acknowledgement that Boughton Monchelsea was, uniquely, the only smaller village with an allocated site and, as such, no further development over and above these 25 allocated homes could be justified
3. Since the original Genn Park application was approved there has been a Local Plan review and Boughton Monchelsea is now a Smaller Village. Policy LPRHOU7 of the Local Plan states that '**Proposals for specialist residential accommodation in unsustainable locations, and not within or adjacent to the defined boundaries of the Maidstone Urban Area, Rural Service Centres and Larger Villages will not be permitted**'. Boughton Monchelsea is a Smaller Village and is not sustainable therefore permitting a C2 development in this location would be contrary to policy. We acknowledge that there is a need both nationally and within MBC for C2 housing but there will be other locations within the Borough that are both sustainable and policy compliant. It should be noted that other C2 schemes such as Ledian Gardens in Leeds were approved under policies contained within the 2017 Local Plan. This has since been reviewed and policies have changed.
4. The Planning, Design and Access Statement (section 4.3) states that '**Whilst adjacent to the existing built form of Boughton Monchelsea, the proposed development is a departure from the development plan owing to the location being within the countryside. However, more important is the need for extra care homes as there has been a persistent under-delivery within the Borough with no allocated sites in the adopted Local Plan for this type of development**'. This statement fails to take into account that the application does not conform with policy LPRHOU7. The Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) goes on to say '**Above everything else, the proposed site is an extension to the existing site, so by definition cannot be located elsewhere. The proposal will use the same clubhouse building and is looking to increase the delivery of services currently available, bringing benefits to both existing and future users**'. This is no justification whatsoever for approving this completely new application as C2 housing can be provided anywhere else in the Borough (in Rural Service Centres or Larger Villages). The presence of a small existing clubhouse (effectively just a meeting point for residents) does not justify approving 18 additional C2 homes in an unsustainable, Smaller Village location. It should be noted that Local Plan policy LPRHOU7 (section 9.28) states '**The policy refers**

**to accommodation for older and disabled persons. These have been grouped together to reflect the Planning Practice Guidance. This policy will cover specialist residential accommodation (including nursing homes, care homes, and extra care accommodation) that fall within Use Class C2 providing some form of care package and communal facilities more than a lounge’.** The communal facility at Genn Park is principally a lounge with a small treatment room and office which residents tell us are not used.

5. The Planning, Design and Access Statement (section 4.5) states **‘Boughton Monchelsea is by far the largest village within the small villages category; it is located in close proximity to the Rural Service Centre of Coxheath and the urban confines of Maidstone, whilst all other villages are significantly more rural and remote’.** This statement is irrelevant as Boughton Monchelsea is a Smaller Village by definition, based on its unsustainability and lack of services. MBC’s Settlement Hierarchy Review dated July 2021 states **‘In relation to overarching considerations of terminology, the terms larger and smaller villages imply that scale is the main or even only factor being considered within the hierarchy. Our report has examined a wider set of issues and data relating to the potential sustainability of places. The impression given by names can be long lasting and we therefore consider it appropriate to reconsider the hierarchy names in this context’.** As a further point, it is irrelevant how close Boughton Monchelsea may be to Coxheath or Maidstone when there is virtually no way of getting there, apart from by private motor vehicle. Boughton Monchelsea has been designated a Smaller Village in the Local Plan as a result of MBC’s Settlement Hierarchy Review.
6. Boughton Monchelsea is not a sustainable location. The transport statement states **‘The site is located within the urban confines of Boughton Monchelsea, where a range of everyday services and facilities can be accessed within an acceptable walking distance. In addition, bus services are readily accessible from the village, allowing for greater connectivity to a wider variety of services and amenities without the need for private vehicle use’.** This statement is inaccurate and misleading. There is a very limited range of services in the village, within walking distance of Genn Park – a single shop and post office, a village hall and social club, a pub / restaurant (not open every day) and a café. Apart from the very early ‘school bus’ (term time only) there is only a once a day bus service to and from Maidstone (except on Weds when there are 2 buses). This number 14 bus gives shoppers less than 2 hours in Maidstone, leaving them stranded if they need to stay longer.
7. The applicant’s submission suggests that the site is in a sustainable location for such a use. This simply is not the case and it fails to meet the criteria in the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) in that;
  - a. Boughton Monchelsea has very limited services. It has no doctors surgery or other such services and only has a single shop / post office which is unable to meet every day needs
  - b. There is no sustainable transport system as Boughton Monchelsea has a very limited bus service so occupants would be reliant on the motor car for access to facilities in Maidstone and / or the rural service centres and larger villages. Since the original bungalows were permitted the bus service has been cut further with only 1 bus per day on most days and no buses at the weekend.
8. As we all witness in our daily lives in Boughton Monchelsea, Church Street is not only a narrow street but vehicle movement is heavily impeded by the intensive on

street parking by existing residents, on both sides of the road. A large proportion of properties in Church Street have no off street parking and therefore the availability of on street parking is essential. The Genn Park / Church Street junction is, uniquely, a pedestrian priority junction and existing Genn Park residents tell us they do not feel safe pulling out on to Church Street due to lack of visibility and the need to constantly watch out for pedestrians. An increase in the number of properties from 24 to 42 would mean that a pedestrian priority junction would be wholly inappropriate for the number of expected traffic movements. Of particular concern is the fact that many children walk to school each day on the Church Street footpath and there is no path on the other side of the road due to the limited road width. The Travel Plan (section 2.3.1) states that the footpath on Church Street is approximately 1.8m wide. This is factually incorrect – the majority of the path is not even wide enough for two pedestrians to pass each other and is unsuitable for those using wheelchairs and mobility scooters who are forced to use the road.

