

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF URCHFONT PARISH COUNCIL
held on Wednesday 10 October 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village
Hall.
(Meeting commenced at 7:09 pm)**

Present: UPC Chair Dave Mottram (DM) Vice-Chair Graham Day (GD) Philip Cottell (PC) Lewis Cowen (LC) Graham Creasey (GC) Bill Donald (BD) Maria Kemp (MK) David Stevens (DS) and Planning Administrator Sandra Johnston (SJ)

Also present: Parish Clerk Bob Lunn (BL) WC Cllr: Philip Whitehead (PW)

Members of the public: 28 members of the public were present; including the Applicant for 5c) and the Agent for 5d/5e).

1. Apologies for absence: Cllrs: Nicky Mitchell (NM)

2. Declarations of Interest: None.

3. Minutes of a meeting held on 12 September 2018: Signed as a true record:- Proposed by Cllr Cottell; seconded by Cllr Day; agreed unanimously.

4. Matters arising from those Minutes: None.

5. Plans for discussion

Council members were reminded by The Chair that when considering planning applications they must follow the guidance in the UPC Planning Policy and Procedure document (UPC/18) and its incorporated Statutory Authorities/Governing Documents, all of which can be found on the Wiltshire Council or the Urchfont Parish Council website. Also, they should have regard to visual impact upon the surrounding area and relationship to adjoining properties.

* Urchfont Parish Council's role, as a Consultee, is to provide Wiltshire Council with UPC's views, which will be based on a balanced view across the Urchfont Parish community.

NB: If necessary, the meeting will be adjourned at the beginning of each Planning Application to enable members of the Public to express their views on that particular application.

As acting Lead Councillor for Planning, Cllr: Mottram welcomed all present and thanked Councillors and members of the public for attending the planning meeting. Due to the number of those present having an interest in Item 7, he would move that item to the beginning of the meeting.

7. Matters for Report

18/06977/FUL * To discuss and agree the contents of the presentation to be made by Urchfont Parish Council at the Eastern Area Planning Committee meeting, to be held on Thursday 1st November 2018 at 3.00 pm. Proposed venue - Wessex Room, Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes, SN10 1HS', concerning the Application for the erection of nine dwellings together with associated works; all on Land at Uphill - at the junction of Friars Lane & Crooks Lane, Urchfont, SN10 4SA.

DM - This planning application was discussed at the UPC August planning meeting. After the meeting a request was made by UPC to WC Philip Whitehead, to 'Call it in' and the application will now be considered by the WC East Area Planning Committee (EAPC) on Thursday 01 November at 3.00 pm in the Wessex Room of the Corn Exchange, Devizes. At the August meeting it was agreed that UPC produce a draft statement to present to the EAPC. 3 members of the public may speak for 3 minutes on a particular application. A member of Urchfont Parish Council may also then speak for 3 minutes.

**The Planning meeting was adjourned for public participation:-

Statement by Malcolm Smith – Resident of Urchfont

The Parish Council must by now be aware there was a great deal of public concern regarding this particular planning proposal. He had counted 42 representational letters on the WC Planning website and every issue of those concerns could be read there. He pointed out that UPC did make a decision to object to the application in August and as requested did ask WC Philip Whitehead to 'Call It In' to WC. It was Mr Smith's opinion, though, that any open criticism of UPC seemed to be treated as akin to heresy. He opined that if any Urchfont Parish councillor felt unable to support the electorate then they obviously had the option to resign. Mr Smith then questioned the appearance on the application's webpage, and subsequent

disappearance 24 hours later (removed 19/09/18 – SJ), of a document written by the WC Landscape Officer, Andrea Kenworthy. He felt this was suspicious and challenged Cllr Whitehead on the document's continued absence from the website. Cllr Whitehead promised to look into the matter. Mr Smith hoped that UPC would consider this Landscape document, a copy of which had previously been sent to them by former UPC councillor Richard Hawkins, when formulating their statement to the EAPC. He thanked all those members of the public attending tonight and urged them to attend the EAPC meeting scheduled for 1st November. He concluded by reminding "all our elected representatives of their obligation to represent the views of their constituents. The price of democracy is eternal vigilance and we are watching you".

****Public participation was closed and the planning meeting re-opened:**

DM asked Councillor Philip Whitehead if he had read Richard Hawkins email, questioning the disappearance of the Landscape report.

PW replied that no WC Officer, for any reason, was permitted to remove a document from the website unless authorised to do so. All documentation put on or taken off the WC website follows a statutory process. Wiltshire Council receives thousands of planning applications a year and it should be noted that, due to IT problems, by the end of August this year 25% of documentation had been lost from the website and was still being replaced. As he had said, he would make enquiries as to the possible reason for the document's disappearance.

MK – At a previous meeting, Richard Hawkins had spoken of his concern regarding this document. Because of this she had contacted the assigned planning officer for Uphill, Morgan Jones, and he said it had been taken down due to issues regarding inaccuracies in the report.

GD opined that it was a pity that the assigned officer had not seen fit to reply to Richard Hawkins enquiry.

****The Planning meeting was adjourned for public participation:-**

Statement by Keith Brockie – 1 Uphill Cottages, Urchfont

At the Neighbourhood Plan meetings, one of the illustrative maps on an A board did not have a 'View' icon outside 1–4 Uphill Cottages. An icon shown indicated the 'View' started beyond Coppers Yew looking NE. Mr & Mrs Brockie emailed Cllr Mottram and on 02/11/14 he agreed to rectify this. Meanwhile L Jennings (NP steering group) apologised that, due to her error, it was missing from the map and arranged for it to be added back with R Hawkins help. On 12/12/14 **DM** confirmed to Mr Brockie that the 'view icon' was back on the neighbourhood plan. On 06/01/15 the UWLNP was published with the view icon in place. From minutes of an Urchfont Parish Council meeting dated 8th March 2017, Mr Brockie understands that, when the UWL.Neighbourhood Plan was sent for examination, the Examiner asked the following question; *2. Important views are shown on Figure 6.1. One seems to be in the same vicinity as one of the proposed site allocations, land at Uphill. Is this correct or a discrepancy? Are the two designations compatible?*

Response – 'This is correct. It is considered that the two designations are compatible'.

Mr Brockie stated that no-one appeared to know who gave this response.

As far as he could ascertain, after searching UPC Minutes from 08/03/15 onwards, between 08/03/15 & 12/09/18 the view was again 'removed' but without any record. However, from the Minutes of the meeting of 12/09/18, he read that - **'DM confirmed that the view at Uphill had been changed in the Plan before submission to the Examiner, the revised view is from north of the proposed development.'**

Statement by Nicola Hammond – Resident of Uphill

Ms Hammond's property, Carina Cottage, lies a few houses to the north of the proposed development site and her garden backs onto the 'View'. A recent pre-application enquiry made by her to build, for her own use, a subservient, disabled friendly, barn style dwelling on a portion of her back garden was rejected by both a WC Planning Officer and the Conservation Officer. Reason given: that the existing Carina Cottage would lose its 'Open Vista'. Ms Hammond wished to know what was the difference between her application and this application? In her opinion, the circumstances were the same, in that an 'Open Vista would be lost by all existing properties on the boundary of this proposed site?

****Public participation was closed and the planning meeting re-opened:**

BD - Cllr Donald asked WC Cllr Whitehead if he would like to comment on 'Views'?

PW – There is a big difference in a view from an area rather than from an existing plot. The two planning applications are quite different. The proposed application to build a development on the Uphill Field site is

quite different from an application to build in the garden of an existing property.

****The Planning meeting was adjourned for public participation:-**

Ms N Hammond – In recent years there have been two 'Back-yard' developments between my property and the site of this proposed development. They have both ruined 'The View' from the gardens in which they were built and neither of those original, existing properties now has an 'Open Vista'. I would like it explained why it would appear that people's applications, proposed in such a relatively small area, are being treated quite differently by the Planning Department? My planning application was proposed for my own personal needs; that I would be permitted to build a dwelling for myself which would have all the facilities necessary to accommodate my increasing physical disabilities. My own financial gain would be temporary as, to be able to build this 'disabled' dwelling, I would have to sell Carina Cottage to find the funds to do so.

****Public participation was closed and the planning meeting re-opened:**

DM invited **BD** to read a statement that they had jointly prepared, regarding a possible way forward.

Councillor Donald explained that, although UPC had returned an Objection to this application on 22 September; that did not mean it had objected to the plan but to the design of what was planned for the site. BD had seen and was appalled by the WC Highways report. It appeared to say that they would be rejecting it, if the site had not been named in the UWLNP. A point that BD would like raised. What UPC did not look into at the previous meeting was building design and external landscaping. For example, fencing 6 feet high is obviously too tall and would not look attractive. There is an opportunity now to reduce ridge heights, introduce dropped eaves and look at internal and external measurements of the houses and garages. Hipped rooves would make a big difference to lessen 'the blocking' effect of the houses en masse. We have looked at the garage closest to Foxley Fields, on Plot 5. At present this incorporates a first floor w/shop and external stairway. Changing it to just a garage would reduce the height and exclude the need for external stairs. Importantly, for the duration of building works, a parking area for local vehicles could be provided, with allocated spaces for all affected households.

An important issue being that, when Foxley Fields was built, the pavement along Crooks Lane only extended the length of the houses. No extra provision was made to provide a safe continuation of a pedestrian footpath down to the B3098 and the bus stop. To form such a footpath, a possibility would be to excavate 3 – 4ft of the Crooks Lane bank, from its beginning at the B3098, up along the Urchfont side (West) until it is level with the existing pavement (East side) in front of the first FF houses. Obviously all this will need discussion and negotiation with the land owner, who has already been approached. Maybe the funding for the highway improvements could be split between UPC and WC?

PC – Maybe the affordable housing could be increased from three to four?

BD – There had originally been conversations concerning bungalows.

GD – Confirmed he would support increasing the affordable housing content to 4 properties. Looking at these re-design proposals, he would ask whether WC Planners had yet had sight of them? However, the draft statement was exceptionally weak and should be substantially "beefed-up" in recording the UPC objections to the development application. UPC should continue to Object, as it did on the 22 September, citing the same list of concerns as previously stated. UPC's role is not to act as a pseudo developer, and UPC should continue to object to development applications which contained serious flaws.

GC – Believed UPC's objections should be strengthened but felt that the detail should be kept back until a decision is made.

BD - So can I ask are we suggesting that UPC never support this application?

MK – It would appear to her that that at some date, some form of development will be carried out on this site. In her opinion it should be smaller she is not ignorant of the fact that the eventual decision will be influenced by the wishes of the sellers, buyers, developers and finally the Planners. In an ideal world, she would be pleased to just have 4 cottages built there.

DM – I'm sure we are all appalled by the Highways statement and are well aware of the fact that the junction of the two lanes and the existing pavements all need improving.

Cllr Philip Whitehead – Wished to defend Hannah Jones, the WC Highways Development Control Officer. What she is saying is quite true but her objection is marginal. She is an engineer and had to couch her statement the way she has, because the UWLNP states it wants more development and proposed this site. She has said it would be possible but would need to see these changes.

BD – If we don't deal with the design issues now, then what?

Cllr PW – I would suggest you stop this now, as you did when dealing with the same sort of issues over the first application for the Beeches development. Then go on from there.

GD – UPC need to build a more competent case and need to substantially redraft this document to reflect the stance of objection and to provide the base for a 3-minute statement to the Eastern Area Planning Committee

DM – I am unavailable to speak; who can and will? **GD** – I am available and willing to speak for UPC.

DM – UPC cannot support this application until the Highways issue is resolved. A review of the height of builds, landscaping issues etc needs to be carried out by the developer. Should we re-draft UPC's statement? **GD** – That would be a good idea.

**The Planning meeting was adjourned for public participation:-

Mr Jim Stevenson – (sic) "I think you have the wrong end of the stick. Urchfont Parish councillors need to understand that the public do not want such a development on this site. The residents of this village want it stopped, so will UPC please now stop it happening?"

Cllr Maria Kemp responded – (sic) "With respect, we are only consultees of Wiltshire Council: how do we stop it? If we as a Council keep objecting to it unreasonably we might end up with something built there that we really don't want. I myself don't want to see the field developed but we have to be realistic and try to get the best deal for the village".

Mr Stevenson – If a great many residents don't want a lot of large houses there then surely UPC can take their wishes and concerns forward to the relevant quarters and fight for what people want. The Parish Council needs to support the public in their wishes. That is their job. If this goes ahead, the village will lose that open aspect and the view towards Lydeaway forever. There is plenty of land available for development opposite Ballingers.

**Public participation was closed and the planning meeting re-opened:

DM – Asked for the meeting to be concluded, with no more public speaking, as he hears what people are saying. Unfortunately, Government legislation decrees we must build a certain number of houses in this parish and the possible sites for these were put forward for consideration at the Neighbourhood Plan Public Meetings in the village hall. There was a democratic vote taken on all the sites to be used. The Parish Council can work to try and restrict what will eventually take place but what Cllr Kemp is saying is a fact, so we need to try and strike a balance between what is acceptable to the developer and to the public.

BD – Other sites were put forward for consideration but these came lower down in the final scoring. If land opposite Ballingers was open for development, there could be a massive increase in housing. If the land offered on the Eastern edge of the village, South of the B3098, was developed, there could possibly have been encroachment on and problems arising, for and around the cemetery and allotments.

DM – Everyone on the Council and members of the public have all put their views forward, so we now need to decide who will compile the statement from UPC and present it to the East Area Planning Committee at their Planning Meeting on the 1st November.

BD – Rather than himself, he felt it would be better that Councillor Day (Vice-Chair) did this.

* **The Planning Meeting re-commenced at Item 5.**

5a) 18/07934/FUL – Re-submission of Full planning application for the Demolition and reconstruction of an existing outbuilding at Beech House, High Street, Urchfont, Wilts., SN10 4QN, for Mrs Fiona Botham.

5b) 18/08261/LBC – Re-submission of Listed Building application for the Demolition and reconstruction of an existing outbuilding at Beech House, High Street, Urchfont, Wilts., SN10 4QN, for Mrs Fiona Botham.

* To date no letters of representation had been received by WC Planning Office and/or UPC.

Site had previously been viewed by Parish Councillors.

The Planning Committee found as follows:

GD There is no change in this application. It required re-submission to WC due to an error in the original drawing of the red line plan. The red line on that plan included a large part of a neighbouring garden.

18/07934/FUL & 18/08261/LBC – Cllr: Day proposed that the UPC Planning Committee confirm its **Support** for this application; proposal seconded by Cllr Cottell, resolution agreed unanimously.

5c) 18/08928/TCA - Works to trees in a Conservation Area, as per schedule, at Urchfont Manor,

Urchfont, Devizes, Wilts., SN10 4RF, for Ms Eleanor Jones.

* To date no letters of representation had been received by WC Planning Office and/or UPC.

Site viewed on Wednesday 10/10/18 by 5 Parish Cllrs (GD/PC/LC/GC/MK). Ms Jones was present to explain the proposal and answer any questions.

The Planning Committee found as follows:

GD This was a novel experience, being the first time he had led a site meeting, and a pleasure to view the trees in the Manor Grounds. Councillors were shown around by Ms Jones who explained works required by each tree; for various reasons including regulatory, maintenance, safety and protection of buildings.

MK & PC both agreed all works proposed were very sensible tree management

18/08928/TCA – Cllr: Stevens proposed that the UPC Planning Committee **Support** this application; proposal seconded by Cllr Creasey, resolution agreed unanimously.

5d) 18/09099/FUL - Full planning application for a single storey Extension to existing dwelling; Addition of doors to existing open store, with decking above. All at The Old School, High Street, Urchfont, Wilts., SN10 4QH, for Mr & Mrs Leigh.

5e) 18/09169/LBC – Listed Building application for a single storey Extension to existing dwelling; Addition of doors to existing open store, with decking above. All at The Old School, High Street, Urchfont, Wilts., SN10 4QH, for Mr & Mrs Leigh.

* To date no letters of representation had been received by WC Planning Office and/or UPC.

With permission of the applicant, site viewed on Wednesday 10/10/18 by 4 Parish Cllrs (GD/PC/LC/MK).

Statement by Callan Powers – Fowler Architecture & Planning

The proposal is to erect a small extension to the SW corner of the house: To be attached to the neighbouring property, Two Chimneys, a Grade II listed dwelling. Listed building consent will be required for this reason. Mr Powers believes the proposal to be sensitive to the Urchfont Conservation Area. The rear storage area will be enclosed and covered by decking and, as it could be optically harmful, will be covered by artificial grass.

The Planning Committee found as follows:

GD - Doors are proposed for the storage area; what are the doors made of? Will they make it secure from the weather and help improve the appearance?

Mr Powers – The doors are timber and will improve the appearance of the structure.

GD – The extension is to be used as a new entrance hall and utility. It will be brought forward and brick built. GD asked why there is a door leading through a wooden wall to the property next door?

Mr Powers – Replied he was unsure of what the situation was regarding the door between Two Chimneys and the Old School House.

PC – Stated that alarm bells were ringing with him concerning the intention to cover the roof of the rear storage area with artificial grass. PC uncertain as to whose outlook it will improve? It is a raised area and is the 'grass' just to improve the outlook for the applicants or from the road?

Mr Powers – Stated that Heritage Services knew of, and had not disapproved of, the artificial grass.

PC – Opined that he still was not in favour of it.

18/09099/FUL & 18/09169/LBC – Cllr: Kemp proposed that the UPC Planning Committee **Support** this application; proposal seconded by Cllr: Creasey, resolution agreed unanimously.

6. Decisions received from Wiltshire Council since 07 September 2018

6a) 18/07314/TPO - Works to trees with a Preservation Order to consist of Felling 1 x Scots Pine tree at 11 The Orchard, Urchfont, Devizes, Wilts., SN10 4QX - for Mr D Myers. **Refused**

There being no other business, the Planning Meeting closed at 08:03 pm

The scheduled date of the next Planning Meeting is **Wednesday 14 November 2018 at 7:00 pm** in Urchfont Village Hall.

Planning Administrator Sandra Johnston – 01380 848774 – 07808 124721 – sandra-j@virgin.net
NB Hard copies of all Planning Applications & Plans are with the Planning Administrator and may be inspected by arrangement at any time. Planning Applications and their documents should also be visible on www.urchfont-pc.gov.uk or go to www.wiltshire.gov.uk and click on 'Planning Applications' – 'Planning applications online' - 'Search by planning application number' – 'application number.'

SignedDate