



## Shere Parish Council

### Planning Committee Minutes

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2025, 6.30pm**

Tanyard Hall, 30 Station Road, Gomshall GU5 9LF

**Present** – Councillors P Tompkin, B Harrap, M Taylor-Cotter, T Florent (Chair)

Assistant Clerk – C Lawrence

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**25/P27 Appointment of Vice Chair**

It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Tompkins be appointed Vice Chair for the Planning Committee.

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**25/P28 Apologies**

Cllrs R Smith & R Davey

It was reported that Cllr Smith had resigned from the Planning Committee. Members expressed their thanks to Cllr Smith for his invaluable contribution and expertise in planning matters, which would be greatly missed.

For this meeting, Cllr Tompkins nominated Cllr Florent to act as Chair; this was unanimously agreed. A permanent Chair will be elected at the September meeting.

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**25/P29 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) Declarations by Councillors in accordance with The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. (SI 2012 No. 1464).**

Cllr Taylor-Cotter declared a personal interest in planning application 25/P/01045.

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**25/P30 Approval of the Minutes** taken on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Approved and signed as a correct record.

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**25/P31 Questions or requests from members of the public to the Council in relation to the business on the agenda or future items for discussion.**

No members of the public present.

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**25/P32 Consideration of Planning Applications:**

25/P/00797 - The Nookery, Upper Street, Shere, GU5 9JA

Erection of a timber fence on the eastern boundary (retrospective application).

**No objection.**

25/T/00161 - Shere Car Park, Upper Street, Shere, GU5 9HE

Silver birch: fell

**The Committee declared an interest as the tree is on land it manages.**

25/P/01045 - Drydown Farm, Hound House Road, Shere, Guildford, GU5 9JG

Construction of horse riding arena with fence.

**Shere Parish Council raises no objection to this application and welcomes the applicant's commitment to addressing biodiversity matters in a thorough and constructive manner.**

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25/P/01001 - Meadow Cottage, Westfield , Hoe Lane, Abinger Hammer, Dorking, RH5 6RS  
Erection of first floor rear extension, addition of render and cladding to elevations and changes to fenestration and doors. Installation of solar panels to the main house and carport roof.

**No objection.**

25/P/00967 - Netherlands Wood, Albury Estate, Guildford, GU5 9TE  
Proposed mixed-use forestry and sustainable eco-retreat comprising of 32 tourist cabin accommodations with associated facilities, landscaping, parking and access.

**Shere Parish Council object to this planning application.**

**The site at Netherlands Woods is within the London Metropolitan Green Belt, the Surrey Hills National Landscape, an Area of Great Landscape Value, the Clandons Downs Site of Nature Conservation Importance, and the Biodiversity Opportunity Area: North Downs Scarp & Dip; Mole Gap to Reigate.**

**It also comprises ancient woodland (Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites, or “PAWS”). Adjacent to and beyond the site boundary there are further PAWS, Areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and Sites of Specific Scientific Interests.**

**There are no rights of way within the site, but the North Downs Way National Trail borders the site to the south and a public right of way follows the northern boundary of the site.**

**The proposal is to build 32 luxury one and two bedroom tourist cabins, each with a fire pit, dotted around the 80 acre site, as well as a service cabin, a wellness centre, a bin store, new tracks, and parking for both cars (38 spaces) and bicycles (64 spaces). This is a significant development in a unique, fragile and heavily protected site.**

**We have concerns about the harm to the site and to the surrounding areas that would result from the construction works themselves and from the ongoing activities, including footfall, traffic, light pollution, and the obvious fire risk posed by the fire pits.**

**Crucially, if this development were permitted to go ahead, it would cause irreparable harm to the site, its flora and fauna. It would fundamentally alter the nature, look and feel of the site itself and of the surrounding areas.**

**It is precisely to protect against developments like these that the Surrey Hills were designated an AONB in 1958 (now National Landscape), and that the site has been further designated as set out above.**

**Section 245 (Protected Landscapes) of the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 places a duty on relevant authorities (including local authorities) in exercising or performing any function in relation to an AONB in England, to seek to further the statutory purpose of the area. The statutory purpose of the National Landscape is to conserve and enhance the area’s natural beauty.**

**The National Planning Policy Framework and the Guildford Local Plan both require great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty within National Landscapes and state that the scale and extent of development within these areas should be limited. Exceptional circumstances must be demonstrated to justify major developments. We consider the proposed development to be a “major development” for these purposes, and no exceptional circumstances exist or have been demonstrated.**

**Nature is our most precious asset, it is irreplaceable, and it must be protected. We invite you to deny this application, for which there can be no justification.**

<b>25/P34</b>	<b>Local Plan Update</b> None.
<b>25/P35</b>	<b>Planning Correspondence</b> Notification of planning applications and objections for 32 tourist cabins at Netherlands Woods, Albury Estate.
<b>25/P36</b>	<b>Enforcement Action</b> 6 low priority open cases noted. 2 closed cases noted. Notification of enforcement action on 1 case was noted.
<b>25/P24</b>	<b>Environmental Issues</b> None.
<b>25/P25</b>	<b>Councillors' Business relating to planning matters</b> None.
<b>25/P26</b>	<b>Date of the next Planning meeting:</b> 6.30pm on 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2025 at Tanyard Hall, 30 Station Road, Gomshall.

Meeting closed 18.51