Burlescombe Parish Council

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting at Wesetleigh URC Hall on 22 October 2026

Present: Councillors Elliss-Brookes, Forward, Smith and Walker together with the Clerk.

The Clerk advised that the first task was to elect a Chair.

PC001/2627/1 Election of Chair
Councillor Smith proposed and Councillor Walker seconded the proposal that Councillor Elliss-Brookes be nominated as Chair.

Given no other names were proposed, the Planning Committee elected Councillor Elliss-Brookes as its Chair.

PC001/2627/2 Election of Vice Chair
Councillor Forward proposed and Councillor Walker seconded the proposal that Councillor Smith be nominated as Vice Chair.

Given no other names were proposed, the Planning Committee elected Councillor Smith as its Vice Chair.

PC001/2627/3 Welcome by Chair, apologies for absence and introductions
Councillor Elliss-Brookes welcomed those present to the inaugural meeting of Burlescombe Parish Council's Planning Committee which had been set up to look at planning applications where the deadline for comments fell outside the normal Parish Council meeting dates and no extension could be granted or an application was due to go to Mid Devon District Council's Planning Committee meeting.

It was noted that there were no apologies and given this was a public meeting, those present introduced themselves.

PC001/2627/4 Declarations of Interest/Dispensations
Planning Application 26/00604/FULL
Councillor Forward advised that she was a resident of South View and whilst not directly affected by and having no pecuniary interest in the application, she felt she should take a step back from discussions.

PC001/2627/5 Minutes of Previous meetings
This being the inaugural meeting of the Planning Committee, there are no minutes to approve.

PC001/2627/6 Public Participation
It was noted that members of the public could speak for a period of 3 minutes on matters they wish to bring to the attention of the Parish Council. These matters may be related to the items on the agenda or other matters that would be taken forward to the next Parish Council meeting.

Local residents raised their objections to Planning Application 26/00604/FULL:

- The proposed one-bedroom bungalow had been provided two parking spaces – other properties in South View currently used the proposed site for parking. Whilst the application indicated that parking spaces would be provided for residents, this would not replace the unofficial parking site being lost. With 14 houses in the South View, a total of 28 parking spaces would be required. Cars would, therefore, have to park on the road.
- If cars were parked on the road, it would increase the road safety issues already experienced as a result of blocked visual splays for nearby roads and homes.
- The play park and Westleigh URC Hall were both opposite the proposed building and would be impacted by cars having to park on the road.

- The application made reference to good public transport. The extent of bus services in Westleigh was one bus a week to Tiverton on a Friday. The nearest station was Tiverton Parkway. Any resident would require as car as indicated by the two parking spaces allocated.
- Residents noted that two disabled parking spaces had been created in South View further restricting parking.
- Residents noted that the application did not Aaddress the issue of flooding. The site was located on an underground water course which rose during wet weather making gardens at South View boggy and the current soakaways were not adequate to cope with the amount of run-off water currently being produced. This was exacerbated by blocked field ditches behind the properties.
- Residents also noted that it was proposed to link to the existing sewage which experienced frequent problems.
- The trees bordering South View could require pollarding or taking down and residents were not aware if any TPO's were in place.
- Residents questioned whether one additional one-bedroomed bungalow would provide a significant benefit against the comments listed above.

The Parish Council noted residents concerns and would be discussing a further response to the application at this meeting. Residents were also able to submit their own comments on the planning portal or email their Mid Devon District Council representatives. All comments submitted before the Planning Officer formalised his report would be included.

As a Mid Devon District Council application, it would go to a MDDC Planning Committee and residents would have the opportunity to submit questions and speak at that meeting either in person or online.

The Parish Council noted that MDDC's Planning Committee meeting in November had been cancelled and the next meeting was scheduled for 2 December 2026.

PC001/2627/7 To consider the Parish Council's response to the following planning applications and receive decision notices.

Planning applications:
New:
26/01277/FULL
Proposal: Removal of Condition (5) of planning permission 22/01784/FULL Conversion of barn to 2 dwellings relating to blocking up of 1st floor low level windows on South East elevation of both barns using blockwork timber and larch cladding
Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 305225 113378 Moorhayes Farm Uffculme
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 305225 / 113378
Parish: Burlescombe 06

The Parish Council noted that application related to the applicants inability to install windows in the existing position as detailed on the original planning application.

The Parish Council RESOLVED that it had no objections to this application.

Existing:
26/00604/FULL
Proposal: Erection of one dwelling and associated works
Location: Former Garages and Forecourt South View Westleigh
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 306041 / 116837
Parish: Burlescombe 06

The Parish Council noted that the last document uploaded on the planning portal was 14 September advising that an extension had been agreed to 6 November 2026.

