



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Planning Meeting held in Urchfont Village Hall on Tuesday 8th June 2021

Present: Councillors: Botham (MB - Chairman), Hollyman (MH – Vice Chairman), Bamber (SB), Turner (MT) and Holt (SH)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Councillor for Urchfont & Bishops Cannings: Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Mr. R Hawkins, Mrs N Mitchell, Mr. M Smith. Mr. T Hill, Mr. D Milner

1. Declarations of Interest – MB registered a pecuniary interest in item 4c (applicant). For the benefit of new councillors, BL explained that MB cannot comment as a councillor or register a vote on this application. As such he is deemed a member of the public for this item.

2. Minutes of a meeting held on 18th May 2021

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

3. Matters arising from Minutes of 18th May 2021 – BL reiterated that at the meeting the Council OBJECTED to a solar panels application from Manor Farmyard based on what was **heard** from speakers at the meeting and councillors own observations. The applicant, Mr. Clayton, subsequently suggested that the minutes did not fully reflect all that he had said at the meeting and subsequently submitted his written notes. For completeness, his email and notes are attached in the appendix to this agenda (can be seen on website version only).

4. Plans for discussion

4a. PL/2021/05136 – T1 Horse Chestnut 4m reduction, T2 Leylandii x 2 remove, T3 Leylandii x 4 reduce 4m, T4 Horse Chestnut – re-pollard at Chestnut Cottage, Wedhampton, SN10 3QA for K Robinson (Consultation Extension granted by WC Planning Officer to 9th June)

Site Visit – 7th June 2021 by 2 UPC councillors (Agent was not present as expected)

Letters of Representation – None received or on WC website

MT stated that the trees quoted in the application were not readily identifiable during the site visit, it was only after photos were subsequently provided by the agent that councillors were able to confirm that they had viewed the correct trees. MT could not see any problem with the proposals. MH commented on the number of trees at the property, in particular leylandii.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
NO OBJECTION to the application proposals	MT	MH	AGREED Unanimously

4b. 21/01195/VAR – Removal of condition 2 of E/11/0123/FUL to allow the building to be occupied as a separate dwelling from the main house at Green Farm, The Green, Urchfont, SN10 4RB for Mr & Mrs Corke – BL explained that an extension to the consultation date beyond 1st June could not be agreed by the Planning Officer. After consultation with the Chairman and Lead of Planning, a SUPPORT response was sent to WC on 26th May 2021 as it was considered that there was no reason to change the Council decision made on 10th March 2021 for this application with the same number but now with amended description.

c. **PL/2021/05328 - Group of oak (T1) - 20 - 30% crown reduction/shape to match height of all trees in group. Cherry (T2) - crown clean Western red cedar (T3) - reduce by 30% and shape Group of holly and hazel (T4) - reduce by 40 /50% to match natural line seen from neighbouring property Birch (T5) - crown raise by up to 5m over garden/driveway and reduce limbs extending towards property to give minimum 4m clearance Beech (T6) - crown raise by up to 5m over garden/driveway and reduce limbs extending towards property to give minimum 4m clearance. Holly (T7) - reduce by 30% back to trim line and shape Robinia (T8) - crown clean at Beech House, High Street, Urchfont, Devizes, SN10 4QN for Mr. Botham**

Site Visit – 7th June 2021 by 2 UPC councillors

Letters of Representation – None received or on WC website

MT explained the application, all works having been assessed and recommended by a qualified tree surgeon. MH commented that trees T1 to T6 are all adjacent to neighbours who were present when the trees were assessed.

**BL intervened at this point to state that this meeting is now not quorate, there being only 4 instead of 5 councillors present and able to vote. Only a recommendation can be made which will need to be ratified at the next quorate meeting or if a currently non-present member attends later for this meeting.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To recommend NO OBJECTION to this application, to be ratified at the next quorate meeting.	MT	MH	AGREED Unanimously

5. Decisions received from Wiltshire Council up to 6th June 2021

5a. PL/2021/03176 - Timber frame garden outbuilding with pitched roof with clay pan tile roof at 3 Bulldog Lane , Urchfont, Devizes, SN10 4RS **Approve with Conditions**

5b. 21/01650/FUL - Full Planning Permission Address: Proposal: Install 18 roof integrated solar panels on south facing roof at 14 Manor Farmyard, Urchfont, SN10 4BA **Approve with Conditions**

6. Matters for Report

a. Works at Yew Tree Cottage, The Bottom, Urchfont – MT stated that concerns had been raised by residents about works being undertaken at this property, in particular the apparent additional excavation of the bank behind the property and below gardens in Walnut Close. MT had contacted the owner who had quickly responded to the effect that he is dismantling an old shed, constructing a new retaining wall and erecting a new shed to the same dimensions as the old. His response stated that “the bank adjacent was excavated just enough to make new cement footings for the new retaining wall. At no point has the bank **behind** the cottage been excavated in the direction of Walnut Close” MT was of the view that this work can be undertaken under permitted development.

