Charmouth Parish Council

Council Office The Elms St Andrew's Drive Charmouth Bridport Dorset DT6 6LN

Telephone (01297) 560826 E-Mail clerk@charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 6.00PM ON TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT THE ELMS

In attendance: Cllrs Julie Leah (Chair), Katie Moore, Sally Roberts, Mike Smith and the Clerk, Lisa Tuck

PL26/27 PUBLIC QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR REPRESENTATIONS – No members of the public were present.

PL26/28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Apologies for absence were received from Judith Sheppard (previous engagement).

PL26/29 DISPENSATIONS – No dispensations had been received.

PL26/30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – No live declarations of interest were received. Julie Leah declared that previously her partner's view had been sought regarding Westcliff Road but not for this latest application.

PL26/31 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14 July 2026, circulated to members, were a correct record and these were signed by the Chair.

PL26/32 APPLICATIONS

Dealt with by delegated authority due to timescales:

(a) Application No. P/FUL/2026/03456 Little Friern, River Way – Replacement dwelling (as self-build/custom housebuilding as set out in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, including erection of domestic outbuilding and associated boundary treatments - **Charmouth Parish Council has no objection to the proposed development which complies with many policies of the Charmouth Neighbourhood plan regarding energy efficiency, improving the housing stock and creating housing in keeping with the area; the submitted planning statement gives a detailed breakdown of this.**

The proposed building is essentially within the footprint of the current build but with a higher roof area in one section which does not appear to impinge on the amenity of other properties nearby. The Parish Council is pleased to see the inclusion of bat tunnels, bird boxes and native planting to return the garden to a green space.

The Parish Council would also like to see water saving measures incorporated into the design where possible. It is assumed that the process of demolition and building will not affect the public footpaths, rights of way and road access for other residents.

(b) Application No. P/HOU/2026/03664 Greenhills, Meadow Way – First floor extension; single storey rear extension, single rear extension to garage; new porch extension; *replacement roof [amended description]* - **The Parish Council has no objection to this development as it complies with the**

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Neighbourhood plan by improving the accommodation whilst keeping a reasonable garden green space and not impacting upon parking. The Parish Council would like to see energy efficient measures such as solar panels incorporated into the build, water capture methods such as water butts and for any hard surfacing in new landscaping to be of permeable build. Approved 17/8/26.

(c) Application No. P/HOU/2026/04127 Commonside, Higher Sea Lane – Erect decking at rear of property – **The Parish Council has no objection to this proposal which is in keeping with the Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan. The scope of the decking is modest within a large garden. The decking will not add to any significant increase in overlooking of the garden of the adjoining property. The decking will enhance the property and increase the safe use of the amenity of the outdoor space.**

(d) Application No. P/VOC/2026/03532 Greenloft House, Lily Farm Buildings, Old Lyme Hill – Convert barn to holiday accommodation (with variation of Conditions 2 & 3 of Planning Permission 1/D/09/001624) the conditions to be removed to allow dwelling to be occupied as an unrestricted C3 dwelling.
Comments made on amended plan reiterated previous discussions - **Charmouth Parish Council has no objection to this application provided the comment from the Rights Of Way officer regarding maintaining the footpath is complied with. This states that "the full width of the public footpath must remain open and available to the public [as a footpath and not vehicular use], with no obstructions, materials or vehicles stored on the route", and that, "the granting of planning consent does not mean that the path will be diverted or extinguished and that a separate process is required to divert or extinguish the path".**

(e) Application No. P/FUL/2026/04039 Myskins, 5 River Way - Change of use of short term holiday let to form part of the dwelling house. Erection of a single storey flat roofed extension on the existing balcony to provide stair access down to lower ground floor & carry out alterations - **The Parish Council has no objection to this proposal. The addition of the flat roof extension will not impact significantly on the look of the house from the river side or impinge on the privacy of the adjoining properties as the existing balcony is large and can easily accommodate this extension. The change of use from a holiday let is not thought to be a problem as it is no longer used for this purpose. The conversions will enable more flexible living arrangements within the property enabling occupants with less mobility to use all areas of the property and have easier access to the garden. It also improves the use of housing stock for long term living which complies with the Neighbourhood Plan.**

<u>To be dealt with at the meeting:</u>

(f) Application No. P/OUT/2026/04299 Dwelling Westcliff Road – Outline application for the erection of dwelling with associated access and parking (scale and appearance reserved) – **attached Appendix A**

(g) Application No. P/HOU/2026/04128 4 Coastguard Cottages, Lower Sea Lane – Proposed two storey rear extension with window added to side and Juliette balcony - **The Parish Council has no objection this this application. The overall build appears to improve the usability of the house as a family property whilst also improving its energy efficiency which complies with the Neighbourhood Plans objectives to improve the current housing stock. The plan does not appear to be excessive in terms of the scale and in terms of the line of build of other properties in this row. There is still a significant garden area remaining. There is some concern that the property behind in Meadow Way might feel overshadowed, although there has been no objection.**

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PL26/33 APPROVAL/REFUSAL/WITHDRAWAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION/TREE APPLICATIONS
The portal is checked weekly and to date no other applications are showing as approved/refused.

(a) Application No. P/HOU/2026/02735 Kittiwake, Higher Sea Lane – Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with an Orangery; extension of porch canopy and installation of posts. **Granted 14/07/26**

(b) Application No. P/HOU/2026/02845 Sanctuary Cottage, Higher Sea Lane – Balcony above sunroom. **Granted 20/07/26**

(c) Application No. P/HOU/2026/03091 8 Downside Close – Convert existing garage to a bedroom and utility room. Remove existing external fire stair, balcony and overclad and insulate all existing external walls and roof to improve thermal performance and provide additional brise soleil solar shading to the south elevation. Construct an open sided car port and studio and construct a timber garden pergola. **Granted 05/08/26**

(d) Application No. P/FUL/2025/05167 Romany, Lower Sea Lane – Erection of Replacement Dwelling **Still showing as undetermined**

(e) Application No. P/TRT/2026/03345 5 George's Close – T1 Yew, Reduce and maintain shape by approx. 0.5m, lift limbs over the garage; T2 Leylandii, Reduce height by approx. 2mto previous reduction points, reduce neighbours side by 0.5m to fence line; T3 Holly, Reduce height by approx. 2m to old reduction points, reduce neighbours side by approx. 0.5m to fence line; T4 Elms, Fell; T5 Griselinia, Reduce by approx. 0.5m maintain shape remove deadwood; T6 Magnolia, Fell - **Approved 16/07/26.**

(f) Application No. P/TRC/2026/03646 St Andrew's House, St Andrew's Drive – T1 Honey Locust – Sectional Dismantle; T2 Cherry – Reduce size of crown (reduce by 2m as needed), clear building and crown raise to 2.5m; T3 Strawberry – Reduce size of crown (reduce by 2m as needed), clear building and crown raise to 2.5m - **The Parish Council has no objection to the proposed work on the cherry tree and strawberry tree. The removal of the honey locust appears to be necessary as the tree is in poor condition. However, the loss of this tree will have a significant impact. The tree is visible from the road (St Andrew's Drive) and helps to soften the appearance of the row of windows of the building whilst providing shade and cooling to the garden. In addition, there are the obvious environmental benefits of carbon sequestration, absorbing the increasingly strong coastal winds, and biodiversity benefits. The Parish Council would like to see it recommended that a replacement tree is planted. Approved 10/08/26.**

(g) Confirmation of previously advised provisional TPO/2026/0008 The Court, The Street.

(h) Application No. P/TRD/2026/03733 Thurlstone, Westcliff Road – T1 Ash – Remove damaged branch under Regulation 14 (S198), **does not require consent**. **Approved 14/07/26.**

(i) Application No. P/TRT/2026/03699 The Elms and Recreational Ground – Various tree works as per submitted schedule – **Parish Council's application via Hardy Tree Surgeons. Approved 11/08/26.**

PL26/34 CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER

(a) Correspondence from resident at Fernhill Heights concerning restrictions – confirm previous information before writing to DC as per July Minutes.

(b) BCP & Dorset Council Employment Land Study to Inform Local Plans – email from DAPTC circulated 2 March with proposed questions to Town and Parish Council in readiness for consultation in late March – nothing further received as yet.

