

PLUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 7th April 2026 at 7.30 pm in Pluckley Village Hall

Present : Cllrs Washer (in the Chair), Robinson, Malpelli & Buchanan

In attendance : Mr. G Eaton Clerk to the Council, KCC Cllr Eustace, ABC Cllr Bell, and Peter New, Neighbourhood Watch

Action by:

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Dilley & Pearson

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 10th March 2026 were approved and signed

4 Public discussion and Parishioners questions

There were no members of the public present

5 Outside reports

KCC Cllr Eustace updated on the proposed yellow lines in Station Road and a reply from Highways to his latest email proposing single yellow lines was awaited. Various other local issues were discussed including the need to keep up the pressure on Southeast Railways to provide additional car parking at the Station

Cllr. Bell reported on the news that Hodson Developments (Ashford) Ltd and four associated companies connected to the Chilmington Green development had gone into administration. Ashford Borough Council, in conjunction with Kent County Council, is seeking legal advice regarding the impact of administration on the developers' obligations under the Section 106 agreement. She reminded the meeting that earlier in the year the Planning Inspector had dismissed an appeal submitted by Hodson Developments seeking to make multiple changes to the existing Section 106 agreement. The Inspector supported ABC's position on almost all matters, including confirmation that the obligation to improve the A28 should remain in place and not be removed

Cllr. Bell said she anticipated the houses would be built and the infrastructure delivered, albeit at a slower pace than originally planned. The implications for Pluckley and other villages would likely be even more pressure to take development, with ABC needing to fulfil its housing requirements. She mentioned speculative “predatory” developers such as Gladman, who are quick to take advantage in these situations

Peter New summarised the key issues from his latest Neighbourhood Watch report, previously circulated by email, and highlighted the huge rise in fuel thefts and number plate thefts given the current situation in the Middle East. Peter also updated on his ongoing projects including violence against women and girls and use of catapults. Peter kindly offered to assist with local resilience planning in due course

6 Planning & Enforcement

2026/0418 - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of Listed Building Consent PA/2025/0913 for internal alterations to ground floor including removal of a section of internal wall; raising the modern section of the ceiling; lowering modern section of floor and inserting limecrete; and insertion of new patio doors to replace double glazed modern window to allow for additional 2no conservation roof lights

Rose Farm, Rose Farm Road, TN27 0RG

There were no comments on this application

2026/0513 – Erection of workshop building and detached garage with home office/gym above and associated landscaping following demolition of existing ancillary workshop buildings

Rose Farm, Rose Farm Road, TN27 0RG

Whilst Pluckley Parish Council does not object to the principle of the proposed development we are of the view that the detached garage with associated facilities is very large and will be relatively dominant in relation to the listed building. We therefore request that the Conservation Officer reviews this application to ensure that the setting of the listed building is not adversely affected

2026/0270 – Proposed detached dwelling to include a new access
Glebe Cottages, Forge Hill

Pluckley Parish Council objects to this planning application.

The application site lies mainly within the Pluckley Conservation Area but outside the Village Confines Plan as approved and adopted by Ashford Local Plan and Pluckley Neighbourhood Plan Review 2023.

The proposal does not conform to the Pluckley Neighbourhood Plan Review 2023, Policy H1 Windfall Housing development as it does not satisfy the criteria a - d as outlined in the Plan.

The proposed development does not conform to the Ashford Local Plan. Whilst the Design and Access Statement of the planning application suggests that the concerns set out in ABC's

Pre-application letter have now been overcome by the current application, Pluckley Parish Council do not consider this to be the case.

The application does not conform to policy HOU5 of the Local Plan because it fails to meet two of the essential criteria set out in that policy, which are the following:

e) The development must conserve and enhance the natural environment and preserve or enhance any heritage assets in the locality. This proposal does not do this.

f) The development.... is of a high-quality design and meets the following requirements:-

1. It sits sympathetically within the wider landscape
2. It preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement
3. It includes an appropriately sized and designed landscape buffer to the open countryside
4. It is consistent with local character and built form, including scale, bulk and materials used
5. It does not adversely impact on the neighbouring uses or a good standard of amenity for nearby residents

In addition, it has not been demonstrated that criteria c) safe access, can be met as the application does not include a drawing demonstrating that adequate visibility splays which meet KCC's requirements can be achieved from the proposed access onto Forge Hill and Smarden Road, which is a fast busy road, despite being within a 30mph zone.

The application includes a landscaping buffer of cherry trees however the available area is so constrained that it is unlikely the trees will grow in such a small area.

Drawing no PL2 PY050A indicates that the lower ground floor will provide car parking for two cars. This appears optimistic given the very tight area available for access and parking.

Clarification is sought regarding the proposals for the washhouse. Paragraph 3 of the D+A Statement makes clear that this little building is something of a gem and an important part of Pluckley's heritage. However, it isn't clear from the documents whether the intention is to demolish and re-build the washhouse by incorporating one of the walls in the proposed new house.

Paragraph 8.2 of the D + A Statement says..." the positioning of the new house has been carefully chosen to allow for the retention of the adjacent washhouse..." however, Paragraph 8.4 goes on to say that" existing bricks and roof slates (of the washhouse) will be **reused wherever possible in the restoration of the washhouse, and any new building materials will be carefully selected to match those on the existing building....**" This building is within the conservation area and any demolition requires separate consent.

The view of the proposed house will be intrusive, especially when approaching the village up Forge Hill from the south or viewing the house from the road. It would be detrimental to the area and to the very attractive collection of existing buildings. In summary the proposal is inappropriate for the location in terms of scale and bulk, which will adversely affect the local environment and neighbours.

The application mentions a number of times that the reason for this proposal is to allow the current tenants to remain within the adjoining house which they have rented for many years. This is not a planning reason which can form any part of the consideration of this application.

Access to the site for demolition, excavation and construction of the proposed development will be difficult and constrained given the small site and the busy and narrow nature of Forge Hill on Smarden Road.

7 Finance Matters:

Accounts for payment

The following accounts (excl VAT) were approved for payment –	£
Forvis Mazars, external audit fee	315.00
Town Legal, professional fees	1422.50
HMRC Clerk's tax (Nov 25-March 26)	824.75

The Clerk's salary/expenses of £599.64, paid by monthly Standing Order, was noted and approved

8 Communications and correspondence

There was nil of note to report

9 Traffic and Highways, including proposed yellow lines on Station Road

This item was fully discussed with KCC Cllr Eustace under item 5 above

10 Recreation Sport & Leisure

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the pavilion needed to be deep cleaned and thereafter cleaned on a regular basis. It was agreed that the Council would pay for the deep cleaning and the costs of the regular cleaning thereafter shared between the main users. Cllr Robinson kindly offered to try and source a cleaner

Cllr Robinson

It was agreed that the 'kissing gate' needed urgent repair. Cllr Robinson offered to try and obtain a quote for the works

Cllr Robinson

11 Music Festival & Fete

Cllr Buchanan reported that the plans for the Musical Festival and Fete were well in hand with many of the musicians already booked. The events would take place on Saturday 6th June 2026 between midday and 10 pm

12 Closed session

There was a full discussion regarding an appeal decision and it was agreed to seek further specialist planning and legal advice before considering any next steps

13 AOB and Diary items

There was a brief discussion regarding the Community Café and it was agreed that the Council was pleased to continue to offer financial support if requested to do so

There was a brief discussion regarding the Parish Assembly – date towards the end of May 2026 to be agreed, same format as last year

14 Date of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 7.30 pm at Pluckley Village Hall

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 9.40 pm