Noting what had been said by the owner, MH and BL were still of the view that the bank behind the cottage appears to have been excavated now or maybe in the past to an extent that could present a landslip problem affecting both this property and/or the gardens in Walnut Close above. PW expressed the view that expert advice should be gained to ensure that the bank is and remains in a safe condition, he suggested that advice should be sought now from WC Planning Enforcement. If it is OK then nothing further will happen, if not then appropriate advice will be given. It was agreed that MT should put this point to the owner before seeking WC Enforcement advice.

ACTION: Planning/4/21 - MT

Date of Next Scheduled Meeting: Wednesday 14th July 2021 7.00pm Village Hall (Main Hall)

Email from Mr. Simon Clayton on 20th May 2021 – Applicant for Solar Panels in Manor Farmyard, Urchfont – 21/01650/FUL

Hi Bob,

Thanks for arranging my attendance at the session Tuesday evening.

I was advised that the conversations related to the planning applications were not minuted, however I now see that this guidance was incorrect. I totally agree that all discussions should be formally recorded.

I did not think to provide you with a copy of my statement, and was speaking rather quickly to meet the 3-4 minute request, so please find it attached. Would you be kind enough to add some of my key points to augment the current minutes of my comments please?

Thanks

Simon

- Global warming and climate change have become far better understood in recent years, we now know that we have 7 years to stop emitting carbon dioxide before the damage becomes irreversible. We are the first generation to really understand this and the last that can do something about it before its too late.
- Some good progress is being made (renewable energy suppliers, the move to electric cars) but forecasting is that we are not on track, or anywhere close to meeting the seven year target. More needs to be done and it needs to happen quickly. As well as industry and public sector, individuals need to do what they can to reduce carbon emissions.
- My planning application is to generate clean renewable energy. As well as embracing a carbon neutral energy source, individuals running their household on sustainable renewable energy can reduce demand on the grid, reduce the need for burning fossil fuel, and over time, reduce the unit price for all users by load balancing the grid across a wider part of the day and night.
- You will all have seen details of my application, do let me know if you have any specific question related to the technology or the approach. I appreciate that this plan was going to raise some questions in our community. The UK, WCC and village Climate Emergency initiatives and guidance are clear, we need to make changes in the way we live. This application has illustrated the challenges of addressing the urgent needs of climate change with the concerns of some related to the aesthetic of this type of solution.
- In relation to the 2012 planning conditions that were part of the Manor Farm permitted development. These do not forbid the addition of renewable energy solution, but they do demand a full planning process when in most cases solar panels are permitted development where planning is not required. I understand that similar planning conditions are levied on all new house builds in Wiltshire as standard, this is not just a Manor Farm or Urchfont special set of conditions.
- Thanks to the members of the planning team who took the time to visit my property in the last few days. While I would suggest that the term conservation is one that could be used to underpin the wider climate challenge, I also respect and recognise it in relation to our village. However, you will have seen that my house is not adjacent to the main road, or indeed visible from the centre piece of the village pond. Also, within the boundaries of what is possible with the latest technology, I have utilised the most aesthetically unobtrusive solution available.
- About setting a precedent, I would highlight that a village and county that is seen to openly embrace the opportunity to positively support residents in its parish and county wide climate initiatives would be a good thing! However, I would also note that this Planning Meeting and that of the WCC Planning Team are where applications can be judged in isolation and on their own merits. Guidance and clarity can then be given to the applicant and community on the reason for decisions made.

- In doing my research for this application over the past 18 months, it's become clear that very soon all new houses will need to include sustainable energy solutions, most notably the inclusion of solar panels and a home battery. Manor Farm was built to meet all the standards of the regulations at that time. We now need to see new and current housing go a step further and become as sustainable and self-sufficient as possible.
- We have to find a sustainable way to exist on the planet and I am in the lucky position to be able to do something about this personally. I would appreciate the support of the Parish Council in this endeavour.