

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council meeting held at Shirenewton Recreation Hall
on **Monday 1st September 2025** at 7.00pm

Councillors: P. Butterworth (Chair), G Mitchel, I Martin, G Todd,

Also in attendance: J McLagan Clerk, Mrs. L Brown County Councillor, Mrs S Todd.

1. **Minute 5105 – To Receive Apologies for Absence** Cllr C Martin.
2. **Minute 5106 – To confirm the minutes** from Shirenewton Community Council meeting held on 4th August 2025 as a true record.
The minutes were approved and signed by Council.
3. **Minute 5107 – Public Participation** – Mrs S Todd discussed works that had been completed in regard to Planning matter DM/2025/0092, safety changes to the gate & access to field.
4. **Minute 5108 – To Disclose personal and pecuniary interests.** Cllr Todd declared an interest in planning matter **DM/2025/00902**.
5. **Minute 5109 – Items for Planning – 4 Items**

DM2025/01018 – Front double storey extension, rear dormer extension and rear porch - The Rosary Earlswood NP16 6AS

The Rosary is on the top road from Shirenewton to Gaerllwyd, the first house before the dip down to the crossroads. It is a bungalow with a rearward dormer roof section, laid out with living room, kitchen, dining room, 2 ground floor bedrooms (1 ensuite) bathroom and utility. Upstairs is a further bedroom bathroom and study/bedroom. The house sits in a substantial plot. The front faces across the upper reaches of the Mounton stream and is prominent in the landscape.

Externally, the existing roof ridge line will be increased from approx 5.6m to 6.5m to accommodate 2 large fully glazed gables at the front. The original side entrance is relocated to the rear with the addition of a porch, the existing narrow side rear 2 storey extension is to be matched with a 2 storey extension to the front adding a further 2m to the depth of the house. The internal volume will increase by 39%.

Roofs are to be finished in slate, the flat roof having a standing seam; the walls will be stonework, render and anthracite grey cladding, and windows with dark grey upvc. There will be a new shrub bed in front of the house and a hedgehog house. There is no comment on bats or other protected species.

The proposal would alter the internal layout to place all 4 bedrooms (2 ensuite) upstairs and provide a snug and an office/study downstairs.

Councillors may wish to consider :

- a) the impact on the landscape of the higher roof ridge and large gables which will be prominent to view from the road and across the valley
- b) whether the increase in volume at 39% is justified, given that the house already provides (in effect) 4 bedrooms and two bathrooms plus study.
- c) Policy H6 requires the protection of the character of the countryside by making extensions subordinate to the existing building and to respect its existing form including the pattern and shape of openings and materials. Although the existing building is not a traditional farmhouse, its structure might be considered typical of the residences constructed over the last century in the locality.
- d) the proposed exterior finish colours.

Recommendation: Objection on the grounds that :

1. The proposed mass of the design and in particular the excessively prominent gables the ridges of which are as high as the main roof ridge which is itself to be raised by approx 1m are not subordinate to the existing building.
2. The design, particularly of the fully glazed gables together with the excessive increase in volume and footprint, imposes an uncharacteristic dominance over the open countryside and would be clearly visible from the public highway and beyond. The proposed gable windows bear no resemblance to the existing house nor to the neighbouring properties and the original form of the dwelling is unrecognisable.
3. Insufficient details are given in regard to the external timber finishes including paint colours, landscaping, bats and other protected species known to inhabit in the vicinity, and external lighting. In particular, no details have been given for the use of a specialist glass coating to prevent bird strikes on the glazed gables. SCC reserved the right to make additional comments when these further details are provided.

Cllrs voted unanimously to object.

DM/2025/01069 single storey extension which is effectively a porch to our front door area and a utility room behind the porch; dormer conversion with rear ground and first floor extension – Willowbrae 8 Orchard Rise Shirenewton

Willowbrae is a dormer bungalow with a kitchen/diner, living room, study, bathroom and 1 bedroom downstairs, with a further 2 bedrooms and a toilet upstairs.

