

# Bethersden Parish Council

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**I hereby give you notice that a Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11 February 2026 at 1900hrs in Bethersden Village Hall.**

All members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend for the purpose of considering and resolving the business to be transacted at the meeting as set out below.

Dated this day 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

Paula Cowperthwaite

Parish Clerk

## AGENDA

Receive reports from County and Borough Councillors. Public questions and comments on agenda and non-agenda items (this section will be limited to 15 minutes or otherwise at the discretion of the Chairman).

### **01/2026. Apologies**

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

### **02/2026. Declarations of Interest**

A Councillor who declares a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to any item on the agenda should leave the meeting for the whole of the item (unless a dispensation is granted) and will not be able to participate in discussion or voting. A Councillor with an Other Significant Interest must declare their interest. They can participate in discussion but must not vote.

### **03/2026. Minutes of the Meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

To approve the minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025 as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **04/2026. Chairman`s Report**

To receive the Chairman's Report.

### **05/2026. Parish Clerk`s Report**

To receive the Parish Clerk's Report

## **Planning Matters**

To agree comments for:

### **06/2026. Planning Application [PA/2025/2359](#)**

Land North East of Sewage Works, Norton Lane, Bethersden.

Change of use of land to residential and erection of a self-build dwelling with detached car barn and associated access parking, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements

### **07/2026. Previous planning comments to note (see Appendix 1)**

To note comments previously agreed for:

[PA/2025/2211](#)

[PA/2025/2243](#)

[PA/2025/2259](#)

[PA/2025/2265](#)

[PA/2025/2278](#)

[PA/2025/2358](#)

[PA/2025/2296](#)

## 08/2026. Notice of Planning Appeal

To note the planning appeal for:

[NOT/2025/1078](#)

Silos South of Office at Vine Hall Farm, Woodchurch Road, Bethersden.

Prior approval for the change of use and conversion of an agricultural building and land within its curtilage to two dwelling houses and associated operational development.

**Appeal lodged. Decision awaited.**

## 09/2026. Planning Decisions

To note the planning decision for:

[PA/2025/1493](#) - Land south of Brook Meadow (Land between Sunglen and Elmsleigh)

Erection of a new 'self-build' dwelling together with associated amenity, parking, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements

**BPC – Object**

**ABC – Approve**

## Financial Matters

### 10/2026. Financial Transactions

To note or approve the financial transactions

Income		
None		0.00
Expenditure		
*Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	10.25
*SSE Energy Solutions	Electricity	282.24
*Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges	8.75
*SSE Energy Solutions	Electricity	221.52
*Business Stream	Water	52.49
Paula Cowperthwaite	Salary	TBC
Paula Cowperthwaite	Expenses	84.79
HMRC	Q3 Tax and NI	700.02
Alastair Boyd	Expenses	20.00
Play Inspection Company	Annual Play Inspection	180.00
ICO	Data Protection Annual Fee	52.00
Countrywide	January Maintenance	399.90
Countrywide	January Maintenance	303.60
Countrywide	February Maintenance	303.60
Countrywide	February Maintenance	399.90
Chris Buckman	January Maintenance	135.00
Chris Buckman	February Maintenance	75.00
Chris Buckman	Expenses	121.00
Xeinadin	Dec & Jan payroll	108.00
Mazars	Limited Assurance Review	378.00
SRidley Farm Contractors	Hedge Maintenance	245.00
Bethersden Village Hall	February Room Hire	31.00
Parish Online	Annual Mapping Software	32.40

\*Payments already made

**11/2026. Bank Reconciliation**

To note the bank reconciliation for the end of Quarter 3.

**12/2026. Financial Regulations**

To agree changes to the proposed Financial Regulations.

**13/2026. Disposal of laser printer**

To agree a method of disposal for the laser printer.

**14/2026. Internal Audit**

To agree the appointment of an Internal Auditor.

**15/2026. S106 Funding**

To agree to apply for funding for George Field ditch clearance and bench purchases.

**16/2026. Canva Subscription**

To agree the purchase of an annual Canva subscription.

**17/2026. Date and venue of April meeting**

To agree a date and venue for the April council meeting.

**18/2026. Parking at Pluckley Station**

To note the issue and agree any further action.

**19/2026. Correspondence**

To note any correspondence.

