

East Harptree Parish Council

Present: Cllrs Andrew Jones (Chairman), Pam Carver (Vice-chair), Kate Gillingham, Richard Coombs and John Vinson.

Ward Councillor not present

Clerk: Sarah-Jane Streatfeild-James

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th October 2021 at 7.30pm in The Theatre, East Harptree

Minutes 2021/10

1. **Apologies for absence:** none
2. **Public forum:** no parishioners present
3. **Declarations of interest:** none
4. **Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on September 21st 2021:** accepted as a true record of the meeting. Unanimously agreed. A hard copy was signed by the Chair and returned to the Clerk.
5. **Planning applications:**
 - i) **21/03622/VAR** Application for Variation of Condition
Land Rear of Yearten House Water Street East Harptree
Description of Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (Plans List) of application 14/05836/FUL
EHPC has previously objected to this Variation. The architects have clarified that although the floor height will be raised, the overall ridge height of the roof will not be higher than was originally consented. Councillors agreed that the Planning Officer should be asked to specifically refer to the originally agreed ridge heights as a Condition in any approval of this application. EHPC remain concerned that the height of the eaves will never-the-less be higher, and this will impose on the neighbouring houses. Councillors would like clarification on whether this will also mean that the height of the first-floor windows will be higher than in the original permission. If this is the case it would have a very negative impact on the privacy of the immediate neighbours. The Planning Officer will be asked to confirm that this will not be the case. Councillors agreed to OBJECT to this Application unless this is confirmed, together with the inclusion of a Planning Condition that expressly refers to the originally agreed ridge heights. Councillors also remained unconvinced by the developer's explanation as to why the floor levels needed to be increased.
 - ii) **21/04415/FUL** Full Application - 5 Richmond Place East Harptree
Description of Proposal: Addition of two garage doors to existing carport structure.
EHPC OBJECTS to this proposal. Please read addendum notes below for a full description and reasons why this decision was reached.

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- iii) **21/04323/FUL** Full Application - Richmond House Middle Street East Harptree
Description of Proposal: Widening of existing driveway to create third parking space, to include removal of section of boundary wall, extension of hard standing, removal of section of step and addition of garage door to car port.

Please read the addendum below for background information about Richmond Place properties. However, in this case, in addition to this background and the conditions set out, if the three new parking spaces proposed in this new application are sufficiently wide to allow 3 cars to park then there will be no reduction in the overall parking spaces under this proposal. In those circumstances only, it may be appropriate for the planning condition (not to convert their existing car port) to be replaced with an equivalent condition to retain permanently, the third new parking space. This would allow the remaining carport to be converted into a garage.

So, in conclusion, PROVIDED the planning officer is satisfied that the 3 car spaces proposed are wide enough to allow 3 full size cars to be parked, then EHPC would SUPPORT this application. However, if the planning officer cannot confirm this point, EHPC would OBJECT for the reasons set out above.

- iv) **21/04290/FUL** Full Application

Site Location: Long Close High Street East Harptree

Description of Proposal: The proposal is for the conversion of an existing adjoining garage. The erection of a car port to adjoin the existing property and extend out from the East elevation of the existing garage. The re-roofing of the existing house and garage, from clay pantile to grey zinc. The introduction of six no. rooflights into the main roof.

This property is not in the Conservation Area, however, some residents object to the proposal to re-roof in zinc as they consider it not in keeping with the village. Whilst very expensive, zinc is considered carbon footprint friendly and although well built, this 1980's property is not of any architectural significance. Given the position of the property, Councillors decided not to object to the use of contemporary materials on this occasion. It was agreed that there was adequate parking and that the loss of the garage would not create problems.

We have a Dark Skies Policy. Previous planning permission has been granted for 5 rooflights, increased to six in this proposal. Councillors were very concerned about light spillage as the area in the immediate vicinity of this property supports a wealth of wildlife, including 13 species of bats, for whom the adjacent field is an important foraging area. Councillors therefore agreed to Object to this application, unless the Planning Officer attaches a specific Condition to any permission for the rooflights, to ensure automated blackout blinds are fitted to the rooflights. Also that any external lighting is sensitive to the location, so lighting must be downwards and on sensors.