SCC considered a previous application DM/2024/00643 in June last year , and raised no objections save for requesting clarification of the materials and colours or a condition requiring these to be the same as existing. A neighbour registered an objection to the then proposed dormer windows to the front due to privacy concerns and the design was subsequently amended and approved by MCC.

The current proposal adds a porch and utility room on the front to the left hand side of the building. As in the previous application the kitchen/diner is to be enlarged at the rear under a new gable roof which now shares the same ridge height of 6m as the main roof, allowing the extra bedroom with en suite upstairs. The recessed glazing on the rear elevation's gable end proposed in the previous application has now been removed, and replaced with flush glazing on the gable end. A pitched roof dormer window is to be added also at the rear. The east facing ground floor rooms will have the windows replaced with patio doors.

There is a public sewer in the vicinity of the property though it is not thought the extensions will encroach within 3m. Welsh Water have however asked that no additional surface water be drained into the public sewer.

The property borders onto part of the Gwent Wildlife Trust's fields from the rear elevation.

Councillors have the opportunity to give fresh consideration to the application and may wish to consider in the context of the neighbouring properties gardens and the fields whether the proposal satisfies Planning policy DES1 (set out in annex 1 below) which requires developments to :

- a) maintain reasonable levels of privacy and amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties,
- b) respect built and natural views and panoramas where they include ...attractive or distinctive built environment or landscape foster inclusive design;
- c) ensure that existing residential areas characterised by high standards of privacy and spaciousness are protected from overdevelopment and insensitive or inappropriate infilling.

Councillors may also wish to have further detail on exterior finishes and colours, and the landscaping scheme, together with further consideration of the fully glazed gable and the number of roof lights impacting on the neighbouring properties, birds bats and other nocturnal fauna and the night sky.

Recommendation: Objection on the grounds that :

1. The proposal, particularly the dominant glazed gable end, does not conform to policy DES1 as it does not maintain reasonable levels of privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties nor respect the natural views and panoramas.
2. Insufficient details are given in regard to the external finishes including roofs, materials, paint colours, landscaping, and lighting.

3. The recessed glazing on the rear elevation's gable end proposed in the previous application has now been removed and replaced with flush glazing on the gable end. No details have been given for the use of a specialist glass coating to prevent bird strikes on the dominant glazed gable.

SCC reserves the right to make additional comments when these further details are provided. **Cllrs voted unanimously to object.**

DM/2025/00902 - Change of Use application – Gaerllwyd Farm

Councillors will recall this application is submitted by fellow Councillor Geoff Todd in relation to his field at the Gaerllwyd Crossroads for change of use from agricultural to equine, with construction of an L shaped stable block and hard standing. The entrance to the field is on the junction and the hard standing of some 500sqm will enable vehicles to pull off the road and turn to exit forward. There is some ranch fencing to secure the horses during vehicle movements.

MCC Highways initially expressed concern that the field gate should be set back some 6-12m from the highway to allow vehicles to pull off the highway or leave before having to open/ close the gate, and to form the access a short distance further south from the road junction for greater safety. Councillors raised no objection subject to MCC Highways first objection.

Revised plans have now been submitted which show the field entrance still at the crossroads but with the field gate set back 8.2m to allow 6m horse van to pull in off the road. Inside the gate there will be a turning area sufficient to allow vehicles to be turned to permit forward facing exit.

MCC Highways have yet to comment further. Councillors may consider :

- a) Highways earlier suggestion to move the entrance further away from the crossroads, opposite the chapel or beyond, also had safety considerations having limited visibility being on the inside of the bend in the road.
- b) Whether some hedging on either side of the field entrance should be removed to improve highway visibility.

Recommendation:

No objection subject to planning conditions providing for

- a) a traffic mirror as proposed by the applicant
- and

- b) keeping the hedging adjacent to the field entrance trimmed back to ensure clear vision for vehicles entering and leaving the field.