**20/2026. Items for next meeting**

To agree any items to be included on the next meeting agenda.

**21/2026. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on the 11th March 2026 in Bethersden Village Hall at 19:00hrs.

## Appendix One

Previously agreed planning application comments

It was resolved at the December 2025 meeting to agree planning comments via email communication for applications received for comment between 10<sup>th</sup> December and 11<sup>th</sup> February. These were agreed as follows:

[PA/2025/2211](#)

### **Oldbury, Brissenden Green Lane, Bethersden, Ashford, TN26 3BJ Replacement of existing glass sheet walls and roof with corrugated metal sheet cladding and replace doors with roller shutters.**

Object. The comments of Bethersden Parish Council on the above planning application are as follows:- We wish to register our objections to the proposed development. It is our opinion that the proposed changes and alterations to all four elevations of the exterior of the building are substantial and material, such that they would result in a marked and harmful change to its characteristics and appearance, from a typical glazed agricultural/horticultural type building to a general purpose, utilitarian storage building. In our view such changes and alterations would result in the proposed building being significantly out of character within its rural surroundings in this location and therefore inappropriate and unjustified in the countryside. Furthermore, we wish to continue to raise our concerns over the fact that it is well known locally that the land is subject to flooding and any alterations that consolidate the nature and structure of the building is likely to exacerbate the flooding problems by adversely affecting the physical extent of the locally flooded area.

[PA/2025/2243](#)

### **Oldbury, Brissenden Green Lane, Bethersden, Ashford, TN26 3BJ Continued use of site as an agricultural contractor's yard (retrospective)**

Object. The comments of Bethersden Parish Council on the above planning application are as follows:- We wish to register our objections to the application. In our opinion, the use of the application site as an agricultural contractor's yard, will likely give rise to unacceptable levels of noise, nuisance and disturbance that will potentially directly harm, and thereby adversely affect, the residential amenities of the owners of the adjoining properties in the near vicinity. Furthermore, any external storage of materials (or plant, vehicles or machinery etc) associated with the contractor's yard at the site, will potentially adversely harm, and thereby negatively affect the rural character and appearance of this location. In addition, we would wish to remind the Borough Council that, in the past we, as the Parish Council, have campaigned against the continued, and increasing number of, heavy, oversized vehicles using the local network of rural lanes. We believe this to be dangerous to local residents (and other road users) and damaging to the character and appearance of the country lanes, due to overrunning of the grass verges and highways edges. As a result, we believe the continued use of the application site as a contractor's yard (without any control over the size or numbers of such vehicles) will exacerbate this situation in an unacceptable manner and should not be supported. We also wish to continue to raise our concerns over the fact that it is well known locally that adjacent land is subject to extensive river flooding. It is our view that if the extent of flooding were to worsen in the future and reach the application site, the use of the land itself, or any external storage of materials (and/or plant or machinery etc) associated with the use of the yard, has the potential to adversely exacerbate the local flooding problems by impacting

and increasing the physical extent of the flooded area. Finally on this point, we are also concerned that, if future flooding were to reach the application site then any materials associated with the use of the agricultural contractors yard that are stored openly in the yard have the potential to be absorbed into the flood water and therefore potentially permeate down into the water table, or into nearby local water courses. In our view this potential requires very close scrutiny and therefore we would respectfully urge that the Council consults with the relevant agencies as part of the assessment and determination of this application.

[PA/2025/2259](#)

**Land 150meters South of Little Oak Farm, Ashford Road, Bethersden  
Development of an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility (energy crops only, no waste)  
delivering Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS), landscaping,  
associated infrastructure and other ancillary works.**

Object. Bethersden Parish Council recognises that this major development proposal in the countryside involves a high degree of technical, operational and environmental complexity. As a Parish Council, we clearly do not possess specialist expertise in Anaerobic Digestion or BECCS technologies, nor do we have the financial resources to commission independent technical advisers.

Nonetheless, we have reviewed the submitted documents as uploaded on the planning portal with a member of our team that has some experience of this type of facility. That said, we consider it is absolutely essential that Ashford Borough Council undertakes a thorough, independent and transparent assessment of all technical submissions supporting this application. This should include robust scrutiny of all evidence, modelling and assumptions provided by the applicant, and should not rely solely on information submitted by or on behalf of the applicant without appropriate verification.

The Borough Council should also check to ensure that this same highest level of scrutiny (in the assessment of the technical submissions) has been as equally applied at the pre-application stage by Kent County Council Highways, especially given the volume of primarily HGV traffic being generated by the development proposal and the highly concerning and controversial aspect of the development that this clearly represents.

There is no doubt in our minds that it is essential that every aspect of the potential harmful impacts of the proposed development on the amenities of local residents, the local area and the local environment, must be fully and properly explored and explained, with detailed analysis, at every stage, including in any eventual planning report.

Given the specialist nature of this development, the Parish Council would expect the Borough Council to ensure that all relevant internal expertise and statutory consultees are fully engaged, and that appropriate independent technical advice, that is widely familiar with developments of this type is obtained, to ensure that the application is assessed comprehensively, and that all potential impacts are demonstrably properly understood and that all local interests are fully and properly protected.

It is evident that documents that have been uploaded have been prepared by recognised technical specialists, nevertheless the Parish Council would like to point out their concerns.

List of our primary material planning concerns

In our opinion, the minimum list of crucial and key material planning issues for investigation in the assessment and determination of this planning application should include:-

1. the impact of the proposal on the traffic conditions and likely congestion on the main

A28 trunk road. This includes the impact of construction traffic, abnormal loads and operational vehicle movements, including cumulative impacts and the enforceability of any proposed routing or traffic management measures.

We wish it noted that the assessment viewed identifies that the impact is within acceptable criteria. We contend that this may be the case if the operational practices are adhered to, however experience shows that local issues may cause non-typical flows to take place under certain circumstances blocking and over-flowing local rest areas, particularly around the local mobile cafés on the A28, with attendant levels of waste and general nuisance, similar to an unauthorised lorry park. The Parish Council would ask that this be specifically taken into consideration.

Furthermore, we wish to query the capacity of the A28 to regularly accommodate HG vehicles standing north bound waiting to turn right into the site across the opposing flow of traffic. In particular, if the Council is minded to support the development, why is no provision being made for a dedicated "right turn standing space" in the centre of the road, that will continue to allow northbound traffic to pass unimpeded? (and avoid tailbacks and potential RTA's at the entrance to the site).

2. The impact of the proposed development in regard to increased HGV and other traffic levels on the local road and rural lane network, including any movement of HGV's in particular through villages/small local settlements (especially in regard to the planned routing of heavy lorry traffic) and what monitoring (and associated enforcement) will take place.

The Parish Council requests that traffic routes, from source to site, are identified in advance and closely evaluated and approved, to ensure the road safety risks within the local environs (as identified above) are avoided.

In our opinion, if traffic issues of this type are not tightly regulated and vigorously enforced against, then the resultant adverse impacts include (i) creating severe traffic danger, (ii) causing demonstrable harm to the amenities of residents living on these local rural lanes (by virtue of noise, nuisance and disturbance), (iii) damage to the fabric of the highway infrastructure (especially from uncontrolled verge damage and lorry overrun), and (iv) the destruction of the broader rural countryside environment (by virtue of noise, disturbance and broken tree limbs and highway boundary planting/hedgerows etc). We strongly believe this cannot, and should not, be allowed or supported.

If the Council ultimately decides to support the development, we would urge that strong, clear and specific safeguards/controls are put in place by the Council, prior to the commencement of any work on the site (and in perpetuity thereafter), to ensure unauthorised HGV "rat-running" along unsuitable rural lanes associated with this development does not occur, and if any breaches do occur, that this is backed up with appropriate associated enforcement action and financial penalties, without hesitation or delay.

Finally, on two related traffic/transport issues, we would point out that:-

(i) there does not seem to be a wheel wash on site which is a necessity on a waste management facility. Failure to wash wheels well away from the highway itself is likely to lead to detritus being deposited on the A28 when exiting to the site. This situation has resulted in a skid risk on other waste facilities in the UK.

(ii) the Parish Council would ask the Borough Council to request a Wind-Blown Waste risk assessment to be completed covering transport to and from the site, preferably with a zero tolerance.

3. Noise, nuisance and disturbance harms/issues arising from the actual operational process(es) to all properties in the vicinity.

