

Planning Committee

A meeting of Planning Committee was held on Wednesday 6th May 2026.

Present: Cllr Mick Stoker (Chair), Cllr Michelle Bendelow (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Stephen Dodds, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Shakeel Hussain, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Paul Rowling (Sub for Cllr Barry Woodhouse), Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE, Cllr Marcus Vickers (Sub for Cllr Jim Taylor) and Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

Officers: Julie Butcher, Jill Conroy, John Dixon, Stephen Donaghy, Simon Grundy, Martin Parker and Sarah Whaley

Also in attendance: Applicants, Agents and Members of the Public

Apologies: Cllr Jim Taylor and Cllr Barry Woodhouse

P/1/26 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

P/2/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

P/3/26 Minutes of the meeting which was held on 4 March 2026

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

P/4/26 Planning Protocol

The planning protocol was noted.

P/5/26 25/2684/FUL 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees

Prior to the commencement of this item, it had come to the attention of the legal advisor that some Members of the Committee had been contacted via e mail by the applicants agent with additional information. The legal advisor informed Members that as this had not been shared with officers of the Council or members of the public the additional information should be disregarded

The Chairman of the Planning Committee agreed to hear the officers report and member debate in relation to items 25/2684/FUL and 25/2685/LBC, as one, as both items related to the same development.

The Planning Officer outlined planning application 25/2684/FUL 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, which sought planning permission for the conversion of existing offices to 22no self-contained apartments at 41-45 Yarm Lane (Barrington House), and planning application 25/2685/LBC 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees which

sought Listed Building consent for the conversion of existing offices to 22no self-contained apartments at 41-45 Yarm Lane (Barrington House).

9no letters of objection had been received following neighbour consultations although the comments primarily related to the full application (ref 25/2684/FUL). Objections had also been received from Cllr Mubeen and the Community Surveillance Team.

The application site related to flatted development within the defined settlement limits, close to Stockton Town Centre, thereby drawing support from Local Plan Policies.

Both applications had been assessed and whilst acknowledging concerns raised, the proposals would result in a currently vacant listed building being brought back into viable use. The proposals also offered a contribution towards the Borough 5 year housing land supply. Therefore on balance, it was considered that the full application and the Listed Building application would not result in any significant conflict with the policies of the Local Plan or relevant chapters of the NPPF and there were no technical reasons why both proposed schemes would be deemed unacceptable in planning terms in which to justify refusal of the applications.

The applications were referred to Members of the Planning Committee due to the number of objections which had been received.

The consultees that had been notified and the comments that had been received were detailed within the main report.

Neighbours were notified and the comments received were detailed within the main report.

For planning application 25/2684/FUL 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees the Planning Officers report concluded that in view of the assessment undertaken which was detailed within the report, it was considered that the proposed development would not result in any significant conflict with the policies contained within the Stockton on Tees Local Plan or the relevant chapters of the NPPF and there were no technical reasons why the proposed scheme would be deemed unacceptable.

In planning terms, the proposed development was considered acceptable in all other regards and was therefore recommended for approval subject to those planning conditions set out in the report.

For planning application 25/2685/LBC 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, it was considered that the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building. Any minor and limited harm arising from internal alterations was clearly outweighed by the public benefits of securing the building's viable long-term use.

The proposals were therefore found to comply with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy HE2 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan.

It was recommended that Listed Building Consent be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions controlling materials, detailed design, historic fabric retention, and building recording.

The applicants agent attended the meeting and was given the opportunity to make representation. Their comments could be summarised as follows:

- Many concerns had been raised relating to social housing and overcrowded accommodation; however, the proposed development was none of these. The development was to be let to working professionals. Members were informed that the developer predominantly provided housing for professionals in town centres which had a positive impact on the town centre economy.
- Barrington House had suffered internal and external damage and had suffered break ins, even after repairs and boarding up. Should the development be approved the onsite presence of builders would deter further break ins.
- The development would bring a listed building back into use and provide modern day living.

Objectors attended the meeting and were given the opportunity to make representation. Their comments could be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development had suffered from Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), break-ins and used as a drug den. The crime rate in and around the property was already higher than the national average, with burglaries increasing. The property would need to be properly managed otherwise current issues would continue effecting the quality of life for residents.
- Concerns were raised due to a lack of parking and the number of parking spaces proposed were not adequate for the number of residents that were expected to occupy the proposed 22 flats.
- With the agreement of the Chair a member of the public showed Committee Members video footage he had taken on his phone highlighting the concerns of residents in and around the vicinity of the property.
- Residents did not believe that professional people would want to live in the proposed flats due to the current issues in and around the area, which included ASB, gangs, drug users, people drinking alcohol during the day, drug dealing, daily damage to cars, urine and faeces in nearby streets, speeding cars, numerous Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's), numerous drug addiction support services nearby, all of which had been reported to the Police.
- It was highlighted to members that previous applications had been submitted for 28 units and then re submitted for 26 units within the proposed development however those applications had been withdrawn due to overdevelopment and inadequate parking. Although the new application was now for 22 units, concerns remained unresolved. The Community Surveillance Team had raised an objection due to ongoing issues in the area such as overconcentration of low-cost accommodation being linked to ASB and crime. There had been some progress made in the area tackling existing problems however should this development go ahead it could undo the progress made.
- Concerns were raised relating to littering and vermin as well as fly tipping which had triggered the Council to introduce a dedicated waste service in the area which was an additional strain on the Local Authority.

- Bringing the building back into use was a positive step however it must be appropriate to the capacity of services in the area.
- Residents felt unsafe going to the local shop / supermarket due to criminal activity in the area. It was also not safe for children to play outside.

Officers were given the opportunity to respond to comments/issues raised. Their responses could be summarised as follows:

- Officers appreciated residents' concerns and informed the Committee that they had spent time with the Housing Team and Police working to eliminate issues. In terms of the Community Surveillance Teams comments, on balance Planning Officers felt the application could be supported in planning terms.

- Members were given the opportunity to ask questions / make comments. These could be summarised as follows: -

- Something did need to be done with Barrington House otherwise ASB / crime would continue and only get worse.

- The proposal was fine; however, the proposed 5 parking spaces was not good enough for a building with 22 units.

- There was evidence where a similar property in the area had been brought back to life, however it had fallen back into disrepair. This development needed to be tackled correctly to prevent the same happening.

- The area was saturated with HMO's

- Clarity was sought relating to the submissions given by Highways during consultation, which stated that the proposed development would require a total of 7 parking spaces, however it was proposed only 5 parking spaces be provided which was below the minimum requirement and which had previously been demonstrated as achievable, however it also stated that although there were insufficient grounds to object to the proposal the Highways, Transport and Design Manager was unable to support the proposals, therefore questions were raised as to whether Highways were or were not objecting.

- There were too many issues around parking and once the 5 car parking spaces were occupied where would the rest of the residents at Barrington House park as the area was already saturated with parked cars.

- In terms of the proposed Management Plan for the building, more information was needed to assure necessary controls were in place to mitigate against residents' concerns.

- Clarity was sought relating to Cleveland Polices submission.

- In terms of secured by design, this had not been designed early enough.

- Concerns were raised relating to a lack of ventilation in the stairwells of the property which required AOV rooflights in the roof, however these appeared to be missing off the plans.

- Officers were asked if they were satisfied with separation distances and amenity space. It appeared that units 4 and 5 would be impacted by a loss of amenity accessing bin stores and there would be a lack of light. Units to the rear would have restricted views and be surrounded by high buildings.

Officers were given the opportunity to respond to comments/issues raised. Their responses could be summarised as follows:

- Officers explained the rationale of accepting a reduction of 2 car parking spaces reducing from 7 to 5. The reduction in parking provision was due to the removal of 2 spaces that were previously located in the garden area on the southeast corner of the site to protect / retain the boundary wall at the request of the Historic Buildings Officer. To provide the 2 spaces the historic wall would need to be taken down, therefore it was considered better to lose the 2 spaces and retain the heritage of the wall. There was a bus route and supermarket close to the development, therefore on balance the view was taken that a minor reduction in car parking to preserve a listed building wall was acceptable.

- The Principal Engineer for Highways, Transport and Environment clarified that Highways did not support the application.

- In terms of a request for more information on the proposed Management Plan, this had already been conditioned and was based on discussions with relevant colleagues including the Police and if not followed correctly enforcement action would be taken.

- In terms of comments relating to Cleveland Polices submission, they were not going by the secured by design accreditation.

- Regarding concerns relating to the requirement of rooflights in stairwells, the Planning Services Manager would have to consult the Historic Buildings Officer for further information.

- Where comments had been raised relating to a lack of amenity, officers understood the concerns regards a lack of light and activity at the back of the property accessing the bin and cycle store, however there had to be a balancing act to preserve the listed building as much as possible, on the whole the proposal was acceptable albeit with compromises.

A vote took place and the application was refused.

RESOLVED that planning application 25/2684/FUL 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees be refused for the reasons as detailed below:

1. Amenity of future occupiers

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed development would result in poor standards of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed development due to the presence of bedroom and lounge windows facing onto the communal courtyards and associated overlooking, poor natural light, activity, noise and disturbance arising

from the use of the cycle and bin storage facilities within the courtyards, contrary to Policy SD8(1,e) of the adopted Local Plan and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF.

