

PLUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 6th January 2026 at 7.30 pm in Pluckley Village Hall

Present : Cllrs Washer (in the Chair), Dilley, Robinson, Pearson, Malpeli & Buchanan

In attendance : Mr. G Eaton Clerk to the Council, Peter New Neighbourhood Watch, and three members of the public

Action by:

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from KCC Cllr Eustace & ABC Cllr Bell

2 Declarations of Cllrs interests in items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of Cllrs interests in items on the Agenda

3 Minutes of the last Meeting & Matters arising

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December 2025 were approved and signed

4 Public discussion and Parishioners questions

There was a full and detailed discussion with the members of the public about the proposed installation of yellow lines on Station Road. Cllr Washer set out the background to the proposal which formed part of the Village Transport Plan which had been fully discussed with KCC Highways. Guy also summarised various other discussions with Southeastern Railways about the need for more parking at the Station, and noted the lack of any progress

The Parishioners set out their various objections to the proposal including displacing the parking problem to other local roads, necessitating a longer walk to the Station causing problems for the elderly and infirm, and the potential for traffic to speed along Station Road when the yellow lines were installed

Parishioners were encouraged to make their objections known to Southeastern Railways and to urge them to provide more parking spaces at the Station

5 Outside reports

The emailed reports from KCC Cllr Eustace and ABC Cllr Bell were noted with thanks

Peter New spoke to his latest report, previously circulated by email, and noting the recent tragic house fire in Hamstreet and the work he was doing supporting residents. Peter also updated on his work with catapults and violence against women and girls

6 Planning & Enforcement

2025/2159 – widening of existing access

South side of Pluckley Railway Station, Station Road, TN27 0RU

PPC recognise that this is a brownfield site, and we wish to see it brought into beneficial use. However, the previous applications so far submitted have not been supported by either PPC or Ashford Borough Council (ABC) for a variety of reasons.

PPC resolved to OBJECT to this application for the following reasons:

- The application for widening the access has been submitted as a stand-alone application, rather than having a reference to any future proposals for the rest of the site. Currently the site is only used by Network Rail who occasionally use it to access the mainline network for maintenance purposes. There is therefore no current need to widen the access - it will not provide any improvements in terms of safety for pedestrians or vehicles. Without a proposed use for the entire site, it is difficult to judge if the changes to the access are warranted.
- We consider that the submitted 2-dimensional drawing showing the proposed widened access is difficult to interpret. The road rises steeply to the railway bridge, and the northern vision splay is obscured by vegetation and trees higher up the slope - despite the proposal to remove some of the trees and hedging. Additionally, the land within the site which will provide part of the bell mouth access is much lower than Station Road, and some substantial earthworks will be required. Without large scale survey drawings, the overall impact of the proposed changes is difficult to understand.
- No pedestrian footpath can be provided because the road over the bridge is too narrow.
- The current application is supported by a Planning Statement submitted by Gasson Planning & Projects. PPC do not accept several of the statements made in this document.
 - We do not believe that this proposal will significantly improve highway and pedestrian safety, as stated several times throughout the document.
 - The site has not been used as a coal yard for many decades.
 - The site was made available for station car parking from July 2022 until June 2023. However, no planning application was ever submitted or approved. A banner was erected and the site gates were opened offering station car parking. To our knowledge very few cars ever attempted to park there because of the dangerous situation for pedestrians crossing the railway bridge. To assert that the site was used for car parking for twelve months is untrue.

- The site is not currently used for commercial or storage purposes, and, to our knowledge, never has been. Occasionally Network Rail's vehicles and equipment use the site for parking in association with maintenance works to the main line railway.
- The Pre App advice provided by KCC Highways on 2 December 2024, addressed to DHA Planning (but not previously publicly shared) and now submitted as part of the current application, related to a proposal for five residential units and a car park and showed a widened access. KCC's comments about these proposed arrangements have been taken out of context in applying them to the current proposal. Without seeing a comprehensive scheme for the site, PPC are not convinced that the proposed arrangements will be a significant improvement.

We would therefore ask ABC to require that the applicant provide a full scheme relating to the entire site so that the proposal can be properly judged. This should include a full-site survey for this area at an appropriate large scale, together with sections, which will allow the different levels and vegetation cover to be assessed.

We would also ask ABC to request confirmation from KCC Highways that an officer has visited the site to assess these issues in detail.

KCC Cllr Jeremy Eustace has already expressed his concerns regarding this proposal and has written to the Chair of Pluckley Parish Council indicating that he will be requesting that the KCC Cabinet Member responsible for Highways together with a senior Highways Officer visit the site to properly assess these issues.

7 Finance Matters

There were no accounts for payment

The Clerk's salary/expenses of £565.80, paid by monthly Standing Order, was noted and approved

8 Communications and correspondence

Email received from parishioner setting out various reasons why they are firmly opposed to the proposed yellow lines on Station Road – discussed and noted

9 Traffic & Highways

This item was covered in item 4 above, Public discussion and Parishioners questions

10 Recreation Sport & Leisure

Cllr Dilley reported on the recent problem of quad bikes using the Rec. and that the old pavilion would be removed soon and the base backfilled and re-seeded

11 AOB and Diary items

There was no other business to discuss

12 Date of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at 7.30 pm at Pluckley Village Hall

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 9.20 pm