

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 5 January 2026 at 7.00pm

Cllr. J. Love (Chair)
Cllr. K. Butler

Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. D. Bennett

Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. P. Selby

IN ATTENDANCE:

8 members of the public

Linda Lewis – Administrative Officer

Minutes taken by Linda Lewis

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interest that they may have in relation to any item on the agenda.

Cllr. K. Butler declared a personal interest on agenda item 5.0, for applications WD/2025/2437/F AND WD/2025/2745/LB Hempstead Farm as she was a close neighbour of the site and also a member of the resident's association who had objected.

2.0 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

P75.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak in objection to applications WD/2025/2437/F AND WD/2025/2745/LB Hempstead Farm.
Resident 1 – Stated that the application was very similar to the application for the site in 2023 and that despite the objections of Uckfield Town Council and Framfield Parish Council permission was granted for converting the barns. He outlined the time-line of the 2023 application and stated that since being granted nothing had happened and felt that there was no intention by the developer to ever proceed with that plan, and pointed out that within the application the same misrepresentations and factual mistakes existed. This proposal would result in a 50% increase to dwellings on the site, from 4 to 6 and would in turn increase by 50% all of the original problems, including that of traffic and light pollution.
He also spoke of concerns for ecology on the site, which had been unoccupied for the past 3-4 years, and being in the countryside was home to wildlife and protected species and stated that there were now bats, owls, badgers, foxes, buzzard and egrets. This was at odds to the findings of the developer.
He stated that access to the site was only down Hempstead Lane which was a narrow single tracked lane with no passing places, other than at two corners. He felt there would be no footfall and all movements would be via vehicle due to the nature of the lane and therefore traffic movements would be much greater than the 3 morning and 3 evening specified by the developer which was inaccurate. He also had concerns regarding construction traffic accessing the lane and whether the bridge over the River Uck would support the weight. He was concerned that there were no pavements and stated that the lane either side of the road was farm land and therefore highways would be unable to place paths.
He stated that it was not true that the River Uck had only flooded once in the last 10 years and had concerns regarding the access to the site in the event of a flood. He stated that Spurlings Lane would not be viable for emergency vehicle access to the site.

He concluded this application was one of greed and that the permission should stay for 4 dwellings in line with the approved 2023 application to convert the buildings.

Resident 2 – felt that this development was in an area cherished by the community and was at risk. He felt that the application had been made at a time where less people would be aware (festive season) and felt this was underhanded and that there was a lack of planning signage. There was no access to the land.

He was concerned for the size of the vehicles using the access and dangers to children and pedestrians using the lane during construction. He also had concerns that dust/asbestos from the site during demolition would be detrimental to those living in the area. He felt that these houses would not be for local people and that there was no mention of social housing.

P76.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

3.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr. C. Macve due to personal reasons.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2025

P77.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee of the 8 December 2025, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Action List

Members noted the Action List and all items were to remain at this time.

5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

For the benefit of members of the public present, a member confirmed that Wealden District Council were the Statutory Planning Authority for the area. The Town Council were consulted for comments on all Uckfield Planning applications, but were not part of the final decision for any applications.

Later in the meeting it was suggested that this explanation be added to the top of the Plans Agenda going forward.

Cllr. K. Butler reiterated her personal interest in the following application and made no comments and did not take part in the decision for this application.

WD/2025/2437/F AND WD/2025/2745/LB HEMPSTEAD FARM, HEMPSTEAD LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 3DL

Demolition and rationalisation of a complex of farm buildings at Hempstead Farm, including the demolition of utilitarian structures and conversion of some of the existing barns to create 6 no. residential dwellings, vehicle and cycle parking, and associated landscaping.

A member commented that as this was partially a brown field site it would be very difficult to find planning policy against it, especially as the site had already been granted permission for four houses.

Members knew of substantial flooding in the lane and noted that the Environment Agency had detailed within this application that things were to be put in place and to be agreed. However, members were aware that the Environment Agency would only look at this application in isolation and not the cumulative effect of all other applications for the area.

A member informed the committee that a Wealden District Council ward member had raised light pollution as an item for objection in the application of 2023, however they were told that there were no Wealden policies that specifically mentioned light pollution.

It was noted that East Sussex Highways (ES Highways) had not found problems with access and were happy for Sandy Lane to be used for emergency vehicles.

