

Uffculme Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting Held
Monday 9th June 2025 at Magelake

Meeting Open – 19:07

Present – Councillors Hallchurch (Chair), Kingdom, Horne (19:09), Cornish and Edwards

Apologies for absence – Councillor Blackman (holiday)

Minutes of meeting held on 19th May 2025

Approved as correct record.

Public Session – There were 3 members of the public present, wishing to make representations on 25/00752/FULL. Concerns were raised regarding the suitability of the 10cm pipe planned (due to existing bungalows also using the services); the lack of SWW objection, due to lack of information provided to SWW; the report being misleading by stating that the foul water condition had already been discharged on the other half of the development; and that the preference would be that any Management Company be outsourced to a professional organisation. The members of the public again expressed their concerns in respect of this planning application in general.

MDDC – Planning Decision Notices

1. **25/00616/PNAG** - Prior notification for proposed excavation to form an agricultural slurry lagoon at Land at NGR 311967 110082 East of Hayne Farm, Blackborough – **REFUSED**

Tree Preservation Orders

No applications

Planning Committee

None

Planning Appeals

None

Planning Applications

As attached

Meeting Close – 20:03

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- **25/00676/CAT** – Notification of intention to dismantle to ground level 1 Cypress tree in a Conservation Area at 17 Fore Street, Uffculme, Cullompton

The parish council has no objections in respect of this planning application.

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- **25/00683/CAT** – Notification of intention to fell 1 Cherry tree within the Conservation Area at Cleve Cottage, Craddock

The parish council objects to this planning application. It was resolved that alternative works had not been considered fully, as part of the overall scheme, and that a reduction and lift would be a more suitable alternative, in order to promote the protection of the tree in the Conservation Area.

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- **25/00719/FULL** – Construction of equine manege at Land at NGR 309526 112497 Northcott Farm, Ashill

The parish council has no objections in respect of this planning application.

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- **25/00732/CAT** – Notification of intention to reduce and lift the crowns of a group of Sycamore trees by 4m within the Conservation Area at SG Uffculme Ltd, Station Garage, Bridge Street

The parish council has no objections in respect of this planning application.

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- **25/00733/CAT** – Notification of intention to remove 1 Scots Pine tree within the Conservation Area at 2 Mill Cottages, Uffculme

The parish council objects to this planning application. It was resolved that there was a lack of consideration for the protected landscape and outlook, which includes this historical tree. The application is not accompanied with a formal tree report and the Parish Council would therefore like to see a full arboricultural survey to accompany this application, due to the impact this application would have on the overall character and appearance of the conservation area due to this tree's visual importance.

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- **25/00752/FULL** – Variation of Condition 3 of planning permission 22/00432/FULL (Erection of 5 dwellings) to allow substitute plans relating drainage at Land at NGR 306758 113093 (South of Allotment Gardens), Clay Lane

The Parish Council objects to this planning application. The proposed variation, along with the replica plans for 24/01618/FULL, continues to present a material nuisance to neighbouring properties, causing undue distress to residents and leading to a loss of hedgerows adjacent to a conservation area, thereby failing to preserve the character and setting of the local environment, a key material planning consideration under both national and local policy.

There continues to be insufficient trial pits and investigatory work to accurately determine the soil infiltration rate specific to this site, not the adjacent development. This absence of site-specific geotechnical data compromises the feasibility and long-term sustainability of any proposed drainage strategy, which is critical for assessing flood risk and ground conditions — both being material planning issues.

The recent infiltration testing was not conducted on the area within the development boundary but on neighbouring land, thus failing to satisfy the requirements set out in the original refusal of application 24/01618/FULL. Moreover, the testing does not appear to comply fully with the BRE Digest 365 (DG365) standard, as outlined in the latest technical memo (ref HCE 0994). This lack of compliance represents a failure to address material engineering and environmental standards necessary to support surface water drainage planning.

While the applicant references Devon County Council (DCC) Highway Authority's position on restricting connections to the highway surface water system, there remains no supporting material justification for not exploring options to upgrade the development to an adoptable standard. This would allow a connection into the existing and strategically located Clay Lane highway drain, a route that appears to have been prematurely discounted without adequate technical or feasibility assessment — both of which are material to infrastructure planning and drainage hierarchy compliance.

Furthermore, the potential for a sewer connection via Chapel Hill remains insufficiently explored. Although it may pose a higher cost to the applicant, economic considerations of the developer are not material, whereas the ability to mitigate flood risk and impact on neighbouring properties is. Given the proposed scale of the drainage system (300m reach for 10 dwellings), this alternative appears viable and should be further evaluated as a matter of proper drainage planning.

It is also noted that South West Water continues to issue generic advice without conducting a site-specific assessment, despite the sensitive nature of the location and proximity to existing dwellings and conservation boundaries. This undermines the integrity of the consultation process. The Parish Council requests a formal referral to South West Water for a bespoke consultation response, including exploration of alternatives within the public sewer network, which should be assessed prior to considering private land solutions.

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The cumulative failure to carry out required investigatory and technical work — particularly related to ground conditions, drainage capacity, and compliance with statutory technical standards — illustrates a disregard for material planning policies relating to environmental protection, infrastructure adequacy, and the amenity of existing residents.

In view of these unresolved and material concerns, should the Planning Officer be minded to approve this application, Uffculme Parish Council requests that it be called in for determination by the Planning Committee, to ensure full scrutiny under appropriate planning principles.