9. The Interim Travel Plan (section 2.5.1) states that there is a Hotel – Cherry Tree Park in Boughton Monchelsea. Cherry Tree Park is not a hotel, it is a caravan park with year round occupancy. In addition, the Planning, Design and Access Statement (section 4.8) makes reference to services such as A&Z fish and chip shop in Loose and various businesses such as Huntingdale Electrical, JMA Plumbing & Heating and Sols Tech IT Support which are simply linked to residential addresses in the area. It should also be noted that Hair & Beauty by the Green closed down at least 2 years ago and is now a residential property
10. The Interim Travel Plan states that a Travel Plan Co-ordinator will be appointed to manage the interim travel plan prior to first occupation, obtaining and maintaining commitment and support from residents etc. This is unachievable and unenforceable and neglects to take into consideration that Boughton Monchelsea is an unsustainable location with very poor public transport facilities. It is unrealistic to expect elderly residents to walk or cycle to use services in adjacent villages or Maidstone town centre. The Interim Travel Plan (section 5.3.1) states '**The proposed development enjoys ready access to regular bus services**'. This statement is factually incorrect.
11. Genn Park residents tell us there are no activities in the club house apart from tea and cake meet ups that they organise themselves. The addition of an extra 18 homes will not make events and activities viable that are currently unviable. The club house is simply a meeting point for residents, nothing more. Residents living at Genn Park tell us they do not have the spare income to afford tai chi classes and the like and say this was offered but there was little to no take up and in any case they could access tai chi classes for free on You Tube.
12. The Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) states '**Clarendon Homes has been liaising with Helping Hands and WrinklyCIC.org who provide a range of services to the public, including social events within Boughton Monchelsea. These organisations are looking to expand their services and we are proposing to support their growth by paying for their bid for future grant funding and allowing them use of the clubhouse building**'. We believe Helping Hands in its current format is a commercial enterprise and we question whether residents would want or need the services that may be on offer. The PDAS also states '**Helping Hands offers a transport service for medical visits ...**'. As far as we are aware Helping Hands do not provide a voluntary transport service for Boughton Monchelsea residents and we understand their hourly rate for such a service is prohibitively expensive. A further statement in the PDAS states '**Grant funding will pay for staff that can be based at the clubhouse and provide a**

***wide range of activities and services to all residents of Boughton Monchelsea, helping to integrate and support the entire community'***. We

question whether this is viable in the long term and whether use of the club house by non-residents would be accepted by those living there. In any case it should not be given any consideration when assessing the application as it may well not happen.

13. Both current and proposed developments are effectively market value residential homes, providing the bare minimum to qualify as C2 Extra Care. The only part of the original scheme that qualifies it as C2 appears to be the club house, the one thing that is not needed (and, as the existing residents tell us, is barely used). Residents also tell us the only qualifying factor for living on the development (apart from being over 55) is that they must pay for a minimum of 2 hours care per week but this can be used for cleaning. The need for care appears to be self-assessed. The 'bespoke care package' on offer is simply care that any resident in Boughton Monchelsea can access. The only difference is that Genn Park residents are forced to use a single care provider, all other residents can use whichever of the many care providers they wish.
14. By qualifying as bare minimum C2, the developer avoids paying CIL or providing affordable accommodation. As a result, properties are sold at market residential rates, making them potentially unaffordable to some residents of Boughton Monchelsea who may wish to live in them.
15. Aside from policy non-compliance, we do not believe there is a need for further C2 housing in Boughton Monchelsea. We understand the existing 'sheltered housing' provision off Haste Hill Road is not filled with the type of older residents it is intended for. In addition, we note there are currently 3 properties for sale in Genn Park which do not appear to be selling (one reduced on Rightmove on 31/1/25, one reduced on 3/6/25, one added on 21/6/25). There were also 2 properties which have now been sold but took many months to sell. We have been informed that prospective buyers have been put off by the high service charges (which they would not need to pay if they downsized to residential dwellings without the C2 designation).
16. The Clarendon Homes design rationale contained within the PDAS states :
  - ***Easy access to Maidstone, neighbouring villages & towns***
  - ***Close proximity with local facilities and services***
  - ***Connected to existing transport / infrastructure – local bus services (14 & 59) easily accessible within short walking distance***
  - ***Activities & regular events to encourage residents & non-residents to get together E.g. pilates, yoga, weekly board games, coffee mornings, communal dinner / lunch, talks or lectures, chiropody session & mobile salon***

None of the above should be taken into consideration when assessing the application because much of the evidence is factually incorrect. Boughton Monchelsea is a Smaller Village and an unsustainable location for further C2 housing.

17. The proposed development does not meet all five of the criteria set out in the Smaller Village policy LPRSP8 of the MBC Local Plan

7. Any other business  
None

8. Date of Next Meeting  
To be confirmed

Meeting closed at 8.40pm