

Draft Minutes of the Whimble Parish Council Planning Meeting Held on Monday 2 March 2026 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Denise Dearden (Chair)
Cllr Jo Yarwood
Cllr Sarah Johnson
Cllr Lynda Patrick
Cllr Angela Trimblett
Cllr Todd Olive

Also Present: Amy Tregellas (Parish Clerk)

There were two members of the public present (leaving after minute 5).

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Venton.
Cllr Olive arrived to the meeting at 7.06pm.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Johnson declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 7 (planning application 25/2641/FUL) as she knows the applicant.

Cllr Dearden declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 9 (Local Government Reorganisation consultation) as she is employed by one of the local authorities.

Cllr Olive declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 9 (Local Government Reorganisation consultation) as he is a councillor on East Devon District Council.

3. Public Participation

Mr Kevin Wheaton was present regarding his planning application but did not wish to make a statement but advised he was there to answer any questions councillors might have when considering the application.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Whimble Parish Council Planning Meeting held on Monday 5 January 2026.

(proposed by Cllr Dearden; seconded by Cllr Johnson)

The Chair proposed, and councillors agreed, that agenda item 7 be brought forward due to Mr Wheaton being present.

5. 25/2641/FUL – Site to adjacent to 1 Rose Cottage, Church Road, Whimble

Erection of a new dwelling.

The discussion took place around:

- The dwelling is a five-bedroom house with an integrated single garage located on the vacant site between Rose Cottages and Orchard Nook and opposite Wymcott in Church Lane.
- The development is within the Conservation Area.
- The walls would be cement render, the roof would be natural slate, and the windows would be painted softwood.
- The plot of land does not lie in the curtilage of Rose Cottages.
- The existing boundary wall would be partially demolished but would be reused within the development

- Councillors asked if the ridge line of the roof would be kept in line with the other rooflines. Mr Wheaton confirmed that the plan is to dig down to ensure that the roof line is inline with the other properties. Also, that the front of the house will be inline with the other buildings.
- Councillors asked if there would be sufficient parking within the development to accommodate the fact that it is a five-bedroom house. Councillors felt that there is no potential to park in the road (i.e. Church Lane) so parking would have to be onsite.
- Concerns were raised regarding construction traffic and how that would work given that Church Lane is the main access route into the Village. Mr Wheaton confirmed that the plan is to have a layby only whilst the construction work is ongoing.
- Mr Ward confirmed that Mr Wheaton lives in the village and is the landlord of the local pub. He now wishes to retire and wishes to build this property to live in.
- No comments had been made by members of the public or statutory consultees

The Council **RESOLVED** that it has no objection to the application, subject to the Conservation Officer and other statutory consultees being satisfied with the proposed development.
(*moved Cllr Yarwood; seconded Cllr Patrick*)

Mr Wheaton and Mr Ward left the meeting.

6. 25/1692/MRES – Land at Cobdens, North of London Road, Cranbrook

Approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission ref. 22/0406/MOUT, comprising appearance, layout, scale, landscaping and additional accesses (in accordance with Condition 35) for 368 dwellings; layout and access for 57 self-build plots; a local centre; the Parsonage; two locally equipped areas of play (LEAP); suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANG); the main local route (MLR); and associated infrastructure together with the discharge of conditions on the outline of condition 8 (LBDS), and the partial discharge of conditions 9 (Design Code), 10 (Wildlife Hazard Management), 11 (LEMP), 12 (Floor levels), 13 (Surface Water Drainage), 14 (Wildlife Corridor), 15 (LBDS), 16 (Tree Protection), 18 (Railway Fencing), 19 (Transfer Plans), 20 (Tree Rooting Volumes), 21 (Junction design), 22 (Junction Materials), 25 (Advance planting), and 28 (Site Investigation)

These amendments relate to amended and additional plans comprise an update to the red line boundary, and changes to the layout landscaping and house types.

The Parish Council is being consulted on this application as a neighbouring authority to Cranbrook.

Councillors felt that as the Council has already considered this application twice (1 December 2025 and 19 January 2026) it has no further comments to add.

7. 26/0222/FUL – Long Meadow, Hand and Pen Lane, Whimble, EX5 2PX

Erection of a single-storey east & west extension, porch to the east elevation and a detached double garage incorporating a log store.

Discussion took place around:

- Comments had been made by South West Water which were their standard comments relating to surface water run off.
- The proposed extension expands the size of the kitchen/dining/living area, creates a utility room and an additional bedroom with en-suite, as well as a double garage with attached log store
- The materials would be in keeping with the existing property – i.e. red brick walls, concrete roof tiles and UPVC windows.
- No hedges or trees would be impacted by the development
- Councillors could see no reason to object
- Concerns raised about access issues during construction

The Council **RESOLVED** that it has no objection to the application
(*moved Cllr Yarwood; seconded Cllr Johnson*)

8. Update on planning application status

The councillors noted the update on application status, and the following change has occurred since the last update (following updates from EDDC as the Local Planning Authority):

25/1928/FUL – Land lying to the South of Rull Barton, Rull Lane, Whimble

Proposed Demolition of Existing Barn With Replacement Dwelling & Garage (Following Class Q Prior Approval For Proposed Change Of Use From Agricultural Barn To One Dwellinghouse Ref: 24/1518/Var)

Approved

25/2254/FUL – Oak Grove, Strete Raleigh, Whimble, EX5 2PP

Agricultural and forestry storage building with extension to existing access.