During discussion it was initially commented that the committee would find difficulty in quoting specific planning policy upon which to object to this application mainly because it

had already been passed, albeit for less dwellings. It was felt that, should this ultimately be decided by the planning inspector, it would be approved, since there were no planning policies on which to object.

One member feared that this development would drive a wedge through and open up further development to the east of the area, although acknowledged this was not a valid planning reason.

P78.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to very strongly OBJECT to the application on the same grounds given for the applications of 2023 (WD/2023/0145/F AND WD/2023/0456/LB HEMPSTEAD FARM, HEMPSTEAD LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 3DL).

However, added to these were comments numbered below i) to ix).

- Concerns for flooding - Unless there is to be an alternative means of access via Sandy Lane then the Farmstead would be in danger of being 'cut off' during periods of heavy rainfall. In periods of heavy rainfall, the river at Hempstead Mill overtops. Although the transport assessment only 'suggests' the use of Sandy Lane in 'periods of flood', it was felt that if this was to be the case then the lane would require resurfacing which would exacerbate the problems of run off from the woodland and adjacent field down the lane towards the railway. Therefore, as an emergency access it was felt that Sandy Lane would be unfeasible;
We would query the points outlined within the transport reports which state the use of the Sussex Horse Rescue site, and would point out that the site was not used for visitors in the winter months;
- Concerns for safety of pedestrians and access because parts of Hempstead Lane were a public Right of Way with single traffic. The lane had no vehicular passing places and was extensively used by pedestrians; children walking, dog walkers, those accessing the rugby club, runners and cyclists;
- Concerns from Browns Lane onto Hempstead Lane - there were two very tight blind bends (sharp left and sharp right) with no passing places;
- Concerns regarding vehicle movements along Hempstead Lane, which due to the increased number of dwellings within this application would increase and whether the bridge would be strong enough to take extra vehicles and also the weight of construction vehicles. There were no turning points;
- If Sandy Lane was to be a temporary access, members requested an Environmental Impact Assessment due to the road being very near to ancient woodland, from which there should be a 15m buffer zone;
- Concerns that it would have a detrimental effect on Buxted Park which had SSSI status. Members requested a biodiversity survey for bats/owls in the buildings.
- Concerns for loss of potential land for agricultural use;
- Members had previously shown concerns that if the original application for four houses made in 2023 were approved then this would have allowed further development in this area in the future with all the issues above.
This was clearly what had happened with this application.

On a non-planning issue, it was noted that ornamental oak trees were planned in each of the two courtyards which would eventually destroy the foundations of the buildings through root growth. It was therefore strongly felt that these were the wrong species of tree. It was asked how these gardens were to be laid out in this area.

- i) **Heritage** - Concerns for the heritage setting of the Manor Farmhouse and its proximity to the actual site, as that building had historical value.
NPPF 202 – applied to this application. The previous Wealden District Council Officer's report stated the listing was for the 'curtilage' of the site.
Therefore, the conversion of the barns had previously been allowed because it had used the existing. However, the proposed four 'new' dwellings would not be acceptable under NPPF 202, due to being out of keeping with the rest of the site, and the fact that they backed onto the Manor Farmhouse, (which was circa 1400/1500); the Oast and the Mill, this would affect the setting and the view from Hempstead Lane and the public right of way around this;

- ii) **Sewage Infrastructure Policy** – Members quoted Chapter 20 - Paragraph 20B and 129C as relevant, as it required local plans to make sufficient provision for sewerage infrastructure. It was noted that there was no sewage system to this site and members would request that Wealden District Council check their Grampian Conditions regarding this matter. There were no details within the application of the plans for sewage;
- iii) **Local Housing need not met** - The site did not provide properties to meet the local housing need and the local wage;
- iv) **Contrary to EN1 and EN27** were relevant as the setting was outside the development boundary. The development would be against policies GD2 and DC17, which restricted development to countryside use, which this proposal was not;
- v) Should the development at Bird In Eye South go ahead members were very concerned that this would allow linking of the land between the two sites and the protection that was required of it;
- vi) Boundary for Bird In Eye South was queried and the ownership of Sandy Lane, as this would have a bearing on the Bird In Eye South SANG. How would this be balanced for use by emergency vehicles? It was therefore queried who had right of way on Sandy Lane. Was it just an assumed right of way as this had been used for more than 20 years. Who owned and what were the impacts for Bird In Eye South and their SANG;
- vii) In respect of vi) this re and also the safety of the railway aspect. There was no report from the Office of Rail Regulation regarding the crossing of the railway line.
- viii) It was noted that on the site of the level crossing there had also been a number of fatalities;
- ix) Plot 6 an oak tree was to remain in the garden, however the documentation did not ascertain if this was a veteran or ancient tree and how the root protection area would be protected;
- x) Members would insist that East Sussex Highways responded to members' queries.