The noise assessment viewed in the application submissions identifies minimal local effect. Whilst experience shows this may be the case in normal working conditions, it is apparent that poorly maintained operational equipment can generate noise that will be significantly above the values noted in normal operational conditions.

4. Air pollution harms/issues, including green-house gas issues, caused by actual operational process(es) or industrial accidents.

Insofar as air pollution is concerned and to endeavour to introduce high level safeguards, the Parish Council asks the Borough Council, as a minimum, to ensure that all non-typical occurrences are discussed in the relevant assessments and with the relevant agencies, to ensure that all precautions are taken within normal, abnormal and emergency conditions.

5. Ground pollution harms/issues – caused by actual operational process(es) or industrial accidents

Insofar as ground pollution is concerned and to endeavour to introduce high level safeguards, the Parish Council asks the Borough Council, as a minimum, to ensure that all non-typical occurrences are discussed in the relevant assessments and with the relevant agencies, to ensure that all precautions are taken within normal, abnormal and emergency conditions.

6. Smell/odour pollution harms/issues – caused by actual operational process(es) or industrial accidents

The submitted assessment identifies that the impact is within acceptable criteria. Our view is that this may be the case if the operational practices are adhered to, however experience shows that local operational issues such as breakdown, maintenance and emergency conditions increase the risk of odours effecting the local environment.

Furthermore, we wish to make the Council aware that bioaerosols are increasingly scrutinised with AD plants, even where “energy crops only” are proposed. Consequently, it is our view that the risks associated with bioaerosols and airborne biological contaminants arising from the operation of the facility, and the adequacy of proposed mitigation and monitoring arrangements must be fully investigating and reporting in an open and transparent manner in the assessment and determination of this application.

Finally on this aspect, insofar as smell/odour pollution is concerned and to endeavour to introduce high level safeguards, the Parish Council asks the Borough Council, as a minimum, to ensure that all non-typical occurrences are discussed in the relevant assessments and with the relevant agencies, to ensure that all precautions are taken within normal, abnormal and emergency conditions.

7. Light pollution harms/issues - caused by actual operational process(es) or industrial accidents

We raise our concerns over the unwelcome/unacceptable light pollution harms/issues in the countryside, caused by the future operation of the site namely from:-

(i) The intermittent operation of the off-gas flare

(ii) The site operational lights outside of daylight hours

8. Pollution of water courses and water table harms/issues – caused by actual operational process(es) or industrial accidents

Insofar as pollution of water courses and water table harms/issues are concerned and to endeavour to introduce high level safeguards, the Parish Council asks the Borough Council, as a minimum, to ensure that all non-typical occurrences are discussed in the relevant assessments and with the relevant agencies, to ensure that all precautions are taken within normal, abnormal and emergency conditions.

9. Adverse flood risk issues associated with the development

10. The adverse/negative physical impact and harms associated with any new buildings

and structures in the surrounding countryside landscape, by virtue of their height, scale, bulk/mass, appearance and overall footprint.

This must also take account of the negative/adverse effects on long-distance views, public rights of way, seasonal variations, and the effectiveness of proposed landscaping over time

11. The unwelcome/unacceptable/unjustified physical extent/degree of encroachment/incursion of an industrial/commercial form of development into the attractive character and appearance of the surrounding rural/open countryside

12. The principle of the significant loss of agricultural land to an industrial use

13. The unsustainable location of the development in employment terms, whereby workers will only be able to reliably and regularly access the site by means of private motor vehicles, especially in light of there being:-

(i) no accessible centres of population and

(ii) no footways or cycleways in any event

In summary, while the Parish Council clearly has grave objections, concerns and reservations over many aspects of the application, we recognise that several aspects represent issues of the highest level of technical expertise.

Consequently, we wish to make clear that whether we raise specific points of objection/concern, or purely raise an issue in principle, it is our strongly held view that all the matters identified above must be very vigorously addressed, in an open and transparent manner by the Council, before any decision is made.

[PA/2025/2265](#)

**Vitters Oak Barn, Old Surrenden Manor Road, Bethersden, TN26 3DW  
Change of use of agricultural building and land within its curtilage to a custom build dwellinghouse, side patio canopy extension, changes to fenestration and the erection of a detached carport/store. Following the demolition of the stables.**

Object. Bethersden Parish Council note that this current planning application follows the grant of a prior approval by the Council (ref NOT/2024/0416) to allow the conversion of an existing barn on this site to a dwelling house. We also note that the height, scale, footprint and general proportions of the structure of the now proposed entirely replacement dwelling, reasonably closely follows that of the conversion of the building granted under the prior approval, which is welcomed. However, there are several aspects of the application that are of concern to us that we wish to raise as objections, as follows:- 1. The current planning application seeks to create a large residential curtilage that was notably not incorporated into the prior approval scheme. In our opinion (irrespective of the size of the new dwelling) this represents a material and harmful form of residential encroachment into the character, appearance and openness of the surrounding, predominantly rural, countryside and should not be granted without a major reduction prior to its determination. 2. In terms of the chosen external appearance of the new dwelling, before any permission can be contemplated (not least having regard to the objections set out in paragraph 1 above), it is our opinion that the chosen roof covering should incorporate a traditional colour and tile type commensurate with the predominantly rural Kent countryside location within which the proposed dwelling is situated. 3. Finally, the proposed new garage structure, by virtue of its height, bulk and scale, combined with its position close to the front boundary of the site, represents a harmful form of development that is unduly prominent in this rural location and thereby detrimental to, and out of keeping with, the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

[PA/2025/2278](#)

**Princes Pond, 1 Bears Green, Bears Lane, Bethersden, Ashford, TN23 3US  
Conversion of loft space including installation of rooflights to front and rear elevation, and construction of single storey rear extension**

The comments of Bethersden Parish Council on the above planning application are as follows:-

In light of the fact that the application proposes:-

- (i) a relatively modest/limited single storey “infill” extension located at the rear corner of the dwelling (with a lantern style roof),
- (ii) the conversion of existing roof space to living accommodation within the existing roof outline/profile and
- (iii) a small number of small-sized velux windows (two at the front and five at the rear) to provide natural light to the proposed new roof accommodation,

we are content that there are no specific planning comments for us to make about the application on this occasion.

[PA/2025/2358](#)

**Wissenden House, Wissenden Lane, Bethersden, TN26 3EL  
Listed Building Consent for superstructure repair works following subsidence damage to main property including installation of Helifix Helibars to front, right and left elevations, removal and replacement of blown external render, localised repairs to internal plaster and external finishes, repairs to internal walls and plasterwork.**

The comments of Bethersden Parish Council on the above planning application are as follows:-

Although the Parish Council does not have any specialised knowledge of alterations affecting listed buildings, we are nevertheless satisfied that, from the details and information submitted with the application, the proposed works appear entirely related to re-establishing the structural strength and stability of the listed building, both internally and externally. This appears to be achieved while at the same time maintaining the character, appearance and integrity of the property, which we welcome.

That said, we would nevertheless request that the Council secures the highest standards of building techniques, materials and finishes (and, if required, seek specialised advice from qualified persons or organisations in this field), to ensure that none of the structural strengthening and changes included in the application will have any adverse impact on any of the important characteristics referred to above.

[PA/2025/2296](#)

**Chart Hills Golf Club, Weeks Lane, Biddenden, TN27 8JX  
Remodelling of Existing Driving Range**

Although we have not been notified on this planning application, it has come to our attention that the part of the current proposal, as set out in the CMTP, indicates vast numbers of HGV's travelling on entirely unsuitable local rural lanes, including in and around the village and parish of Bethersden (and other local villages). In our opinion this is completely unacceptable on the grounds of creating severe traffic danger, demonstrable harm to the amenities (by virtue of noise, nuisance and disturbance) of residents living on these local rural lanes, damage to the fabric of the highway infrastructure (especially from uncontrolled verge damage and lorry overrun), and the destruction of the broader rural countryside environment (by virtue of noise, disturbance and broken tree limbs and highway boundary planting/hedgerows etc). We strongly believe this cannot, and should

not, be allowed or supported.

Finally, if alterations are eventually made to the CMTP to re-route this heavy traffic to more suitable carriageways, then we would urge that strong, clear and specific safeguards/controls are put in place by the Council to ensure unauthorised HGV "rat-running" along unsuitable rural lanes associated with this development does not occur, and if any breaches do occur, that this is backed up with appropriate associated enforcement action and financial penalties, without hesitation or delay.