Withdrawn – resubmitted as 26/0125/FUL

25/2424/AGR – Land opposite Rull Barton, Rull Lane, Whimble

Construction of galvanised steel framed agricultural building

Approved

25/2315/FUL – Country House Estate Whimble.

Creation of amenity facilities comprising an access road, parking spaces, amenity block (including toilets and seating area), children's playground, and dog-friendly amenities on agricultural land. Attenuation pond to aid drainage

Refused. EDDC reasons 'There is no policy support for a roadside service area sited away from a trunk road or motorway and it has not been demonstrated that there is a need for such a facility given the proximity to other nearby service areas. Furthermore, the proposal by way of the extent of hardstanding proposed, the utilitarian building and the addition of external lighting would lead to a creeping urbanisation of the countryside, and light intrusion within the countryside which would lead to harm to the character and appearance of the countryside. The proposal is therefore contrary to the provisions of Local Plan, Strategy 7 - Development in the Countryside, Strategy 46 - Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONBs, Policy D1 - Design and Local Distinctiveness, Policy EN14 - Control of Pollution, and Policy TC11- Roadside Service Facilities of the Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, the Landscape Guidelines contained within the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Landscape Character Assessment March 2019 and Paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended).'

25/2371/ADV – A30 Slip North/Exeter Road/B3174 London Road Roundabout

Erection of 3 no. non-illuminated sponsorship signs on the roundabout, one sign facing each road entrance.

Refused. EDDC reasons 'The proposed signs would introduce a greater risk of harm to public safety, by means of interfering with road users' visibility, causing driver distraction, and by introducing a collision hazard (in particular to motorcyclists). It therefore conflicts with policy D4 (Applications for Display of Advertisements) of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Policy DS03 (Display of advertisements) of the emerging East Devon Local plan and paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.'

25/2372/ADV - A30 Slip South/Exeter Road/B3174 Roundabout Aller Grove EX11 1GN

Erection of 4 no. non-illuminated sponsorship signs on the roundabout, one sign facing each road entrance.

Refused. EDDC reasons 'The proposed signs would introduce a greater risk of harm to public safety, by means of interfering with road users' visibility, causing driver distraction, and by

introducing a collision hazard (in particular to motorcyclists). It therefore conflicts with policy D4 (Applications for Display of Advertisements) of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Policy DS03 (Display of advertisements) of the emerging East Devon Local plan and paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.'

25/1939/FUL – Jasmine Cottage, Whimble, Exeter, EX5 2NT

Demolish existing sunroom and front porch; new front porch, single story extension and lean-to link on west elevation; fenestration alterations, remove cement render and replace with lime render; replace car port and alter vehicular access to bell-mouth entrance. Additional supporting statement and amended plans

Approved

25/1940/LBC – Jasmine Cottage, Whimble, Exeter, EX5 2NT

Demolish existing sunroom and front porch; new front porch, single story extension and lean-to link on west elevation; fenestration alterations, remove cement render and replace with lime render; replace car port and alter vehicular access to bell-mouth entrance; internal room layout changes and replace staircase. Additional supporting statement and amended plans

Approved

25/2568/ADV – Country House Estate, Whimble, EX5 2NL

Three non-illuminated free standing totem signs located in the vicinity of InstaVolt's EV charging site (retrospective)

Decided – split decision. APPROVED - Sign C (Internal 2m Totem). REFUSED - Signs A & B (Roadside Totems)

Reason for Refusal: 1. The roadside totem signs (Signs A and B), by reason of their siting, scale, height and overall commercial appearance, appear as visually intrusive and incongruous features within a rural setting, detrimental to the visual amenity, character and appearance of the countryside. 2. The advertisements therefore conflict with Policy D4 of the East Devon Local Plan, Policy DS03 of the Emerging Local Plan, and the objectives of the NPPF, which require advertisements to be well designed, respect amenity and be appropriate to their surroundings

25/2376/LBC – 3 Rectory Cottages, The Square, Whimble, EX5 2ST

Renew covering and insulate flat roof extension and include solar light tube.

Approved.

9. Local Government Reorganisation Consultation

Cllrs Dearden and Olive declared personal interests at the start of this item of business. Cllr Dearden due to working for one of the existing local authorities and Cllr Olive due to being a councillor at East Devon District Council.

Councillors considered the information circulated by the Clerk relating to Local Government Reorganisation in Devon, which had been published by the Government.