WD/2025/2670/F FINWOOD, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SJ

Proposed outbuilding/ self-contained annexe.

P79.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as there were no concerns raised by neighbours and it would have no effect to the street scene.

WD/2025/2508/F 26 SYCAMORE COURT, UCKFIELD, TN22 1TY

Re-siting of 2m high boundary fence.

Discussion took place regarding the boundary. However, it was found on a previous application that the grass area to be enclosed was part of the property boundary.

P80.01.26 It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to support the application as there were no planning grounds on which to object.

WD/2025/2662/F AUBADE, 1 HIGHLANDS AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, TN22 5TD

Erection of side extension, new rear door, raised access deck/steps.

P81.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as there were no planning grounds on which to object.

WD/2025/2677/LB THE OLD CHAPEL, LONDON ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 1HX

Repair cracks in external walls and add strengthening in attic roof.

P82.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as long as this was in accordance with the Conservation Officer.

WD/2025/2688/F 33 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1AG

Provision of new ground floor windows (4 no.) and rooflights (2 no.) to existing commercial unit.

P83.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application to ensure that the property remained a retail/commercial premises in the High Street.

WD/2025/2776/F 77 ROCKS PARK ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2BD

Single storey rear extension.

P84.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application and welcomed the fact that the property was to remain a bungalow - being a much needed unit within the town.

WD/2025/2794/F 71 BAXENDALE WAY, UCKFIELD, TN22 5GB

Single storey rear flat roof extension.

P85.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as there were no concerns raised by neighbouring residents and it would not create any overlooking and would have no effect on the street scene.

WD/2025/2703/F UNITS 3 & 4, BELL LANE, BELLBROOK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1QL

Proposed single storey front extension to unit 3.

P86.01.26 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application and members were pleased to see a flourishing business.

WD/2025/1574/F 15 CHURCH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BJ

Erection of shed for ancillary accommodation/incidental use.

Members raised concerns regarding the title of the use of the shed. The term 'ancillary accommodation/incidental use' and queried if this was to be used for short term accommodation and therefore could affect parking. Members did not understand how this would reduce footfall as the application stated.

P87.01.26 It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to object to the application at this stage, subject to the Conservation Officer's report on the inclusion of this unit within the curtilage of a listed building.

6.0 DECISION NOTICES

Approved:

WD/2025/1877/F

EXTEND EXISTING DROPPED KERB.

STONE MULLIONS, 38 FRAMFIELD ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5AH

WD/2025/2344/F

PORCH EXTENSION ON EAST ELEVATION

5 LIME TREE AVENUE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1TD

WD/2025/1503/LB

REPLACE EXISTING WEATHERBOARD CLADDING AND SINGLE-GLAZED WINDOWS WITH LIKE-FOR-LIKE WEATHERBOARD CLADDING AND SINGLE-GLAZED WINDOWS. REPLACE EXISTING RAINWATER GUTTERS WITH BLACK PAINTED METAL GUTTERS AND REMOVE EXISTING 20TH CENTURY REAR DOOR FACING SIDE ELEVATION AND INFILL OPENING WITH WHITE-PAINTED BRICK TO MATCH EXISTING EXTERNAL WALL FINISH.

THE OLD BAKERY COTTAGE, CHURCH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BJ

Appeal Decision:

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/25/3374817

WD/2025/1731/F The Old Quarry Snatts Road, Uckfield TN22 2AP

The development proposed is extension to first floor balcony.

Members noted the decision notices.

7.0 TO ADVISE ON THE TOWN COUNCIL'S OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS OUTSIDE THE USUAL CYCLE OF MEETINGS Members noted the report.

8.0 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

TM/2025/0323/TPO

Ref TM/2025/0302/TG

T1 & T2: REDUCE OVERALL HEIGHT BY APPROXIMATELY 3 METRES.

T1 & T2: REDUCE LATERAL BRANCHES BY APPROXIMATELY 2 METRES.

THE PROPOSED REDUCTIONS ARE INTENDED TO MAKE THE TREES MORE

MANAGEABLE, IMPROVE SAFETY, AND REDUCE NUISANCE WHILE RETAINING THEIR OVERALL FORM AND AMENITY VALUE.

