

UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL



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Minutes of the UPC Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 14th August 2023 at The Pavilion, Wealstone Lane, Upton, Chester.

Present – Alan Lingard (chair), Sue Stanley, Sherin Akhtar (committee members), Cllr Chris Jeffrey and David Evans (non-councillor member).

1. There were no visitors and members were reminded of emergency exits.
2. There were no absentees
3. There were no declarations of interest, although some members pointed out that they were ordinary members of Chester Zoo. Committee agreed such membership would have no influence over decision making in relation to the item listed under point 6 of the agenda.
4. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19th June 2023 were approved.
5. Members agreed to the introduction of two pieces of late information, one an objection raised by a local resident in connection with planning application reference 23/02153/FUL and also an application for a drinks and entertainment licence submitted by Chester Zoo
6. Planning applications

23/02153/FUL – Countess of Chester Hospital. Committee raised no objections to the plans submitted, but agreed that a comment should be inserted as consultee relating to sustainable construction and car parking (*see below*). It was acknowledged that the hospital campus housed operational health trusts, and as such the requirements of the site would continually change over time.

The comments entered on the planning portal by the resident of Warren Drive were noted.

It was noted that included within the documents submitted was a travel plan. Given the concerns previously raised by residents in connection with the new Women's and Children's building and in particular the temporary car park recently introduced, members expressed surprise that neither the public nor the Parish Council were consulted.

It was resolved that fresh dialogue should be engaged in with the stakeholders of the Countess of Chester campus. The clerk to write to the developers reminding them of their undertaking to keep residents up to date via the Parish Council with progress of their plans and inviting them to meet with the Parish Council, ward councillors, and members of the public. Date to be considered in due course.

Resolved to Comment– *Upton Parish Council has no objections to the proposed MBU but draws to the attention of the planning authority the requirements set out in Policy S1 Sustainable Construction of the Neighbourhood Plan. It further requires the applicant to monitor the impact of the loss of car parking spaces as a consequence of this development so that the local community is not adversely affected with additional parking in evidence on nearby streets.*

23/02203/FUL 10 Upton Lane

It was noted that the proposal will result in a much bigger dwelling. No objections were raised, but it was considered appropriate to comment on the portal with regard to sustainable construction, and also to ensure that the finish should complement the existing building style so as not to compromise the character.

Resolved to Comment -*The Parish Council raises no objections to the proposed works but would draw to the attention of the developer the Neighbourhood Plan for Upton and specifically policies S1- Sustainable Construction and PC2 – Conserving local character and distinctiveness.*

23/02418/TPO 22 The Beeches - No objections
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22/02129/FUL Chester Zoo –

Committee was supportive of the revised application to create 51 lodges on the site.

The Local Plan Part Two regarding the green belt supports development for zoological purposes, subject to various criteria.

The Neighbourhood Plan for Upton states – “Development that protects and promotes employment opportunities at these sites would therefore be positive in terms of local employment and sustainability”. (Note -the reference to “these sites” includes the Countess of Chester Hospital)

It was noted that the current development would result in a failure to achieve a Biodiversity net gain on the site, and Committee would expect that the Zoo will make this up on land within their ownership. A comment to this effect to be entered.

Resolved to Comment - *The Parish Council supports this application subject to the Zoo making good the biodiversity deficit arising from this development, on other land within its ownership.*

While not within the ambit of this planning application the committee turned its attention to the late information it agreed to receive with regard to a licence application which the Zoo

had submitted in respect of 1)the sale of alcohol and 2)staging various performances.
Concern was about the hours of business applied for - Monday to Sunday 09:00-00:30

It was resolved that this council

- 1) Should contact the licensing authority to establish whether this has yet been agreed, and
- 2) Make arrangements to meet with Zoo officials as a matter of urgency to establish its intentions in greater detail in this respect.

23/02377/CAT 54 Upton Park

Committee objected to the removal of a tree, referencing a policy set out in the Neighbourhood Plan where retention is always preferable, adding that should any tree be removed it requires two replacement trees to be planted.

The subject property is within a conservation area and it was agreed that removal of this tree would upset the physical character of the area.

Committee recommends reducing the crown rather than removing the tree.

Resolved to Comment – *The Parish Council objects to removal tree T7. The subject is within a conservation area and trees are an important part of the character. It would prefer the applicant to exercise the option of reducing the crown rather than removal and replacement.*

7. Future meetings

It was recognised that having fixed dates in the calendar to consider planning applications did not always result in meeting the requirements of the borough council when it requires consultee comments by a certain date.

Committee was reluctant to ask for extensions as a matter of course and would ask only when thought absolutely necessary.

It was resolved that the planning committee should adopt a hybrid system, whereby dates can be inserted in the diary, but these may have to be altered subject to circumstances. The next meeting date will be agreed at the closure of each meeting to be determined by prevailing circumstances.

It was resolved that Councillor Chris Jeffrey would join the committee with approval to be sought at the next full council meeting.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would be asked to agree to a proposal from this committee whereby in order to ensure quoracy of the Planning Committee at all times, the committee will have the power to co-opt any member of the Parish Council to the committee with full voting rights on a meeting by meeting basis.

8. The next meeting will be held at Upton pavilion on 12th of September at 4:30 pm.

Meeting closed at 7:45 pm