

DRAFT MINUTES OF AN INTERIM MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF URCHFONTS PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 31 May 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: Baker, Chapman, Day, Gibb, Hill, Holt, Mitchell, Stephens, Thomas & Planning Administrator Sandra Johnston.

Also present: Agent for 3b) and 8 members of the public. Brief attendance by Wiltshire Cllr Philip Whitehead towards end of the meeting.

Councillor Trevor Hill (UPC Lead of Planning) opened the Planning meeting. He welcomed and informed those present that, in the absence of the UPC Chairman and Vice-Chairman, he would Chair the Planning Meeting that evening. He then explained that, on any planning agenda item, his voting rights would remain as a regular Councillor and he would not have a casting vote as the Chair elect.

1. Apologies for absence received: Cllrs: Mottram and Donald. Mr Steve Arnott & Mrs Rosie Palmer.

2. Declarations of Interest: - 3a) Cllr Chapman: Non-pecuniary interest. 3b) Cllr Holt: Non-pecuniary conflict of interest. 3b) Cllr Thomas: Pecuniary conflict of interest. 3c) Cllr Holt: Non-pecuniary conflict of interest. 3c) Cllr Stephens: Pecuniary interest.

3. Plans for discussion

Council Members were reminded that when considering planning applications they should follow the guidance outlined in the Urchfont Parish Council 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 Urchfont Parish Council websites.

****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: The meeting would be adjourned at the beginning of each Planning Application to enable members of the Public to express their views on that particular application.

3a) 16/01519/FUL - Full planning application for an Amendment to the design of Plot 1, at Manor Farmyard, Urchfont, Wilts., SN10 4QP, for Redcliffe Homes Ltd.

*Since the UPC Planning meeting of 13/04/16; 12 letters of objection to this application had been received by UPC and/or WC Planning Office.

The Planning Committee debated as follows;

* Being a resident of Manor Farmyard and therefore having a non-pecuniary interest in this agenda item, it was permissible for Cllr Chapman to join in debate and vote on this application.

SH – Backed by UPC, he was responsible for the enforcement action taken by WC on Plot 1. A new planning application from Redcliffe Homes had followed, which was now being considered by UPC. In his opinion, the segmented arches shown on this plan are not correct. The segmented arches present on the ground floor cover 3.75 courses of brickwork. The proposed arches for the 1st floor follow the same curve but cover 6 courses of brickwork. In his opinion, the only way now to improve the look of Plot 1 would be to widen and heighten the upper windows to take up the extra courses above the existing windows. The provision of a dark beam, immediately under the thatch, flush with and covering 3 brick courses had apparently not been considered by WC or Redcliffe.

He was confused that, in her report, the Conservation Officer, Helen Garside, had suggested increasing the height of the upper windows and the addition of a third casement to each of the 2 light windows, inserting segmented arches to match the lower floor and widening of the thatched porch canopy... but had made a final observation of No Objection

Cllr Holt believed that the house should not be re-thatched as the thatching has been done well, though sadly only to the roof provided. Cllr Holt opined that the training of Master Thatchers might include more knowledge of the structural design of roofs, porches etc.

NM - Very disappointed with Helen Garside's final statement and decision when it is blatantly obvious that the house Redcliffe Homes promised as the focal point of the Manor Farmyard development is not at all what it should be. Urchfont could now be saddled for a Century with what the Conservation Officer describes in her report as a building that has a jarring visual impact.

HG states:- " *The jarring visual impact which results from the change to the approved design is confined to the immediate locality of the house (plot 1) and, albeit that this is a prominent and central site, the level of harm which is caused to the character of the conservation area as a whole and to the setting of nearby listed buildings (which rely more on the contribution of the rural village's overall character than the appearance of any individual building) is limited*".

For information: *Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that 'designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance'.*

Manor Farmyard is a prominent site within the centre of Urchfont Village and conservation area. The area to the West is perhaps one of the most important areas of streetscape within the area; a quintessentially English village landscape. The quality of the area is recognised in its designation as a conservation area; the first Conservation Area designated in the county of Wiltshire.

Throughout all the developmental stages of Manor Farmyard's planning applications, the Conservation Officer had been concerned with historic precedent and been extremely particular on what type of materials and style of building she considered permissible on the Manor Farmyard site. The concept of Redcliffe's architect was to re-create a farmhouse (Plot 1) and its accompanying buildings & cottages arranged around yards but HG demurred; historically there being no farm or cottages on that site. Planning approval from WC was apparently agreed on the basis of broad local support for the scheme.

NM- With regard to Plot 1 as it now stands, the opinions Helen Garside expressed in her Planning Consultation Response seemed at complete variance with her final decision of 'No Objection'.

Her argument for not having the roof re-thatched includes encouraging sustainable development by avoiding wastage of good quality materials and expertise and the avoidance of further disturbance to local residents from continued construction.

**** Councillors agreed that allowing disregard of approved plans on such terms would inevitably set a dangerous precedent.**

Some of the residents of Manor Farmyard take the view that the sooner the builders leave, the sooner the hand over process of the Management Company can take place but it has also become apparent that longer standing residents of Urchfont consider any further disruption a price they are willing to pay to gain the streetscape on the Eastern side of Pond Green that the approved planning application had promised. Cllr Chapman questioned whether a response had been received from WC to UPC's request to enter into dialogue with WC, Redcliffe Homes and their Architects, to find an acceptable solution for all parties. No response had been received and it was assumed a dialogue had taken place, resulting in the application now on the table. There is no indication on the new plans that the design of the Porch has been addressed to reflect the original drawing and no way to tell, as no dimensions have been provided.

Hopefully, the Conservation Officer would not consider re-building and re-thatching the porch a substantial waste of materials?

16/01519/FUL - The Planning Committee found as follows:

Councillor Hill proposed that the Planning Committee of Urchfont Parish Council **Object** to this amended application on the following grounds: That the drawing does not show the 3 brick courses which will still be visible above the proposed segmented arches. UPC believe that wider and taller 1st floor windows and a wider porch (as per the original consent) is the only way to remedy this faulted construction.

Proposal Seconded by Councillor Day: motion passed unanimously.

3b) 16/01152/FUL - Full planning application for the Demolition of existing dwelling and Erection of five new dwellings & associated domestic garages and Access Improvements; all at Peppercombe, Peppercombe Lane, Urchfont, Wiltshire, SN10 4QR for Mr A Turner.

*Since the UPC Planning meeting of 09/03/16, 13 letters of Objection to this application had been received by UPC and/or WC Planning Office.

Cllr Thomas requested permission to retire from that evening's Planning Meeting and left the room.

Cllr Holt declared a non-pecuniary Conflict of Interest. He would be joining in debate but would not vote.

****Point of Order** – Royston Thomas being a Parish Councillor, all remaining members of the Planning Committee automatically declare a non-pecuniary Interest in this planning application. This declaration of Interest does not create a bias and all Councillors are free to debate and vote on the application.

Andy Turner; Developer – Amendments to the plans were requested by the WC Planning Officer. The changes are quite small and somewhat difficult to identify; being a slight re-orientation of Plot 1 and an adjustment and joining together of the 2 garages between Plots 3 & 4 to form a barn style building.

16/01152/FUL - The Planning Committee found as follows:

The Planning Administrator was requested to read out the UPC Planning Committee response to the original application. Cllr Chapman opined that, the proposed changes in the amended plans being so modest and not addressing any of the concerns or conditions included in the previous UPC response, UPC had no choice but to repeat that response to the Planning Officer.

Therefore Councillor Day proposed that UPC Planning Committee **Support** this application, subject to suitable screening being installed on the Eastern side of the site and that WC Highways Department review the priorities of the existing junction. Proposal Seconded by Councillor Baker: motion passed unanimously.

3c) 16/01099/FUL - Full planning application for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two three bedroom and two four bedroom houses, garages and associated works (resubmission of 15/11645/FUL); all at 'The Beeches', Blackboard Lane, Urchfont, Devizes, Wilts., SN10 4RD, for Qdos Homes Ltd.

*Since the UPC Planning meeting of 09/03/16, 15 letters of Objection to this application had been received by UPC and/or WC Planning Office.

** Having declared a pecuniary conflict of interest in this agenda item, Cllr Stephens confirmed he would not take part in any discussion of the application and would not be voting.

** Having declared a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in this agenda item, Cllr Holt would take part in any discussion of the application but would not be voting.

** Councillor Hill then adjourned the planning meeting for public participation:

Statement by Mr Declan Lyttle: Neighbour of The Beeches

Looking at both versions of the plans, Mr Lyttle was happy with some of the changes that were in line with recommendations but the basis of his objection had not changed. Policy D1 Design, section 2a *'The proposed development does not show a design of appropriate scale, layout and form which reflects local distinctiveness as required by this policy'* had not been addressed. Also, the gable end of plot 1 was now positioned on his border and more overbearing than the gable end of the garage would have been.

* The Planning Administrator read out Mr Steve Arnett's statement (4 Manor Close), while slides of his 3D models were shown.

* The Planning Administrator read out Will & Rosie Palmer's statement (Hardway, Manor Close).

A statement from Mrs Linda Clow (2 Manor Close) had been given to UPC & WC. In that statement Mrs Clow had pointed out that planning permission had been previously granted for 3 bungalows; that permission given, presumably, because the proposal represented reasonable development for the size of the site and its effect on immediate neighbours. Mrs Clow asked if any Councillors had viewed the Beeches site from any of the surrounding houses. Unfortunately Councillors had not been invited to do so by any of those neighbours concerned.

**Councillor Hill closed public participation and re-opened the planning meeting:

TH - Read out Urchfont Parish Council's response to WC on the original planning application.

JC - Previous objections of UPC still seem to be outstanding, especially points 1 & 2.

SH – The plots have been swung round to accommodate objections from Manor Close residents and he believed the fully hipped roof would reduce the impact of the garage on the boundary. He made reference to UWLNP and the steering groups view that the preponderance of 2/3 bedroom dwellings is across the whole parish and not each site. This application does provide 2 x 3 bedroom houses and one 'home for life' ie. Enabled living on the ground floor when unable to access the stairs.

TH – Expressed the view that it was a great shame that Plot 1 had now been changed from a thatched property to tiled. Opined that UWLNP site briefs restricted UPC's ability to fully implement the main policies of the UWLNP except for a couple of sites that were unspecified; including The Beeches. Therefore to support the 2/3 bedroom predominance, UPC had no choice but to press for smaller builds on those unspecified sites. This planning application seems to take no recognition of the Neighbourhood Plan. Still

have 4 bed roomed houses proposed. S/detached or even the inclusion of 2 x 3 bedroom or 1 x 2 bedroom would have been preferable. It was difficult to know how much weight WC place on the UWLNP. Even before the UWLNP, UPC would be looking at this application on the basis of local vernacular, neighbour issues, vicinity of the site etc. Apart from its Northern boundary, this site is bounded by bungalows and chalet bungalows on all sides: must be sympathetic to residents in smaller houses. 5 smaller houses on this site would have made less impact on neighbouring properties than the 4 larger dwellings proposed.

PB - Surely these arguments counter each other? More houses would mean an increase in noise level, pollution, and traffic. Personally would like to have seen a proposal of 2 storey houses and bungalows on this site. Older people are happy to have less land to tend. Obviously the building of bungalows is no longer an efficient use of land to a Developer. Chalet bungalows are a good return on an investment and maybe developers should start thinking out of the box.

SH - Requested that the comments of the designer be read out. TH gave the following information, taken from The Beeches application documents: From Ashley Design - Plot 1 now oriented to face Blackboard Lane, with a detached garage approached from the internal access road to avoid the RPZ (Route Protection Zone) of the Beech tree. Plots 2 & 3 are narrow in depth with only one bedroom and an obscured bathroom window rear facing. These units have reduced eaves level. Car ports and parking occupy north east corner. Plot 4 re-designed and now presenting a gable end to the highway.

GD – UPC objections have not been greatly altered. He also feels the dictates of the N.Plan have not been satisfied. The local vernacular has a predominance of bungalows, not larger houses. Unfortunately a gain for Urchfont may be of less import than a gain to the developer.

NM – There are a mix of house sizes in Blackboard Lane but obviously the bungalows behind the site will be more affected by the height difference of the new properties. Chalet bungalows would have been an ideal intermediary between Blackboard Lane and Manor Close. Tucking the large garage into the corner of the plot leaves little scope for creating any screening behind it. All the changes seem to have been made to mollify residents in the bungalows at the back of the plot but this has now created a much larger problem for Mr & Mrs Palmer of 'Hardway', the rear of whose house will be significantly overlooked by plots 2,3 & 4.

TH – Asked if SJ would re-read UPC's previous observations on The Beeches original planning application.

PB – This site not being specified; if the UWLNP has not yet been ratified, how does this affect UPC and WC's decision making?

JC – Astonished that Councillors were having this conversation. UPC should have confidence in the process that had been gone through to create the UWLNP, which was, in his opinion, the best Neighbourhood Plan he had seen to date. If UPC were to deviate from their Neighbourhood Plan, they should have a very good reason for so doing. Cllr Mitchell seconded his opinion.

Cllr Chapman believed the grounds for objecting to this application were still extant and proposed that UPC do so using the reasons previously given. It was also hoped that the Planning Officer would give considerable consideration to the problems these new proposals would be creating for Mr & Mrs Palmer and their young family in Hardway.

16/01099/FUL - The Planning Committee found as follows:

Councillor Chapman proposed that the Planning Committee of Urchfont Parish Council object to the amendments on the following grounds;

(The Policy references detailed below are those Policies contained within the Urchfont, Wedhampton and Lydeaway Neighbourhood Plan (UWLNP) which has recently been approved by Urchfont Parish Council and sent to Wiltshire Council.)

- Policy H1 Housing Site Allocation:- The proposed development only provides 4 houses and not 5 as specified within this Policy.
- Policy H2 Form of Housing Development:- Having regard to the type and size of houses expected to be delivered throughout the area covered by the UWLNP and as specified within policy H2, the proposed development does not provide an overall predominance of 2 & 3 bedroom houses, or small scale housing units for older people.
- Policy D1 Design – Section 2 (a):- The proposed development does not show a design of appropriate scale, layout and form which reflects local distinctiveness as required by this policy.

Proposal Seconded by Councillor Day: the vote was as follows – 5 votes in favour of the proposal; 1 against; 2 abstentions: motion carried.

Urchfont Parish Council **OBJECT** to the amendments to this planning application.

There being no other business, the Planning Meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

The proposed date of the next Planning Meeting is **Wednesday 08 June 2016 at 7:00 pm** in Urchfont Village Hall: at item A on the Full Council agenda.

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'; type application number into the box, click 'Search' and when the Planning Application Search comes up in blue, click on the underlined case number and the webpage for this planning application should open.

Signed Date