6. Formal motions requiring a decision:

- i) Invoice for repair and paint of the village clock tower, to discuss overrun against the estimate. The invoice received for the work was £245 over the quote provided in Feb 2019. Part of the reason for this can be attributed to the work being delayed due to the pandemic, the wood was found to be in worse repair than anticipated. However, the pavement licence had not been accounted for and this increased the overall

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invoice. Councillors were recommended to pay £685 for the work by removing £110 which was the licence fee. Agreed to pay the scaffold and licence invoice directly £390 (+VAT). The Chair applauded Cllr Coombs for his attention to the Financial Regulations. Councillors also agreed to use reserves held from the previous years' budget for work to the clock tower which had been allocated in 2019.

- ii) Village noticeboard – proposal to replace current noticeboard. The clerk suggested that the noticeboard was in a state of disrepair and would benefit from being replaced. After discussion agreed that Cllr Gillingham to seek advice on whether it is possible to mend the current board. Agreed to postpone decision until next meeting. Project Newton is also seeking to replace the church noticeboard, agreed to have regard for the style of their board if the PC pursues a purchase.
- iii) The Queen's Green Canopy - an initiative to plant trees in celebration of the Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Agreed a good idea, but to discuss with East Harptree Environment Group (EHG) and ask for their thoughts on it, and whether it is something the village is already undertaking, or whether to pursue the idea with EHG.
- iv) To adopt the Asset Register – unanimously agree to adopt the Asset Register. Agreed to ensure it is updated when necessary.
- v) Accounting software package for Clerk/RFO -the clerk presented information about a software package called Scribe which would be of great benefit to the accuracy and ease of record keeping the PC finances. It would benefit the clerk in saving significant amounts of time on financial matters, including reconciling accounts, VAT reclaims, producing budgets etc. Quote for 1 year is £144, this will increase to £233 in second year. Councillors agreed unanimously to purchase the software for reasons mentioned above.
- vi) Remembrance Day Wreath – a parishioner is checking whether another wreath can be purchased on behalf of the Parish Council at this stage. Irrespective of this, councillors agreed to make a £50 donation to The Royal British Legion as they have in the past. This is budgeted for. If a wreath is available Cllr Gillingham to attend ceremony on 11th November.
- vii) To agree the protocol for the appraisal of EHPC clerks, as agreed and proposed by REMPAG. Unanimously agreed.

7 Finance:

- i) To note receipts:
 - 1.10.21 Second instalment of precept £7576.00
 - 6.10.21 Partial refund from East Harptree Environment Group, unused CIL monies from Wildflower project - £186.63
- ii) To note standing orders:
 - SJ Streatfeild-James - clerks salary (Oct)

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Paul Sperring - sweepers salary (Oct)

- iii) To review interim accounts at the end of the 2nd quarter of the financial year – checked and signed by Cllr Carver. Approved by councillors.

iv) The following payments agreed:

Date	Item	Payment to	Amount(net)	VAT	Gross
15.9.21	Scaffolding & pavement licence for clock repainting	Coll Scaffolding	£390.00	£78.00	£468.00
13.9.21	Clock repair and paint	P Watkin	£685	-	£685
15.10.21	Annual payment for domain name: eastharptreeparish.org	SJ Streatfeild-James	£99.99 (within budget)	£20.00	£119.99
12.10.21	Clerk's expenses, HWA, fuel, Zoom.	SJ Streatfeild-James	£25.04 (within budget)	£2.40	£27.44
1.10.21	Website support - 6 month period	Dan Stevenson	£150.00 (within budget)	-	£150.00

8. Matters of report:

- i) The Harptrees Charities Committee are meeting on Monday Nov 29th, papers to follow. Several councillors are able to attend the meeting.
- ii) Update from the Parish Liaison Meeting held on 13th October – Cllr Carver attended, and heard contributions from the newly appointed Police Commissioner Mark Shelford and the newly elected Metro Mayor for the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), Dan Norris. Mark Shelford discussed his vision to put more emphasis on prevention of crime in addition to dealing with incidents. He is the strategic lead and his role includes holding the Chief Constable to account.
Dan Norris discussed public transport, particularly more buses, but unfortunately the main focus will be on urban areas. Regarding Planning, it is his view that, “Green land that matters isn’t necessarily in the Green Belt.”
It was noted that as well as positives, there has also been a negative impact by the introduction of Clean Air Zones eg Bath, which has resulted in decreased air quality in some nearby villages which have seen an increase in traffic as a result.
Dina Romero also spoke and discussed the ‘Safety for Women’ project and noted a cross-party motion to address this. One suggestion is more street lighting, which although sensible, is counter to the village stance on maintaining the dark skies policy in a rural area. To discuss with resident who has considered this in East Harptree.
- iii) Minutes and papers from the CV Climate & Nature Emergency Working Group have been circulated to councillors – lots of ongoing projects within the group. One suggestion is to circulate a newsletter for residents in the Chew Valley regarding insulation and tips to save money as we approach winter. The group also responded to the recent Local Plan Partial Update consultation on behalf of the group, not Parish Councils.
- iv) Information received about a scheme to introduce car charging points in urban and rural areas, specifically for those without off-street parking www.chargemystreet.co.uk Further research is required to determine if the Parish Council should be trying to establish Electric

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Charging Points (ECP's) in the village, and expert help is required. EHPC is looking for someone to help council look into this. There are grants available to help people who have off-street parking and ECP's, and apps are becoming more common (these facilitate sharing of domestic ECP's). PC to consider whether to investigate sponsoring an ECV on public land eg the Playing Field car park.

6) Report of decisions taken under Covid-19 Special Measures: none

7) Correspondence received: none

Meeting closed at 21.35pm

Next meeting Tuesday 16th November 2021 in The Theatre, East Harptree

Addendum:

Background information regarding decision to planning Application 21/04415/FUL 5 Richmond Place and 21/04323/FUL Richmond House Middle Street.

(1) There are road "pinch points" in East Harptree where on-street parking causes significant bottleneck problems for the community. Proud Cross outside Richmond Place is one such area.

(2) The CVNP specifically identified this problem in rural villages with old road systems. Under the CVNP a majority of residents have voted to increase parking requirements to ensure that all developments provide sufficient off-street parking where this was justified.

(3) The original application for the Richmond Place development of 8 houses (then known as Pinkers Farm) was controversial. It was ultimately approved but on the basis of requiring 28 off-street car spaces to alleviate any problems at this specific site. The developer chose to build 11 of those car spaces as car ports. These were subject to a Planning Condition to be retained as such.

(4) Towards the end of the development, the developer submitted a new planning application (20/03382/VAR) to vary the original application asking to reduce the number of car spaces from 28 to 23 by converting 5 of the car ports into single garages. Ultimately, after much debate, the developer was only allowed to reduce the car spaces to 25 by converting 3 of the car ports into single garages but with a Planning Condition to reinforce retention of the remaining car ports for parking. The developer then chose to convert 3 car ports into single garages specifically for plots 4,7 & 8. All other plots, including Plot 5, were not included in this.

(5) Unfortunately, the application for no 5 Richmond Place (21/04415/FUL) completely ignores this bigger picture. We recommend all interested parties read the Planning Officer's Report for application no. 20/03382/VAR to understand this background more fully. In particular, application 20/03382/VAR imposes a specific planning condition on this property to retain their 2 car ports as such. It would be wholly inappropriate to ignore the extensive reasoning and work done by earlier planning officers and residents to deal with this longer term problem for "pinch points" in areas such as this.

(6) Finally, should officers be minded to ignore our points made above and seek to look at this application in isolation ignoring the rest of the development, then please note that the

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application has omitted to take into account the need for additional visitor spaces as well under the current planning policies. On an isolated basis, this would increase the number of spaces for a single development to 4 (rounded up) which their proposal would not meet.

(7) EHPC notes some residents' comments supporting the application on grounds of appearance/security etc. and we do share some sympathy with those. However, we feel the bigger picture and goal set out above should not be ignored especially after so much work has already been done by officers and residents alike to establish it. The decision to build these car ports was the developers, and the houses were subsequently bought together with existing planning conditions to retain the car ports.

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