(c) Confirmation that following the consultation on Dorset Council Local Plan in Autumn 2025, the Government has introduced a new system for preparing local plans and is bringing forward further significant changes to national planning policy. As part of these changes, local authorities are now expected to meet a strict deadline of December 2026 for the preparation of their plans if

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proceeding under the legacy system. Having carefully considered the new national requirements and the progress made on the Dorset Local Plan to date, Dorset Council is proposing to move to the new plan-making system.

(d) Information received from DC about the next Planning and Building Control forum for Parish and Town Councils on Tuesday 8 September. Attended in person by Mike Smith, who gave a summary of the presentation and would circulate the slides when they have been received.

(e) Email from Ward Cllr Belinda Bawden – explaining that as the new Government planning regulations are implemented the system of delegation will change to limit the scope at Dorset Council level for decision-making on planning applications, making town and parish council even more significant in guiding planning officers. It may therefore be helpful moving forward for Belinda to engage more at the initial consultation stages.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm.

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Appendix A

As this application is for outline planning permission, the Parish Council can only make some restricted comments.

Regarding the application forms, there are some errors:
The proposal **is** within 20 m of an existing watercourse, as a ditch runs alongside the Southern Boundary of the plot.

The proposal **is** within 500 m of the Natural England designated priority habitat SSSI cliff area (as per attached).

It will be possible to link the sewerage into the mains system so this should not be an "unknown".

Tree warden comment:
The tree report states that **a tree will be removed** but also states that **"no trees require removal"** and one tree requires transplant. The Parish Council is very concerned that this matter is not clear and is deliberately misleading.

The oak tree is defined as a tree with "low value and low impact". In reality, it is a very attractive mature tree (possibly Quercus alba) which helps to screen the house below, provides a pleasant street scene and, as it is an oak, provides significant support for biodiversity. There is no requirement for the tree to be removed, other than the statement that it is not worth the required protection. This is a very concerning approach. The Neighbourhood Plan clearly states that it is important to protect the mature gardens of this part of Charmouth.

General comments:
The plot was expected to be a potential building plot when the road was initially created and divided into plots. However, as it has not been built on so far this could be determined as infilling.

Whilst the Parish Council appreciates that the housing need in Charmouth is for small starter properties, in reality this could be a greater negative impact on an environmentally sensitive site due to the greater requirement for parking (2 spaces per property), likely need for hard standing in gardens, and the increased requirement for installing water, sewerage, electric, etc compared to one property. The increased traffic from multiple owners, on a privately owned road, would also be a consideration. In reality, the cost of the site would also mean that affordable housing would be an unlikely option for this plot.

Style of build:
The Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan encourages sympathetic style of build for new houses in keeping with houses in the immediate area. The design of properties in this road is extremely variable reflecting the change in architectural styles as the area has developed and as houses are re-built to improve energy efficiency or reflect change of use. The aim of low-level builds is to be less imposing and to create energy efficiency. In this case, while the design is not the same as the 1970 - 1990's style builds around the plot, this low level would be expected to have a reduced impact upon the open character and views, as opposed to a pitched roof. It is important that a build style is used which includes materials that blend with the environs.

Stability and natural springs:
There are considerable concerns about the ongoing development of this area of Charmouth in terms of ground stability and surface water drainage. The creation of more hard standing and weight to create the house, parking and possible patio areas will have an impact on stability and water capture of the hillside and movement of water within the land. It is worth noting that the Southeast corner of the plot can be very wet and this needs to be taken into account.

Removal of amenity from neighbouring properties:
There is concern that the position and scale of the build will impose upon the privacy and amenity of Thurlstone. If the application is successful, the final design would have to be closely monitored for local impact, in particular the level on imposition on Thurlstone.

Primary Residence
The Neighbourhood Plan states that the property becomes a primary residence.

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Environmental concerns
The Parish Council are extremely concerned about the proposed removal of the oak tree at the entrance of the land.

The build, parking and any associated hard standing will result in the loss of what is currently meadow area. Whilst it does not fall within the BNG requirements, it is still a significant area currently supporting biodiversity and the Parish Council would like to see measures put in place to mitigate the loss of this by for example planting of more hedgerow.

The Parish Council would like to ensure that environmentally positive build is followed : regenerative energy, green roofing, water capture, permeable hard standing and biodiversity enhancements such as bat boxes, bird boxes etc.