COUNCIL AMENITY LAND, MARKLAND WAY, UCKFIELD, TN22 2DA

TM/2025/0318/TPO

POLLARD T1 – SYCAMORE.

20 LASHBROOKS ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AY

TM/2025/0334/TPO

CUT BACK BRANCHES TO BOUNDARY ON 4 LIME TREES WITHIN TREE

PRESERVATION ORDER (UCKFIELD) NO ESCC 1967.

LANE TO THE REAR OF MOONRAKER LINDEN CHASE UCKFIELD, BETWEEN SAID PROPERTY AND FREEDOM LEISURE CENTRE (CARPARK)

TM/2025/0328/TPO

T1 OAK TREE IN FRONT GARDEN TO BE REDUCED BY 2 METRES BACK TO SUITABLE GROWTH POINTS LEAVING A BALANCED NATURAL SHAPE. TREE WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT DUE TO TREE CAUSING EXCESSIVE SHADING ON PROPERTY AND TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF DEBRIS IN FRONT GARDEN/DRIVEWAY.

NORTHWOOD, SNATTS ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AJ

TM/2025/0330/TPO

WORKS TO TREES SPANNING 11 AND 9 THE JAYS AND COPPER BEECH NURSING HOME. WITH PERMISSION FROM ALL PARTIES.

OAK (T10) - REMOVE ALL EPICORMIC GROWTH, REDUCE CROWN BY 2-3M ALL AROUND AND BALANCE AND CROWN THIN BY 25% TO MAINTAIN OVERALL HEALTH OF THE TREE AND IMPROVE VISUAL AMENITY.

OAK GROUP G1 - REMOVE ALL EPICORMIC GROWTH, REDUCE CROWNS BY 3M ALL AROUND AND CROWN THIN BY 25% TO MAINTAIN OVERALL HEALTH OF THE TREE AND IMPROVE VISUAL AMENITY. WITHIN TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (UCKFIELD) NO 19/5, 1990. OAK TREE A: WORKS TO 1 X OAK within TPO No. 31/1 1989 - REMOVE ALL EPICORMIC GROWTH, REDUCE CROWN BY 2-3M ALL AROUND AND BALANCE AND CROWN THIN BY 25% TO MAINTAIN OVERALL HEALTH OF THE TREE AND IMPROVE VISUAL AMENITY.

OAK TREE B: REMOVE 1 X OAK WITHIN TPO 31/1 1989 AS IT IS TOO CLOSE TO OAK TREE A, IS NOT GROWING PROPERLY AND IS HAMPERING THE HEALTHY GROWTH OF OAK TREE A.

11 THE JAYS, UCKFIELD, TN22 5YG

TM/2025/0335/TPO

TPO NUMBER 31/3 1983

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS - WHOLE CROWN REDUCTION TO OLD CUT POINTS THAT ARE 2M FROM THE TIPS OF THE NEW GROWTH ALLOWING SUFFICIENT CLEARANCE TO THE PROPERTY.

4 RIDGEWOOD CLOSE, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SQ

TM/2025/0337/TPO

T1 OAK ON FRONT EASTERN BOUNDARY OF PROPERTY. THE TREE IS A LAPSED POLLARD AND REQUIRES REDUCTION TO PREVIOUS POLLARD POINTS WHICH IS APPROX 2.5-2.8M IN HEIGHT FROM THE TOP OF THE CROWN. THE WORK IS REQUIRED TO REDUCE THE RISK OF BRANCH OR STEM FAILURE.

27 SELBY RISE, UCKFIELD, EAST SUSSEX, TN22 5ED

TM/2025/0339/TPO

FELL G1 - 6 LIME TREES, SHAPE AND REDUCE CROWN OF T4 - YEW TREE BY 30% AND SHAPE AND REDUCE CROWN OF T5 - YEW TREE BY 30%. TREES WITHIN TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (UCKFIELD) NO 49/2, 1988.

4 THE GLADE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1EF

Members wished to respond to the Tree Officer that they did not agree to the felling of G1-6 at 4 The Glade, Uckfield TN22 1EF ref TM/2025/0339/TPO, since the trees were not dead, dying or dangerous and therefore against the Tree Policy of the Town Council.

Members noted the only Tree Preservation Orders without comment.

The meeting closed at 8.41pm.