The current structure of local government in Devon split across three tiers:

- Tier 1 - Devon County Council
- Tier 2 - Eight District Councils – East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge and West Devon
- Tier 3 – Town and Parish Councils

There are also two Unitary Councils already:

- Tier 1 - Plymouth Unitary Council and Torbay Unitary Council
- Tier 2 – Town and Parish Councils

The five proposals for Devon are:

Option 1 Devon County Council proposed 3 unitary councils. These would comprise the current areas of:

- **Devon Unitary Council:** East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge and West Devon
- **Plymouth** to remain unchanged
- **Torbay** to remain unchanged

Option 2 South Hams District Council, Teignbridge District Council, West Devon Borough Council proposed 3 unitary councils. These would comprise the current areas of:

- **Exeter and Northern Devon Unitary:** East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon and Torridge
- **Plymouth** to remain unchanged
- **Torbay and Southern Devon Unitary:** South Hams, Teignbridge, Torbay and West Devon

Option 3 East Devon Borough Council, Mid Devon District Council, North Devon Council, Torridge District Council proposed 3 unitary councils. This includes a request to split existing district council areas between the proposed new councils. These would comprise the current areas of:

- **Exeter and Northern Devon Unitary:** East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, and Torridge
- **Plymouth Expanded:** Plymouth plus parts of the parishes of Bickleigh, Brixton, Shaugh Prior and Sparkwell from the neighbouring district of South Hams
- **Torbay and Southern Devon Unitary:** Remaining parts of South Hams, Teignbridge, Torbay and West Devon

Option 4 Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council proposed 4 unitary councils.

This includes a request to split existing district council areas between the proposed new councils. These would comprise the current areas of:

- **Devon Coast and Countryside:** The rest of Devon
- **Exeter:** Exeter plus 15 parishes from within Teignbridge District Council, 28 parishes from within East Devon District Council and 6 parishes from within Mid-Devon District Council.
- **Plymouth:** Plymouth plus 13 parishes from South Hams
- **Torbay:** Torbay plus 22 parishes from within Teignbridge District Council and South Hams District Council.

Option 5 Torbay Council proposed 4 unitary councils. This includes a request to split existing district council areas between the proposed new councils. These would comprise the current areas of:

- **Exeter Council:** Exeter plus 15 parishes from within Teignbridge District Council, 28 parishes from within East Devon District Council and 6 parishes from within Mid Devon District Council
- **Plymouth Council:** Plymouth plus 13 parishes from South Hams
- **Rural Devon Coast and Countryside Council:** The rest of Devon
- **Torbay Council** to remain unchanged

The Government is currently consulting on the five options and is asking the following questions

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support existing devolution arrangements?

Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Question 8: If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1 to 7 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on the proposal. Where a proposal includes a request that the Secretary of State modifies a proposal to achieve boundary change, or the proposal affects wider public services, such as fire and rescue authorities, you will be asked an additional question:

Question 9: This is a proposal that is accompanied by a request that the Secretary of State considers boundary change or that affects wider public services. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal sets out a strong public services and financial sustainability justification for boundary change?

Question 10: If you would like to, please use this free text box to explain your answer to question 9. For each question, you can provide the following answers:

- strongly agree
- somewhat agree
- neither agree nor disagree
- somewhat disagree
- strongly disagree
- don't know

Discussion took place around:

- Whichever option is chosen by the Government will face a massive challenge to be organised and ready for the 'go live' deadline.
- Likely to be 'safe and legal' by the 'go live' date – i.e. having the Constitution and structure of the Council in place and key things such as finance – ensuring staff can be paid, suppliers can be paid and money can be paid into the Council. It will take years to harmonise everything across the Unitary Councils especially given that each existing council will have contracts with different end dates. Planning unlikely to be harmonised across the Unitary Council area until a new Local Plan has been developed and approved.
- Whichever option is chosen will cause massive disruption to staff with likely redundancies (probably at the top of the organisation to start off with). The uncertainty relating to jobs is likely to lead to a disgruntled, unhappy and unproductive workforce.

- The amount of work that will have to be done to move to the new structure and to harmonise in the years following will likely have an impact on the residents and communities in Devon, i.e. being internally focused rather than externally focused.
- The bigger the authority the harder it is to hold them accountable and to have meaningful change. The optimum population number per Unitary Council is maximum of 500,000 as any larger results in diseconomies of scale.
- Also the bigger the authority the greater the population per councillor will be. This has the potential to damage democracy given that some current Devon County Councillors have large patches and struggle to visit all Town and Parish Council meetings. The greater the population per councillor the more time councillors would have to put in, meaning that it could become a full-time job. This may rule out younger people standing to be councillors if they work full-time.

The Councillors asked the Clerk to write the Council's response taking into account the points listed above, and that it is considered at the 16 March 2026 Council meeting.

10. Chair's Business

The following items were raised under Chair's Business:

- Cllr Johnson confirmed that she had sent around a job description for Parish Lengthman for North Tawton Parish Council. This will be an item on the 16 March 2026 Council agenda
- Councillors raised concern regarding a young man in the village putting stones and other debris in the river near the Square. The concern is that by blocking the river this could potentially lead to flooding. The Council spent money having the stream cleared in 2025. One of the councillors confirmed that she knew the individual and would speak to him and ask him to remove the stones and debris from the stream.
- Whimble Victory Hall Committee have asked the Council to publicise the 250k lottery

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Chair:

Date: