

DITTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON MONDAY 18th JUNE 2018

PRESENT: CLLRS P DALTON (CHAIR), MRS A THROSSEL, MRS K DENNISON, J LOVER, A MULCUCK, M PORTER, MRS J THWAITES, P JOBLING and MRS J COOPER
MRS N GREENAWAY - Clerk of the Council
MRS G JEFFS - Administrative Assistant

101. OPENING OF MEETING

The meeting was opened by the Chair at 7.30pm.

102. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were **RECEIVED** from Cllr Mrs Dearden The previously notified reason for absence was recorded in the Absence Book Ref:393 and **ACCEPTED** and **APPROVED**.

103. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned to allow the Chair to welcome the 13 members of the public present who wished to address the Parish council regarding their concerns over the planning applications to remove further trees by the churchyard. Cllr Dalton said his personal opinion was that although the Council had previously deferred decisions about trees to the TMBC Tree Officer this approach should now change. Cllr Mrs Cooper advised she had been approached by many members of the public about this issue and agreed the way applications are considered, needs to be reviewed.

All residents present were disappointed at the lack of local consultation when approval was given to fell the 19 trees as many were unaware until the work commenced. The Church Warden said that the church was under the impression that the prior notification was to pollard the trees, not fell them. It was agreed TMBC's notification system was not sufficient for applications in the Conservation Area. Another resident stated that when he contacted TMBC he was advised the application went through under planning notice rather than planning application based on information from the TMBC Tree Officer. Several residents gave accounts of how distressed they were to see the devastation caused by the removal of the trees in an area where they had loved ones as there was now no privacy. Another resident said she was unaware until someone handed her a letter. A resident asked how people are notified about applications and Cllr Dalton said that TMBC Planning should notify those properties affected by an application. Someone else asked why no-one was there when the work was being done. The Church Warden advised that they could not do anything as the work was not on their land. A resident said that he was looking to take a legal challenge and also asked that the plan be called in rather than delegated to a TMBC Officer. Someone asked about the "totem pole" left. The Church Warden advised that this was within the Churchyard and had to be cut this way because the tree next to it had a hollow middle and was subject to wind stress and it was already starting to regenerate.

It was discussed if it was possible to replace the fallen trees with something fast growing to screen off the open space as to allow grieving families the privacy they would expect. It was **NOTED** it is not possible to place new trees the Churchyard side as this would disrupt the graves with tree roots in the future.

The Chair concluded the adjournment by assuring those present that all their concerns would be taken into consideration and the Parish Council will be supporting the residents objections to this new application and would be writing to TMBC to express their wish for TPOs to be placed on all trees in the conservation area and wider consultation is carried out for future applications and also that it would seek assurance that if the applicant does not own the tree that the landowner is aware.

104. **PLANS RECEIVED FOR COMMENT**

RESOLVED to take item (b) first.

- (b) TM/18/01246/TNCA – 37 The Stream, Ditton ME20 6AG
T1 Elderberry to fell to ground level, T2 – T9 Sycamore trees to dismantle to a coppice stool on each stool on each stump, T10 Yew tree to prune approx. 10%

RESOLVED this Council objects to this application in support of the many resident's concerns about the impact further tree removal would have on this part of the Conservation Area. Thirteen residents attended a meeting of the Parish Council's Planning Committee on Monday 18th June each having objected to this application and wishing to express their dismay about the impact the previous application to fell trees at this site has had. The Council is also aware that many other objections have been lodged on the planning portal. Another concern was very few neighbouring properties were asked to comment on the application. Such an application that affects the visual impact of the conservation area, affects the wider community visiting the Churchyard and not just the immediate properties.

Council would also ask this application is called in to be decided by the planning committee as this is a very sensitive issue that is very important to a large proportion of the community.

As this and other recent applications have raised so many concerns, the Parish Council will be writing separately to you to address these concerns further and ask that TPOs are placed on all trees in the conservation area and wider consultation is carried out.

Cllr Mrs Cooper asked that it be **NOTED** in the minutes that all decisions are collective decisions of the Council and not the Parish Clerk and it was unfair and inappropriate for anyone to aim criticism or accusations at the Clerk.

- (a) TM/18/01263/TPOC – 31 Ditton Place, Ditton, ME20 6SX
T1 Horse Chestnut to reduce by 2 to 3 meters selected branches in the lower crown to help shape and balance overall tree canopy. Also to reduce in height the secondary stem that is closest to the house, this stem would be brought down to the next suitable pruning point a reduction of approximately 2 meters in height. The tree is currently approximately 21m high and 15m across.

RESOLVED This Council has no objection to this application as long as only these works are carried out.

- (c) TM/18/01245/TNCA 43 The Stream Ditton, ME20 6AG
T1 Lime tree to fell to ground level and replace with field Maple or ornamental Acer#

RESOLVED This Council objects and would also ask this application is called in to be decided by the planning committee as this is a very sensitive issue that is very important to a large proportion of the community.

As this and other recent applications have raised so many concerns, the Parish Council will be writing separately to you to address these concerns further and ask that TPOs are placed on all trees in the conservation area and wider consultation is carried out.

- (d) TM/18/01113/FL – 125 Woodlands Road, Ditton ME20 6HF
Demolition of porch. Erection of part single, part 2 storey extension.

RESOLVED This Council has no objection to this application.

105. **PLANS DEALT WITH BY TMBC AREA SUB-COMMITTEE**

- (a) TM/18/00207/FL – East Malling Research Station New Road East Malling West Malling Kent ME19 6BJ
Commercial high- tech glasshouse development with attached serviced building for growing new varieties of soft fruit plants.
APPROVED 22.05.2018

- (b) TM/18/00772/FL – 1 Franklin Kidd Lane, Ditton ME20 6FH
Erection of an oak framed rear garden room
APPROVED 24.05.2018

106. **KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES**

NOTED, None Received

107. **CORRESPONDENCE**

NOTED, None Received

108. **CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 8.01pm

Chairman
2nd July 2018