Cllrs voted unanimously no objection with Cllr Todd Abstaining

DM/2024/00456 – Reconsultation - Demolition of cottage and outbuildings, construction of replacement dwelling, replacement of corrugated iron parking shed with double garage/bat loft, bin store and excavation for pond at Ostrey Bully Hole Road Earlswood.

SCC considered this application in May last year and objected in the following terms :

Objection on the grounds that the proposed house is too prominent in its setting given :

- 1. its visibility from the B4325 and
- 2. the roof ridge height being 2.2m (plus chimney) above the existing house roof ridge height, consequent upon the existing house being 1 ½ storeys and the new house being 2 storeys
- 3. the lack of compatibility of the utilitarian appearance of the new house with the surrounding traditional Monmouthshire farm building landscape, particularly in the scenic upper reaches of the Moun-ton valley.

County Councillor Louise Brown also objected and attended a site meeting, the outcome of which can be considered in Monday's meeting. For the assistance of Councillors the summary from the meeting last year is set out in annex 2 below.

Annex 1

Planning Policy DES1 - General Design Considerations

All development should be of a high quality sustainable design and respect the local character and distinctiveness of Monmouthshire's built, historic and natural environment.

Development proposals will be required to:

- a) ensure a safe, secure, pleasant and convenient environment that is accessible to all members of the community, supports the principles of community safety and encourages walking and cycling;
- b) contribute towards sense of place whilst ensuring that the amount of development and its intensity is compatible with existing uses;
- c) respect the existing form, scale, siting, massing, materials and layout of its setting and any neighbouring quality buildings;
- d) maintain reasonable levels of privacy and amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties, where applicable;
- e) respect built and natural views and panoramas where they include historical features and / or attractive or distinctive built environment or landscape;
- f) use building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting to enhance the appearance of the proposal having regard to texture, colour, pattern, durability and craftsmanship in the use of materials;
- g) incorporate and, where possible enhance existing features that are of historical, visual or nature conservation value and use the vernacular tradition where appropriate;
- h) include landscape proposals for new buildings and land uses in order that they integrate into their surroundings, taking into account the appearance of the existing landscape and its intrinsic character, as defined through the LANDMAP process. Landscaping should take into account, and where appropriate retain, existing trees and hedgerows;
- i) make the most efficient use of land compatible with the above criteria, including that the minimum net density of residential development should be 30 dwellings per hectare, subject to criterion l) below ;
- j) achieve a climate responsive and resource efficient design. Consideration should be given to location, orientation, density, layout, built form and landscaping and to energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, including materials and technology;
- k) foster inclusive design;
- l) ensure that existing residential areas characterised by high standards of privacy and spaciousness are protected from overdevelopment and insensitive or inappropriate infilling.

Annex 2

Ostrey is situated off the Usk Road in the upper reaches of the Moun-ton valley. According to the Design & Access Statement, Ostrey is a one bed detached farmworkers dwelling constructed in the late 1800s set in its own grounds within 11 acres of agricultural land. It is double-fronted with 1.5 storeys, the upper windows being set immediately below the low eaves line. Single storey extensions have been made to the sides and rear over the years, and the roofs have a mixture of pitched and lean-to forms with a combination of concrete tiles and corrugated metal. The walls are random rubble stone, some with a render finish originally cream/white

The buildings are of no architectural significance and the cost of renovation is uneconomic so a new four bedroom house is proposed. Downstairs there will be a kitchen, dining room, snug, and living room with a single storey addition for a piano room/playroom abutting and connected to the main house. Provision has been made for a future lift and modifications can be made to make the second bathroom into a future ensuite. The house exceeds Nationally Described Space Standards for a 4-bed 2 storey dwelling. The design is a modern interpretation of a traditional farmhouse, the roof pitch and materials similar to the existing house.

The existing house has very low ceilings, incompatible with modern living standards. Much of the volume of the proposed house is generated by an increase in ceiling heights. The existing house has a volume of 578m³ and the outbuildings 426m³. The new house volume is to be 958m³ and the new outbuildings 320m³. This equates to a 65% increase in volume for the house (much of it attributable to having modern ceiling heights) and a 43% decrease in volume for the outbuildings. In contrast, the footprint of the existing house is 152m² whilst the new house has a footprint of 158m² (+ 4%).

As the roof pitch of the proposed is similar to the existing, the house sits higher in the landscape [by 2.2m – see comment below]. The new ridge line will be similar in height to the existing chimney and does not break the skyline set by the trees in the background.

Most of the outbuildings on the site will be removed as they are in a poor state of repair, save for the stone barn and the corrugated metal barn on the west side of the house which are to be repaired and will remain. A double garage is to be built.

The south facing roof will have a photovoltaic array. Heating and hot water will be provided by an air source heat pump. The design maximizes internal levels of daylight and complies with the Simplified Method when assessed against Approved Document O, Overheating. Rainwater will be stored for use in the garden, with any excess draining to the new pond or to the soak away. An EV charging point will be located in the garage.

The north and east walls will be faced with random stone (from the existing house), the window lintels and cills provisioned in cast stone. The west and south sides are more modern in elevation and window design but the walls are to be rendered being typical of other buildings in the landscape. The windows are uPVC throughout to match the existing, with windows in the stone façades coloured white, whilst those in the render will be Chartwell Green. The roofs will have a similar pitch to the existing house but will be finished with artificial slate, and the roofs to the single storey addition and the garage having standing seam metal roofs to match the existing outbuildings.

A new natural pond will be formed in the lowest part of the garden, providing a habitat for frogs, toads and newts, and nest-building materials for swallows and House Martins. The pond will also attract insects for foraging bats. A new bat loft will be accommodated above the proposed garage, sized for Lesser Horseshoe bats, and bat boxes will be incorporated into the gable walls on the North, East and West sides suitable for Pipistrelle bats. A range of bird box designs will be fixed to the trees in the gardens to accommodate sparrows, robins, nuthatches, and owls.

MCC Planning Policy H5 permits the replacement of dwellings provided that:

the original dwelling is not a traditional farmhouse, cottage or other building that is important to the visual and intrinsic character of the landscape and has not been demolished, abandoned or fallen into such a state of disrepair so that it no longer has the appearance of a dwelling;

the design of the new dwelling is of a form, bulk, size and scale that respects its setting;

the proposal does not require an unacceptable extension to the existing residential curtilage;

the replacement dwelling shall be of similar size to the replaced;

any outbuildings should be modest in size and sensitively located and it can be demonstrated at the time of the original application that adequate ancillary garage and storage space can be achieved for the dwelling.

Where the replacement of an existing dwelling can be considered acceptable in principle under Policy H5, the replacement dwelling shall be of similar size to that replaced.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside (2015) advises that it is reasonable to take into account the size of extension that might be permissible under Policy H6 (Extension of Rural Dwellings). While SPG regards up to a 50% increase in volume to comply with Policy H5 it does recognise that exceptions to extensions can also apply to replacement dwellings.

The applicant's Design & Access Statement asserts that the cottage has a constricted room layout with shared bedroom access so is by no means generous in size or representative of a typical modern-day house hence an increase above 50% is justified and can be accommodated within the context of the site and the surrounding landscape.

Councillors may be concerned that the roof ridge height of the new house will be 2.2m above the existing and the impact this will have on the landscape. The existing house is of 1 ½ storeys and Councillors may wish to consider whether the replacement house should be similar given that although the existing house does not sit on the skyline, it is visible from the Usk Road. Councillors might also wish to give thought to the compatibility of the proposed utilitarian monoculture building design with the surrounding traditional Monmouthshire farm building landscape.

Recommendation : SCC have reconsidered this application and whilst it still has reservations on the grounds set out in our response last year, SCC has no further objection provided planning consent is subject to the terms and conditions set out in the attached emails with the MCC Planning Officer.

Cllrs agreed to no further objection.

- 6. Minute 5110 – Finance:** To approve a list of expenditure as detailed & confirm the 1st quarter reconciliation.

EXPENDITURE AND INVOICES – September 2025

Clerk's salary/allowances.	Aug 2024	£1033.01
Clerk's Pension (Council 25% & Clerk's contribution)	Aug 2024	£ 390.73 incl £20 AVC
HMRC Employers NI Contribution	Aug 2024	£ 304.57

Payee	Reason for expenditure	Amount £	Vat £	Total £	Type
C Martin	Monthly Microsoft 365	8.51	1.70	10.21	BACS
C Martin	Monthly Google storage	1.33	0.26	£1.59	BACS
Clerk	Expenses July	50.50		50.50	BACS
Merlin Environmental Services Ltd	Sept Collections – Invoice	127.50	25.48	152.88	BACS
Chepstow Accountancy Services Ltd	Inv Aug payroll Clerk	25.00		25.00	BACS
Distinct IT	Website Annual	189.99	37.80	266.79	BACS
Bank Charges LLOYDS	Aug	4.25		4.25	Deduction
Bank Charges HSBC	Aug 25	5.00		5.00	Deduction
			Total	2205.53	

Breakdown of Clerk's expenses Aug 2025

Mileage £34.79 = 77.30 @ 45p per mile
Purchases = £15.71 Ink
Total = £50.50

Balances:
Bank Account £17,429.97 (includes precept)
Savings account £62,577.53
Other Bank account £707.79
Clock Account £21,895.68 (interest £8.65)

The above list of liabilities were approved by council.

Items for Discussion:

- Minute 5111 – Memorial Clock Repair – Progressing, awaiting CCCo to visit on site.** Thanks to Cllrs Todd & C Martin for their ongoing support with this project.
- Minute 5112 – Earlswood field rental:** Resolved to approve the agreement, with noted amendments. **Action** Clerk to notify Powells
- Minute 5113 – Risk Assessment – Reviewed Ongoing Action Clerk & Cllrs**
- Minute 5114 – ANPR:** Awaiting news from Gwent Police **Action** Clerk to Chase .
- Minute 5115 – Planters & Verges:** MCC confirmed that SCC can fit 2 x planters in agreed locations in Mynyddbach. **Actions** Clerk to contact A Orrell. **Planter** opposite the Tredegar Arms – **Action:** Awaiting contact from Pub. **Verges,** Quote in progress.
- Minute 5116 – Traffic events & Date results:** Data received from the 6 x traffic loops in the area which now needs to be reviewed. Cllrs discussed having similar loops in the Village to look at speeding.
No speeding events reported.
- Minute 5117 – Hay-cutting of Earlswood field – Completed**

- 14. **Minute 5118 - Budget meeting** – review in October.
- 15. **Minute 5119 – Memorial Path** – Quote in progress.
- 16. **Minute 5120: Grant Earlswood – Resolved** to pay £250 donation towards electrical costs.

Items for Information:

- 17. **Minute 5121** - To receive reports from County Councillor & Clerk.

Cllr L Brown had nothing to report for August due to MCC not meeting.

Clerks report as circulated and taken as read.

- 18. **Minute 5122 - Police report** – No report received.

- 19. **Minute 5123 - Meetings attended** No meetings attended

- 20. **Minute 5124 - AOB and ward reports –**

Cllr Todd raised – No issues reported

Cllr Butterworth - No issues reported

Cllr Mitchel – No issues reported

Cllr I Martin – Reported the wooden Footpath sign is rotten and in need of replacement. **Action**
Clerk to notify MCC on Mon App.

- 21. **Minute 5125 - Correspondence** - As circulated and taken as read

- 22. **Minute 5126 - To agree the date of the next meeting**

Councillors agreed the date of the next meeting on **Monday 6th October 2025** at **7.00pm** by public meeting in Shirenewton Recreation Hall or remotely via Google meet.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.00pm.