

Cherhill Parish Council – Planning Working Group Terms of Reference (first draft) **Nov 2025**

Cherhill Parish Council has a “General Terms of Reference for Working Groups of the Parish Council” document. The terms of reference defined here supplementary to these and are specific to the Planning Working Group. The two documents should be read together.

Purpose

The Planning Working Group exists to:

1. **Review and comment on planning applications** where Cherhill Parish Council is a statutory consultee and to make recommendations to the Council for a formal response to the Wiltshire Council Planning Officer.
2. **Identify planning applications outside the Parish** that could affect Cherhill and submit appropriate comments.
3. **Produce a Neighbourhood-Planning strategy** for adoption by the Parish Council.
4. **Evaluate the existing Neighbourhood Plan on an annual basis** and prepare a public report on its effectiveness.

The Group is purely advisory – it has no decision-making authority, holds no monies and cannot spend funds.

3. Membership

Requirement	Details
Core members	Minimum of 3 Cherhill Parish Councillors (selected by full council).
Ward representation	Ideally at least one member from each electoral ward of the Parish to ensure geographic balance.
Additional participants	The Clerk may provide administrative support. The Group may invite residents, planning applicants or experts (e.g., planning consultants) to attend meetings, but only councillors may vote on recommendations.
Term of office	One year, reviewed at the Annual Meeting in May when the Group’s terms of reference are also refreshed.
Chair	The Group elects a Convener (must be a councillor) at the first meeting of each year. The Convener chairs meetings, moderates email/online discussions, defines the agenda and ensures actions are followed up.
Declaration of interest	Members must declare any personal or business interest in a specific application and potentially recuse themselves from discussion and voting on that item, depending upon the level of interest. The Convener records and manages all declarations.

Meetings

- **Frequency** – The Group meets monthly if there are planning applications to discuss.
- **Format** – Hybrid: either via video-conference (Zoom/Teams) or in-person at a suitable venue – this could be anywhere with the agreement of the participants.
- **Quorum** – Minimum of three members, including the Convener.
- **Agenda** – Circulated three clear working days before the meeting. Typical agenda items:
 1. Review and approval of last minutes
 2. Review open actions
 3. Declarations of interest

4. Statutory-consulted planning applications received since the previous meeting.
 5. External applications of potential impact.
 6. Progress on the Neighbourhood-Planning strategy.
- **Minutes** – Recorded by a designated councillor or the Clerk (if present), approved at the next meeting.

Core Responsibilities

- **Application Review** – Examine each statutory-consulted planning application in detail, prepare a concise recommendation (support, no-objection, or objection), along with clear rationale for the recommendation, and submit it to the Parish Council for forwarding to the Wiltshire Planning Officer.
- **External Impact Monitoring** – Scan Wiltshire Council’s planning portal for proposals outside the Parish that could affect traffic, amenity, etc; submit comments where appropriate.
- **Neighbourhood-Planning Strategy** – Draft a short-term (12-month) and long-term (3-year) strategy outlining the future of the CCNP2 and how to protect the rest of the parish outside CCNP2’s area. Present the draft to the Parish Council for endorsement.
- **Annual Review of the Neighbourhood Plan** – Assess whether the Plan’s policies are being implemented, compile a public report (≈ 2–3 pages) summarising successes, shortfalls and any recommended amendments, and present it at the main Council meeting.

Reporting & Accountability

- To the Parish Council – After each meeting the Group supplies a written summary of recommendations. An annual review report is presented to the full Council.

Communications

- **Primary contact** – The Convener is the main point of liaison with the Clerk, who in turn is the single point of contact for the Wiltshire Planning Officers.
- **Community outreach** – The Group may issue a short newsletter or a website update to inform residents of significant applications or milestones in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Powers

The Group may:

- a. Develop a timetable and strategy for undertaking its work.
- b. Co-ordinate activities to promote community consultation.
- c. Gather facts and evidence to test proposed solutions and policies.
- d. Work with local parish councils to jointly prepare draft planning application responses or work on the Neighbourhood Plan strategy.
- e. Use evidence, including that from consultations, to develop recommendations to full Council.

Objective of Pre-Application Consultation with the Working Group.

The objective of pre-application consultation with the parish council is to bring local knowledge and planning policy together at an early stage, so that proposals can be improved, major issues identified and community concerns understood before a formal planning application is submitted