

In the Chair: Cllr Morris-Wyatt

Present: Cllrs Lee and Wood

Apologies: Cllrs Beioley, Pearson, L Taylor and Trinder

In Attendance: Clerk

Due to apologies, the Plans Assessment Committee was not quorate. Therefore Cllr Wood, a previous member of the Plans Assessment Committee, joined the Committee for today's meeting.

PAC 01.17.05.23 ELECTION OF CHAIR Cllr Lee proposed "**Cllr Morris-Wyatt as Chair of the Plans Assessment Committee**" This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed.

PAC 02.17.05.23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

PAC 03.17.05.23 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR Cllr Pearson is not present but has expressed his wish to remain as Vice Chair. Cllr Lee proposed "**Cllr Pearson as Vice-chair of the Plans Assessment Committee**" This was seconded by Cllr Morris-Wyatt and unanimously agreed.

PAC 04.17.05.23 TERMS OF REFERENCE – Consideration has recently been given to the PAC's TOR. As previously discussed, Cllr Morris-Wyatt proposed "**5.7 - remove the word advice and replace with guidance, and add to the end of the sentence, 'in accordance with the planning protocol adopted 6th April 2023'**" This was seconded by Cllr Lee and unanimously agreed.

PAC 05.17.05.23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

PAC 06.17.05.23 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING Cllr Lee proposed "**we approve the minutes from the 27th April**" This was seconded by Cllr Morris Wyatt. There was one abstention.

PAC 07.17.05.23 MATTERS ARISING - none

PAC 08.17.05.23 REFERRALS - none

PAC 09.17.05.23 CORRESPONDENCE –

S.23/0677/TCA Stump removal; use of poison. The PAC discussed this application at their last meeting and were concerned about the use of poison. The Case Officer and Tree Officer confirmed that the District Council has no control over the use of poison. County Cllr Turner provided details of GCC's policy in relation to the use of poison. However, the title of this application has changed since the PACs discussion and no longer mentions the use of poison. Cllr Turner will investigate this on our behalf to see if a) they have changed their mind about using poison or b) they have a good reason for using it and c) that it's a biodegradable herbicide.

Enforcement: A report was made to SDC Enforcement many months ago regarding tree work at Chalford Place. SDC have written to us to confirm that this has now been investigated. They confirmed that the tree work related to planning application S.22/0534/TCA. Therefore, no further action was taken.

Solar Panels: S.230717/HHOLD. The Committee discussed this application at their last meeting. It was unclear if planning permission was required for this installation so the Clerk contacted the Case Officer about this. He responded to say that "**as the solar panels are not going to be installed on a wall it looks as if the development is permitted development**". The PAC have requested clarity regarding solar panel applications before and the information provided was very vague. The PAC would like further clarity about when planning permission is and isn't required. If an application is submitted unnecessarily, this not only impacts on time but there is a cost implication for the resident. **Action: Clerk**

At Full Council Cllr Morris-Wyatt raised concern with the service levels within the Enforcement Department and queried whether a Tree officer had yet been appointed. District Cllr Tricia Watson contacted SDC on our behalf to enquire about current staffing and service levels, Geraldine LeCointe responded with updates

regarding specific concerns. During the week commencing 15th May all Case Officers are working with Enforcement to help with the backlog of cases. Recruitment has been successful and training is in progress, so we should see an improvement to the service going forward.

PAC 10.17.05.23 RESULTS – Only three applications have been determined since our last meeting. Autumn Cottage S.23/0349/HHOLD We objected, SDC have supported. The other two decisions were in agreement with the PAC's decisions.

PAC 11.17.05.23 NEW PLANS

1431 S.23/0794/HHOLD Marieham Brownhill - Erection of single storey extension. Cllr lee Proposed **"we support plan 1431"** This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed.

1432 S.23/0790/HHOLD 1 Litfield Cottages Silver Street Chalford Hill - Replacement porch. Cllr Lee proposed **"In principle we support this proposal, however we feel that the windows are over ornate and incongruous to the Georgian sash windows"** This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed.

1433 S.23/0871/TEL Telecommunications Apparatus Alder Way Chalford - Proposed 15m 5G, telecoms installation: H3G street pole and additional equipment cabinets. The Committee note that nothing significant has changed about this application. The reduction in height does not address our previous concerns. No pre-application advice has been sought and no consultation has been carried out by the applicant. It is disappointing that our offer to meet with the applicant to find a suitable alternative site has been ignored. Cllr Lee proposed **"we strongly object to plan 1433 for the reason listed"** This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed. Cllr Morris-Wyatt will draft our full response and circulate to the PAC prior to submission. **Action: Cllr Morris-Wyatt/Clerk** * full response attached*

1434 S.23/0849/HHOLD 2 Anthony Court Randalls Green Chalford Hill - Erection of single storey side extension, two storey rear extension and loft conversion. Cllr Lee proposed **"we support plan 1434"** This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed.

1435 S.23/0869/VAR Land at Marle Hill House Marle Hill Chalford - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) for application S.18/0775/FUL - Conversion of coach house to dwelling with a moderate extension. Cllr Lee proposed **"we are supportive of the variation, but would like to ensure that the flue is a neutral colour to avoid dominating the historic aspect of the building"** This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed.

