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Minutes of the Beaulieu Parish Council Planning Committee held on January 13th 2026

1. Attendees: Cllr Steele [Chairman], Cllr Hubbard, Cllr Rowland, Cllr Reece and Nicky Deering [Clerk]. Attending for planning application 25/01405 FULL Steve Rigby, Ewa Bielecka, Andrew Dykes, Christina Dykes, June Kirkman, Lucy Pelham, David Blackeby, Paula Blackeby, James Higginbotham, Alice Higginbotham, Matt Phillips, Phil Johnson, Rachel Pearson, Anna Bernard and Jane Cooper.
2. Apologies: Cllr Dolbear
3. Conflicts of interest in planning application 25/01405 FULL: Cllr Knight and Cllr Dolbear.
4. Minutes of the meeting held on December 16th 2025 were authorised later in the meeting when the full Committee was present.

The following planning applications were discussed:

25/01405 FULL Field west of Tree House Study Centre, Hartford Woods, Beaulieu, SO42 7YL

Application for change of use to car park with access track, including surfacing, to serve the Tree House Study Centre.

The Chairman outlined that this proposal was for change of use of the land to facilitate a permanent car park and new access to be used in association with the Countryside Education Trust's Study Centre in Hartford Woods. The car park amounting to 5,940 sq. metres would be located in part of the field known as Hides Field and situated to the west of the Tree House Study Centre accessed by an existing gravel track. She stressed that the change of use only applied to the area marked in red on the map of the site. The car park would have a permeable gravel surface providing space to accommodate 46 cars and will be screened to the west by

trees. A new vehicle access route would join an existing gravel track surrounding one of the overflow car parks and a works compound.

The Chairman informed the meeting that this application had been subject to extensive pre application advice from the National Park Authority and that the Planning Officer did not raise any major concerns that could not be addressed with their conclusion being that the proposal was likely to be supported by the National Park Authority. The Parish Council had also been informed that at the pre application stage the Landscape, Ecology and Tree officers had raised no objections.

Parish Briefing: For the benefit of the Planning Committee the Chairman outlined the main considerations to be used for assessing this application:

1. Impact of the proposal on the character and visual appearance of the Landscape [SP7]
2. Impact on adjacent trees
3. Impact on the amenities of the nearby dwellings [SP15]
4. Managing the use of the car park to activities associated with the Tree House Study Centre
5. Consideration should be given to the social and economic development of the educational facility.

Rachel Pearson, speaking in support of the application, said that the Estate had proposed this application to provide the Tree House Study Centre with more accessible parking to assist the Charity adjust their business model now that they had lost their local authority funding. The existing ten parking spaces is proving inadequate and shuttling children up from the Museum car parks was proving problematic. She suggested it would solve the problem of inconsiderate parking on the narrow access track into Hartford Woods and that it was not the Estate's intention to allow an increase in the currently agreed number of non-educational events at the site.

Phil Johnson, the Chairman of the Countryside Education Trust's Trustees informed the meeting that the Trust was struggling financially following the loss of state education funding and that this increased more accessible car parking was necessary to secure the Charity's future.

Jane Cooper, CEO of the Countryside Education Trust, confirmed that the current parking situation at the Tree House Study Centre was inadequate and did not suit the current needs of the Charity. She informed the meeting that there was no scope to increase the existing parking at the site as it would involve the removal of ancient woodland. She stressed to enable the Charity to carry out its stated educational function they require safer access to the site for all, no matter their age or ability.

Matt Phillips highlighted the excellent work undertaken by the Countryside Education Trust which was being hindered by the narrow access tract into Hartford Wood which was dangerous for children to walk up; a view supported by Anna Bernard the Trust's Operations Manager.

The Chairman disclosed to the meeting that 9 letters of objection had been received and had been posted on either the National Park Authority or the Parish Council websites. She then invited objections from Steve Rigby, Andrew Dykes and Christina Dykes who raised the following issues:

1. Inappropriate change of use from agricultural use and gradual suburbanisation infringing planning policy SP 17,
2. Unproven need for additional parking and no consideration given to other potential sites for the additional parking
3. Concern over the use of the car park for commercial purposes unrelated to the educational function of the Charity leading to an expansion of these activities
4. Harm to residential amenity, the dark skies policy through light pollution and impacts on local ecology and ancient woods.

The Chairman opened up the meeting to a discussion on the application with Cllr Rowland questioning whether the extra parking was justified in view of the original 2007 planning permission [ref. 07/91713] for the Tree House Study Centre which contained Condition 7 requiring the Countryside Education Trust to produce a Green Transport Policy. He informed the meeting that in this document they agreed to promote a sustainable transport policy using for example the Motor Museum car parking facilities and limiting activities run at the Tree House to small educational functions. Jane Cooper responded by saying that where possible a sustainable transport policy was being followed and that the residential children walk to the Tree House Study Centre from their main site in Palace Lane. However, the change in the type of groups they are now trying to attract requires more accessible parking nearer the Tree House Study Centre if the full educational potential of the site is to be achieved. The possibility of increasing the existing car parking at the Tree House Study centre was further discussed but was considered difficult as would require the removal of ancient woodland.

The resident's concern that the extra car parking would lead to an increase in parking for non-educational events, such as weddings, was discussed with Rachel Pearson who indicated that the Estate did not intend the current agreed level of these type of events to increase and if the position on this policy changed the local residents would be consulted. It was pointed out that the venue was restricted to only ten TENS licences per year which would act to limit the number of social events run every year.

Cllr Hubbard highlighted the current very serious financial position of the Countryside Education Trust with the Chairman of the Trustees and CEO confirming this to be the case with the proposed increase in more readily accessible car parking being essential for the longer term survival of the Charity.

Following further discussion the Chairman asked the Committee to summarise their views and the Committee voted unanimously to recommend permission but would accept the decision reached by the National Park Authority's officers under their delegated powers.

Proposed: Cllr Reece

Seconded: Cllr Hubbard

MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting held on December 16th 2025 were unanimously passed:

Proposed: Cllr Hubbard

Seconded: Cllr Reece

25/01366 2, New Cottages, Salternshill Lane, Beaulieu, SO42 7XE

The Chairman informed the Committee this was an application for a two bay oak framed open fronted garage with attached work shop .The building would have softwood weatherboards and a clay tile roof.

The Committee agreed that despite having not received a Parish Briefing they knew this property well and that as it had no other outbuildings on the site this was an acceptable proposal in terms of size and design.

The Committee recommended permission for the following reasons but would accept the decision reached by the National Park Authority's officers under their delegated powers:

1. Design considered appropriate for the site
2. Proposal compliant with DP37 as subservient to the main dwelling.

Proposed: Cllr Hubbard

Seconded: Cllr Rowland

25/01356 VAR Spearbed Copse, Dock Lane, Beaulieu, SO42 7YJ

Application to vary Conditions 1,4,9,12,13 and 15 of planning consent 24/00783 CAC for replacement dwelling and associated works.

The Chairman reported that a covering letter to this application states that this project has reached the stage of detailed drawing and design work which is resulting in a number of inevitable adjustments which are not considered to be substantive design changes and do not alter the approved form, massing or external appearance of the development. These changes related to the Machine Store & Plant Room, Pool House, Forestry Barn and the Main Dwelling.

The Committee agreed that the most substantive change to the original plans was to the Main Dwelling where the removal of a previous permitted balcony had resulted in an additional 19 sq. metres being added to the building's habitable space. This was considered acceptable providing it did not take the dwelling over the 30% allowance of new habitable space and remained compliant with planning policy DP36.

The Committee recommended permission providing the extra 19 sq. metres of habitable space did not take the dwelling over the 30% limit.

Proposed: Cllr Hubbard

Seconded: Cllr Reece

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm.