



**DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Planning Meeting held remotely on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**Present:** Councillors: Day (GD – Chairman), Botham (MB – Vice Chairman), Hill (TH), Kemp (MK), Cowen (LC), Creasey (GC), Hollyman (MH), Cottle (SC) and Stevens (DS)

**Clerk to the Council:** Lunn (BL)

**Councilor for Urchfont & The Cannings:** Whitehead (PW)

**Members of the Public (for all or part of the remote meeting):** Mr. S Veitch

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Rotherham (PR)
2. **Declarations of Interest** – None declared at the meeting
3. **Minutes of a meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021** – to approve

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting	MB	MH	AGREED with one abstention due to absence

4. **Matters arising from Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021** – None raised

5. **Plans for discussion**

- 5a. **21/01116/FUL – Formation of driveway. Erection of Fence and relocation of oil tank at Carina, Uphill SN10 4SB for Mr Andrew McKenzie**

**Site Visit** – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 by two councillors (socially distanced)

**Letters of Representation** – None received or on WC website

TH explained that this application has arisen because two neighbours wish to exchange a plot of land assuming the application is approved. To facilitate the works, a number of trees will need to be removed which appear to be in a poor condition anyway, it was noted that it is intended to replace trees but not necessarily in the same positions as those removed. MB commented that the proposed works will improve the entrance to the properties, give both more room and improve visibility. MB had no issues with the proposal which he considered sensible. TH agreed with the views expressed by MB.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To SUPPORT the application	TH	MK	AGREED unanimously

- 5b. **21/02363/TCA – Fell ash tree which is in decline at Old Barn, High Street, Urchfont, SN10 4QH for Alex Middleton**

**Site Visit** – Not considered necessary during COVID restrictions

**Letters of Representation** – none received or on WC website

TH noted that the tree is on the boundary between the Old Barn and Hanover House and is badly affected by ash dieback. The tree surgeon has advised that the tree needs to be felled. It was also noted that several other ash trees in the locality may need to be removed for the same reason in due course. No other comments were made.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
<b>NO OBJECTION</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>GC</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

**5c. 21/01990/FUL – Barn extension at Marsh Farm, Lydeaway, SN10 3PR for Mr Martin Bodman**

**Site Visit** – Not considered necessary due to COVID and earlier visits to the site

**Letters of Representation** – none received or on the WC website

TH explained that he had contacted the applicant who had confirmed that the application proposed a lean-to attached to the recently approved calf barn. The application will have no impact on neighbouring properties. No other comments were made.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
<b>To SUPPORT this application</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>MH</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

**5d. 21/02484/FUL – Garage conversion, new store & alterations to House at West End House, The Green, Urchfont, SN10 4RB for Mrs Felicity Maton**

**Site Visit** – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 by three councillors (socially distanced)

**Letters of Representation** – None received or on WC website

TH confirmed that a site visit had been made and that councillors had spoken to the applicant. It is understood that a previous application relating to the garage had been approved but had not been taken up. The new application includes a new entrance off Chapel Lane. GD believed that proposals could raise a possible issue with a neighbouring property at the rear, but no representations had been received in this respect. MB commented that he believed the proposals improve the property and make it more useable. No other comments were made.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
<b>To SUPPORT this application</b>	<b>TH</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

**6. Decisions received from Wiltshire Council up to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (Note: this list may not be complete due to transition to the new WC Planning IT system causing some delays in notification.)**

**6a. 21/00922/TCA - Norway spruce (T1) - fell due to excessive shading of small garden and interference with phone lines, Holly (T2 & T3) – fell, Yew (T4) - reduce crown by 30% at Toms, The Green, Urchfont, SN10 4RA – NO OBJECTION**

**6b. 21/01083/TPO -Smooth Japanese Maple (T7) – Fell, Beech 'Asplenifolia' (T8) - reduce crown by 25%, Birch (T1) - crown clean, Sycamore (T2) - reduce crown on eastern side over neighbouring property to balance. Crown clean, Wild cherry (T4) - crown clean, thin crown, remove stubs from previous work and remove lower damaged limb which extends north towards dwelling at Jubilee House, Townsend, Urchfont – APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

**6c. 21/07880/FUL Conservatory to rear elevation at Lime Tree Cottage, Manor Close, Urchfont, SN10 – APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

**7. Planning Policy & Procedures – possible options for change on Site Visits – see written report at Appendix (on website only)**

**TH referred to his written report which followed comments at the March meeting regarding a perceived increase in applications which have consultation deadlines between UPC meetings and extensions may not be granted. In this report he had raised two questions:**

**i. Is a 'No Comment' response under specific circumstances acceptable to the council and if so should this procedure be included as part of the policy?** LC expressed concern that the Council is being pushed into a corner by such situations, could the Council not delegate responsibility to the Lead of Planning and/or Chairman to deal with in between meeting responses. TH responded that such delegation would mean that the public would not have an opportunity to comment on an application. GD stated that he highly values the UPC role as a statutory consultee, as such his view is that all applications should be discussed in public before making comments to WC and that any change to the Policy should only be made as a last resort.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconded</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
<b>To amend the Policy to include 'No Comment' as an acceptable response, TH to provide a draft amendment.</b>	<b>GD</b>	<b>MB</b>	<b>AGREED unanimously</b>

**ACTION: Planning/05/21 - TH**

**ii. Is it acceptable to the council to consider general TCA applications without site meetings after the current restrictions cease, and only carryout a TCA site meeting when the application is considered controversial by a member of the council or public?** TH emphasized that the proposal is made to only undertake site visits if controversial. GD commented that he would prefer to maintain the status quo. MB agreed with GD. TH concluded that the Policy should remain unchanged.

Having consulted the WC Tree Officer, TH stated that it is worth noting that trees growing in conservation areas are automatically protected where they have a stem that exceeds 75mm in diameter, (or 100mm if the tree is multi stemmed) measured at 1.5m above ground level.

**8. Matters for Report - None**

**Date of Next Scheduled Meeting: Provisionally TUESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> MAY 2021 in Village Hall (Main Hall) – Note that this is changed from previously published and is dependent on Lockdown Easing Road Map dates remaining unchanged.**

## APPENDIX TO APRIL 2021 PLANNING MINUTES

### **UPC Policy 18 - Planning Policy and Procedures – site meetings**

As raised at the last UPC Planning Meeting under item 7b 'Consideration of Planning Applications', I have looked at our current Planning Policy and Procedures, (a copy of which is outlined in italics below) on how we might deal with planning applications that has a WC respond date which is before the next scheduled planning meeting.

I outline two questions below for the council to consider which, if agreed, may need some amendment to our Planning Policy;

1) The policy covers most eventualities and our Clerk BL regularly seeks extensions as appropriate. However, there have been occasions when an extension has not been granted and it is considered unnecessary to arrange an interim meeting. These occasions are rare and usually involve TCA (Tree in a Conservation Area) applications. On these occasions a 'No Comment' response is returned as neither the council nor the public have had the opportunity to discuss the application.

**Is a 'No Comment' response under these circumstances acceptable to the council and if so should this procedure be included as part of the policy?**

2) During the current pandemic restrictions on how the council operates, in particular site meetings, we have dealt with many TCA's without carrying out a site meeting. In the majority of cases TCA applications refer to general maintenance work to the tree and would attract a 'No Objections' response. Where a TCA application is considered controversial, I believe a site meeting is still appropriate.

**Is it acceptable to the council to consider general TCA applications without site meetings after the current restrictions cease, and only carryout a TCA site meeting when the application is considered controversial by a member of the council or public?**

(Paragraph 4.4(e) below of the current policy covers the current procedure)

**Councillor Trevor Hill  
Lead of Planning  
4<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

### ***Policy 18 Planning Policy and Procedures***

#### ***4.4 Scheduling of Planning Meetings***

*(a) Once received from WC, planning applications will normally be considered at the next scheduled full UPC meeting and form part of that meeting under the heading 'Planning'. This will normally be scheduled at the start of the full meeting.*

*(b) On receipt of a planning application from WC, UPC has 14 calendar days in which to respond. Where UPC is unable to respond within this time constraint, UPC may seek an extension to this response time period.*

*(c) In view of the fairly short timescales within which UPC has to consider applications, Councillors are encouraged to look at applications as early as possible, and site meetings arranged promptly to enable WC Planning Officers and, as necessary, the Divisional Member, to be alerted to possible concerns.*

*(d) On occasions when a planning application is considered:*

- 1. Controversial, or has;*
- 2. One or more new dwellings.*
- 3. Timescales imposed by WC Planning restrict the opportunity for UPC to consider an application at the next*

*scheduled planning meeting.*

*The UPC Chair, Lead Councillor or Clerk to the Council may call a dedicated interim UPC planning meeting to allow more time for discussion with the planning applicant (or their agent) and public representation in favour or against the application. These meetings will follow the same guidelines as outlined in paragraph 4.6 post.*

*(e) A site meeting will be held for each application, wherever possible, prior to the relevant Planning Meeting. However, at the discretion of the Chair or Lead of Planning, some Tree Applications may be considered without the need for a site visit.*

*(f) A quorum of at least 5 full councillors who are able to vote must be present at a planning meeting in order that valid business can be transacted. Councillors need to declare to the Clerk to the Council any Conflict of Interest relating to any planning application as soon as possible so that the Clerk to the Council can confirm that UPC will have a quorum.*