1436 S.23/0935/FUL Land at Dark Lane Chalford - Construction of replacement access. This application relates to Dark Lane Paddock which has been identified by the Gloucestershire County Council Ecologist and the Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records as a Key Wildlife Area. Dark Lane is a steep, single track, ancient sunken lane lined by trees and native hedgerow. The existing access at the top of the land is level and on a relatively open bend. The proposed access would involve a disproportionately wide splay (because of the narrowness of the lane there), across a steep bank, destroying valuable native hedgerow and trees and the character of the lane. The creation of the hardcore apron would destroy paddock vegetation and alter the natural gradient. There are also potential water run-off implications adding to existing surface water problems down the lane. Further, the narrowness of the lane and that the proposed access would emerge through the bank would create visibility issues. Cllr Lee proposed **"for these reasons and the adequacy of the existing access we object to plan 1436"** This was seconded by Cllr Morris-Wyatt and unanimously agreed.

The date of the next meeting will be Thursday 8th June 2023. The Clerk will send Committee members meeting dates for the next three months to ensure we are quorate over the holiday period. Thanks was extended to Cllr Wood for attending today.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 3.05pm

S.23/0871/TEL Telecommunications Apparatus Alder Way Chalford. Proposed 15m 5G telecoms installation: H3G 15m street pole and additional equipment cabinets.

This revised proposal continues to attract a great deal of community interest and concern.

Public comments recorded online on the SDC website and much vocal opinion to councillors, express strong opposition, for many reasons, to the proposed location.

The vast majority of respondents recognise the necessity of 5G equipment but they very strongly believe that the proposed location is highly inappropriate, that the search by the applicant for alternative locations has not been sufficiently robust and does not consider less optimal locations that would likely get community acceptance (clearly by proposing a reduced height the applicant is willing to consider this principle). It is especially disappointing that the Parish Council's offer to the applicant, both in our previous response and by direct approach, has been ignored and that no discussion with SDC has taken place.

The height reduction to 15m makes no meaningful difference to the objections that were previously raised – this site remains entirely inappropriate and would be unacceptably damaging to this environment.

It is appreciated that the relevant planning order restricts the basis on which the Local Authority can refuse an application for Prior Approval to matters relating to Siting and Appearance, and so we have again focused our comments on these matters. However, we strongly consider that other comments that have been raised should not be dismissed nor should the strength of public feeling be ignored.

Siting:

- The site is near the top of the surrounding area, at the summit of the hill and open to the south. Consequently, the pole would be a prominent feature right across to the other side of the valley damaging the visual amenity and natural beauty of the AONB.
- As it is located on an open village green the proposed siting will substantially damage the visual and recreational amenity of the green itself, the surrounding houses and for passing pedestrians and traffic.
- The surrounding buildings and structures are two storey houses and thus well below the height of the proposed mast.
- The buildings in the proximity of the proposed site are all residential.
- Other masts locally are sited in far less intrusive locations.

Appearance:

- Dimensions – a 15m pole would be completely incongruous in this location, not only out of scale with surrounding residential properties, but also by comparison to lamp posts.
- Colour – we understand that the proposed colour of the pole is grey, which would in no way constitute a “reduced visual impact” as the applicant claims.

The justification statement put forward by the applicant is flawed and inaccurate:

- It continues to refer in several places to what it describes as an ‘urban’ setting. The setting is not urban - it is a village green.
- It continues to deny the proximity of two schools and an airfield which fall within the regulatory area for consideration and consultation.
- We strongly disagree with the narrative that the “proposed location of a new mast shown will assimilate well into the immediate street scene and will not be detrimental” and “it is considered that this will not overly detract from the character of the existing streetscape”; by any objective assessment of the reality of the height of the pole and the size of the cabinets this is misleading and untrue.

- The applicant has not made a satisfactory assessment of alternative locations that could have a lesser impact.

The other potential sites they considered are all clearly unsuitable in principle because they are all residential settings.

- It is also unclear from the assessment how big the coverage “hole” is or what the target search area is, or how close to the target area the pole needs to be. Importantly, less optimal locations need to be considered in order to gain community acceptance.
- The reference to the Walworth Appeal Decision in the case of Hutchison 3G (UK) Limited v. Borough of Southwark remains not relevant because the circumstances are not comparable. The setting of that pole was one of much higher buildings within an urban location.

Air ambulance:

The village green has been used by the regional air ambulance service on at least two occasions recently, in response to emergency medical need. While we appreciate that the use of the green by the air ambulance does not have regulatory status, it is one of very few sites locally that can be used for this critical purpose. The proposed location of the mast therefore risks preventing parishioners from receiving potentially life-saving interventions.

Highways:

The green and the footpath are in frequent use by young children. The cabinets especially will restrict their field of vision and also hide them from the view of drivers.

Conclusion:

For the reasons detailed above we strongly object to these proposals. In summary, the principal reasons for our objection include the unacceptable siting and appearance of the mast and cabinets, the misleading and inaccurate aspects of the application submission and the failure to properly consider alternative locations for the mast.

Other considerations which we consider to be material include the failure to consider the use of the location by the air ambulance and the visibility restrictions in connection with the highway.

Chalford Parish Council recognises the benefit of the expansion of the 5G network, in principle. We repeat our offer to work constructively with the applicant to identify a suitable appropriate site, as it did with the siting of the pole at Frith Youth Centre. We are aware that residents’ representatives also continue to be keen to engage constructively to the same end.