

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning & Townscape Committee held
at Rye Town Hall on Monday 10 November 2025**

PRESENT Councillors David Bookless, Michael Boyd, Bernardine Fiddimore, Vagn Hansen (**Committee Vice-Chairman**), Chris Hoggart (**Committee Chairman** – Deputy Mayor), Pat Hughes, Andy Stuart (Mayor)..

IN ATTENDANCE Jessica Neame – Deputy Town Clerk; Anthony Kimber – Rye Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator; James Stewart and Peter Connock – Rye News; Rob Pollard – RX Architects; Alex Cheneviere – Martello Developments and four members of the public.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.

58 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Deputy Clerk – were accepted from Councillors Rogers and Thorpe.

59 CODE OF CONDUCT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest, nor requests for dispensation.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public comments/contributions and an update from Martello Developments.

See Appendix.

60 MARTELLO DEVELOPMENTS UPDATE

No action was required.

61 MINUTES

RESOLVED To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Planning and Townscape meeting held on 13 October 2025 (PT09).

55 MATTERS ARISING

There was none.

Item 57 was brought forward, with item 56 deferred to the end, after Colonel Kimber briefly left the meeting.

57 RESOLVED To submit the comment following to the Local Planning Authority:

[RR/2025/1494/P](#)

Halyard Studio, Rock Channel, Rye TN31 7HJ
Change of use to create live work unit and installation of balcony and
rooflights.
SUPPORT REFUSAL - insufficient safe and habitable living space.

56 RYE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

AK reported that Rother District Council had increased Rye's housing numbers from 200 up to 325. No additional sites had been identified, so this could only be achieved through greater density on existing sites. He is currently exploring their justification for this but explained that other parishes are in the same position.

In relation to the bid for the Tilling Green playing field, AK has been liaising with a specialist consultant on the social value to establish a suggested offer figure.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.32pm

Date Chairman

Public comments:

Colonel Kimber (AK) highlighted that Councillors are able to engage with developers provided there is no pre-judgement of applications.

Presentation from Martello Developments on the former Freda Gardham School site:

Alex Cheneviere from Martello Developments and Rob Pollard from RX Architects provided an update on progress with their proposed planning application for the former Freda Gardham (FG) School site (currently housing Rye Creative Centre).

They explained that after discussions with Rother District Council, they were now able to move forward with submitting a planning application for the site in the early part of next year.

The layout would be similar to that previously proposed – building around a central green, retaining any trees, with the dwellings looking inwards. The number of units – a mix of flats and houses - had increased slightly from 48 to 52, in response to Rother's requirements to maximise the number of dwellings. Any social housing would be subject to a forthcoming viability report.

In response to a question about flood-risk, it was explained that there would be no sleeping accommodation on the ground floor, which would instead be utilised for car parking. Additional drainage is also proposed for the scheme, which would only proceed upon completion of the flood defence works along the Rother.

The site is currently home to the Rye Creative Centre, housed in the former FG school building. Alex Cheneviere set out Martello's proposal for purpose-built units located at Atlas Business Park (also owned by them) to replace the studio facilities lost with the demolition of the FG building. This new development would consist of two buildings housing artists' studios, a print room, kitchens and toilet facilities with dedicated parking.

Some of the current Rye Creative Centre tenants were present. They explained that they were excited in principle about the move, provided the rents remained affordable. The conditions of the old building at FG are challenging as the building suffers increasing maintenance issues – the tenants are looking forward to improved conditions. At present only two tenants had indicated they would be unlikely to move to the new site.

It was highlighted that RCC is currently within walking distance of the town for exhibitions, and that the location at Rye Harbour could be a disadvantage. However, the tenants explained that most visitors drive to the site at present, so the move need not be a negative, provided sufficient car parking was provided.