2. Highway Safety

The proposed development, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority would provide insufficient parking provision to meet the required parking standards set out in the Council 's Supplementary Planning Document 3 – Parking for new development, resulting in increased on-street parking and indiscriminate parking, contrary to the above associated guidance, local plan policies SD8(1f) and TI1(12c) and paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

3. Anti-social behaviour, crime and community cohesion

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on the existing community through the increased provision of small residential units in an area of the Borough with an over-supply of this type of accommodation. The Proposals will further attract transient occupants and exacerbate existing anti-social behaviour and crime levels, creating unsafe communities, increasing the fear of crime and further undermining community cohesion, contrary to Policy SD8(3) of the Local Plan and Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF.

P/6/26 25/2685/LBC 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees

For the discussion of this item please see above.

A motion was proposed and seconded that the item be deferred due to a lack of information relating to rooflights in the stairwells of the proposed development.

A vote took place and the application was deferred.

RESOLVED that planning application 25/2685/LBC 41-45 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees be deferred for the reasons as detailed below:

To bring back to a future meeting of the Planning Committee and provide additional information relating to the requirement of AOV rooflights in the stairwells of the proposed development.

P/7/26 Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document and Article 4 Direction

Members were asked to consider a report which outlined activities undertaken in the preparation and consultation on a Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Article 4 Direction following the resolution of Cabinet / Council in January 2026. Delegation to prepare and consult on the draft SPD had been provided to the Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member and the Planning Committee. The SPD was to be presented to Cabinet/Council for adoption with planning committee members being welcomed to provide any comments of the SPD which will be presented alongside the SPD. The report also outlined next steps in relation to confirmation of the Article 4 Direction.

RESOLVED that Planning Committee Members

1. Note the contents of the report.

2. Provide any comments on the SPD which members would like to be presented to Cabinet/Council alongside the SPD which is being proposed for adoption.

P/8/26

Planning Compliance Performance Report

Members were asked to consider and note the contents of the quarterly Planning Compliance caseloads and performance report, for Quarter 4, 2025/26

The Stockton on Tees Local Enforcement Plan (LEP) was approved at planning committee in September 2024 and became 'live' on the 1st November 2024 and this report provided the latest quarterly report. As part of the LEP, service targets were introduced which are as follows;

- 70% of enforcement cases closed where no breach identified within 20 working days.
- 60% of enforcement requests received an initial response, for example no breach of control identified or further investigation to be undertaken, within 10 working days.
- 60% of planning enforcement cases, where the case actions were determined within the established priority timescales.

Performance against the internal performance standards continued to remain strong and overall 97% of all cases received in the last quarter had case actions determined within the identified priority period.

As detailed within table 1 of the report, over the last quarter the number of cases received had again dropped slightly, with the number of cases determined and processing time remaining consistent with the previous quarter and year overall.

Planning Services also continued to discuss a case of non-compliance with colleagues in legal services over appropriate next steps and potential prosecution.

At the time of writing, the total number of unresolved compliance cases currently equated to 191, with 38 cases being historic cases received before the introduction of the Local Enforcement Plan.

The next quarterly update would be quarter 1 of 2026/27 (April - June), which was anticipated being reported in July/August 2026.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

P/9/26

Consultation direction and call-in arrangements for housing schemes

Members were asked to consider and note the change in legislation and the procedure from the 11 May 2026.

On 31 March 2026, a new Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026 was published. The Direction applies in relation to any application for planning permission which meets the following criteria

(a) is for development which includes the provision of 150 or more houses, flats or houses and flats; and

(b) has not been determined by a local planning authority before 11th May 2026.

The Direction required that, where a local planning authority proposes to refuse an application for planning permission to which the above criteria apply, the authority must first consult the Secretary of State before determining the application. This is to enable Ministers to decide whether to exercise their existing powers to call in the planning application.

Ministers are then provided 21 days to decide whether to use their existing powers to call in the planning application.

Where the Council is minded to refuse any planning applications that meet the above criteria, Officers will need to notify the Secretary of State of the Local Planning Authority's intentions and a decision cannot be issued until the direction from the Secretary of State is received as to whether they wish to call in the application or not.

When the Secretary of State calls-in an application. An inquiry will be held. The inquiry procedure is set out in The Town and Country Planning (Inquiries Procedure) (England) Rules 2000, Statutory Instrument 2000/1624 (as amended).

A brief discussion was had around if the new legislation applied to Officers and Members if the criteria was met. Officers confirmed that if the criteria was met as detailed above the Secretary of State would be notified whether officers or Members refused an application.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.