Given that MDDC's Planning Committee in November had been cancelled, it was likely that this would be extended again.

The Parish Council noted that the Tree Officer had objected to the application stating that in the absence of a BS5837:2012-compliant Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), Tree Constraints Plan (TCP), and Tree Retention Plan (TRP), together with a draft Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and outline Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS), he was unable to support the application and, therefore, raised a holding objection.

It was understood that once this information was received, the Tree Officer would be providing a further report.

The Parish Council would be looking to provide a further comment once all the above noted reports had been uploaded onto the Planning Portal.

In the meantime, given the concerns of residents, the Parish Council would submit a comment as a result of this meeting.

The comment would address material planning considerations:

Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
Appeal Decision 6011431 26/00151/PIP Land at NGR 305520 114082 North of Waterloo Court Uffculme
The Planning Inspectorate had dismissed the Appeal on the grounds the application not sustainable: Whilst services and facilities may be reached by relatively short car journeys, this does not negate the fact that future occupiers would remain heavily dependent on the private car to meet their day-to-day needs. The need to rely on motorised travel for even routine journeys is indicative of a location that offers limited opportunities for genuine travel choice and weighs against the proposal in sustainability terms.

It is evident that this application relies upon the occupants utilising a car.

Nature conservation
A number of concerns had been raised in relation to bats and bird nesting and this could not be commented upon until all the relevant documents had been uploaded to the planning portal.

Parking and highway safety
As detailed in the comments made during the Public Forum, this application takes away all the unofficial parking in South View and will force cars to park on the main road running through the village and the associated concerns relating to highway safety and the impact on local facilities in particular the Play Park and Westleigh URC Hall which provided events for senior citizens and the youth club. The Westliegh URC Hall was also one of the parishes Emergency Hubs.

Overlooking/loss of privacy as well as loss of light or overshadowing
From the drawings, it was difficult to ascertain if any existing residential home would be affected by overlooking.

National Planning Policy Framework
As detailed in the Appeal decision, reliance on a private car was not sustainable and given the lack of public transport, misrepresented in the application, given there was only one bus a week. There was no provision for electric car charging.

The Parish Council noted the results of its own survey in support of developing a Parish Neighbourhood Priority Statement. Residents key concerns related to lack of car parking facilities and public transport. Residents had also felt that there should be no further without an improvement of infrastructure including the road network and local facilities.

At the recent Plan Mid Devon Parish Councillor and Clerk Meeting on 29 September 2026, the following key statements were made:

- Presumption of sustainable development - **unless harms substantially outweigh benefits**
- "Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework."
- i.e. 1.5m new homes and the national housing interest "trumps" local policies unless adverse effects can be proven."

In this instance, the Parish Council felt that the building of this single one-bedroomed bungalow would have a significant adverse effect on the many existing residents of the village and provide very limited benefit given that this was social housing that relied solely on the use of a private car.

The Parish Council also questioned whether the site could be accessed to allow the build to go ahead given the restricted access for large vehicles.

The Parish Council were concerned at the response from Devon County Council Highways who had only quoted standard procedures without fully understanding the impact.

It was also noted that the two sites proposed in Burlescombe in the recent Housing and Economic Land Available Assessment (HELAA) had been deemed to be unviable.

Decision Notices:
The Parish Council noted the following decision notice.

26/01162/PNAG - No Objection – Prior Approval Not Required – 29 September 2026
Proposal: Prior Approval for the erection of an agricultural storage building
Location: Land at NGR 307428 115815 Velhay Burlescombe Devon
Site Vicinity Grid Ref: 307434/115818

Other planning matters:

Local Green Spaces
Given the extension to the closing date to 7 January 2027, the Planning Committee would ask all Parish Councillors to consider responses to the questionnaire. The Parish Council would include the green areas of Westleigh and Burlescombe play parks and the ORL.

The provision of a buffer zone along the canal would be further expanded on at a Parish Council meeting but the Clerk advised that parishes had been asked to look at the canal and consider areas where development would be detrimental to the Country Park. An example, was that Halberton Parish Council were considering the area around the Swan's Neck which was a well-used area that could be severely impacted by development in close proximity.

East Cullompton and the Garden Village
Planning Committee to consider responses to the questionnaire
East Cullompton & Culm Garden Village | Let's Talk Mid Devon
Councillor Forward would prepare and circulate a response to the questionnaire given the closing date was 30th October 2026. The response would be forwarded to Parish Councillors.

PC001/2627/8 Date of the next Planning Committee Meeting
The Planning Committee would meet as and when necessary.

Signed _____ Date _____
Chair