

Minutes from the Amenities and Planning Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at Castle Park Arts Centre at 7pm

**Attended by:** Cllr D Critchley, Cllr J Critchley, Cllr R Drapeur (Vice Chair), Cllr H Hayes, Cllr A Holman, Cllr R Lofts (Chair), Cllr P Lowrie, Cllr M Nield, Cllr B Wade, Cllr G Wood & J O'Donoghue

**Also attended by:** 1 member of the public

**Meeting 8**

**1. Apologies and reasons for absence**

To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence from members.

**RESOLVED:** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Wade.

**2. Declarations of interest**

To note any declarations of interest on items which are on the agenda.

**NOTED:** There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Suspending Standing Orders**

To note Standing Orders require that any suspension be approved by resolution of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Orders 1(r)(ix) and 25(a). This process will apply to all items other than agenda item 4.

**NOTED**

**4. Public participation**

Members of the public are invited to speak on items which are on the agenda in accordance with FTC policy on public speaking at meetings: <https://frodsham.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Publicspeaking-at-meetings-2023.pdf>

**NOTED:** One member of the public attended to speak on Item 10b. It was noted that a site visit had taken place with an advisor from Mersey Forest prior to the planting of native forest trees in Churchfields.

**5. Approval of minutes**

To approve the minutes from the Amenities & Planning Committee Meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

**RESOLVED:** The minutes from the meeting were approved and signed.

**6. To consider the following planning applications:**

Reference	Address	Description	Comments
25/03963/FUL	3 Orchard Close, Frodsham, WA6 6DS	Two-story side extension.	RELEVANT POLICIES: R1; M4; DM11; DM44 NO OBJECTION subject to it meeting the provisions of Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Domestic Outbuildings
25/03915/FUL	15 Keswick Drive, Frodsham, WA6 7LT	Erection of garden pavilion	RELEVANT POLICIES: R1; M4; DM11 NO OBJECTION subject to it meeting the provisions of Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Domestic Outbuildings

25/03864/PIP	Land At Hawthorne Road, Frodsham	Erection of 9 dwellings with double detached garages	See Appendix A
25/04042/FUL	6 Blue Hatch, Frodsham, WA6 7QJ	Alterations to the front porch, conversion of the existing garage including removal and replacement of the existing roof to form a new flat roof, and changes to windows and doors.	RELEVANT POLICIES: R1; M4; DM11; DM44 NO OBJECTION subject to it meeting the provisions of Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Domestic Outbuildings

## 7. Festive lights

- (a) To consider approval of the Stage 2 quotation in the sum of £16,046.65 for the replacement of festive lighting on Church Street, to be undertaken by the existing installer and aligned with the Main Street scheme.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to approve the Stage 2 quotation in the sum of £16,046.65 for the replacement of festive lighting on Church Street, to be undertaken by the existing installer and aligned with the Main Street scheme.

**ACTION: JO**

- (b) To consider the request from members of the Christmas Working Group for the replacement of the candy cane lamppost lighting on Main Street with red and white bulbs, and that a quotation in the sum of £4,985.00 has been received from the existing installer.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to make no change to the existing arrangement recently completed.

## 8. Hob Hey Wood

- (a) To receive the Annual Report.

**NOTED:** The report was received and Mark O'Sullivan and his team were congratulated on the achievements over the last 12 months.

- (b) To agree any action to be taken.

**NOTED:** No action to be taken at the present time.

## 9. Community Orchards

- (a) To note that pruning of the orchards was carried out in March 2025 as part of the Grounds Maintenance Service Level Agreement with Northwich Town Council.

**NOTED**

- (b) Northwich Town Council has confirmed that pruning is scheduled to take place in February 2026 in accordance with the Grounds Maintenance Service Level Agreement.

**NOTED**

## 10. Churchfields woodland planting

- (a) To note the report on woodland planting completed in 2024, delivered with advice, guidance, and grant support from the Mersey Forest as part of the "Trees for Climate" initiative.

**NOTED**

- (b) To note that a complaint has been received from a resident regarding the tree species planted, namely hornbeam, oak, and birch, with concerns that, when mature, they may reduce light to the orchard and impact fruit production, together with a request for their removal, and to note that the trees are subject to a 15-year maintenance agreement with FTC following planting.

**NOTED**

- (c) To agree any action to be taken.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to ask Northwich Town Council to check the health of the fruit trees when carrying out the pruning.

### **11. Frodsham Leisure and Library Refurbishment**

- (a) To receive a verbal report from Cllr Lofts following their attendance at the Frodsham Leisure and Library Committee meeting held on 27 January 2026.

**NOTED:** Cllr Lofts delivered a verbal report and noted that CWAC is leading the committee, supported by Brio Leisure. The proposed development was originally costed at £7 million. Initial funding of £4.5 million has since been increased to £6 million; however, additional funding is still required for the sports hall floor (£107,000), community facilities (£82,000), and changing facilities (£28,000). It was agreed that Cllr Lofts would invite the Chair of the Committee to attend the Town Meeting in May to provide an overview.

**ACTION: RL**

- (b) To consider, in principle, a request for a grant towards the Leisure Centre and Library refurbishment. Further details of potential areas for Council support are awaited from the Committee Chair.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to defer this to the full council meeting to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.

**ACTION: JO**

### **12. Request from a member of the public**

- (a) To note that a member of the public has requested permission to fund the planting of a memorial tree or other suitable planting within Frodsham, specifically within the woodland areas.

**NOTED**

- (b) To consider the request and advise on the appropriate process.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Cllr Drapeur will contact Mark O'Sullivan of the Hob Hey Wood Friends Group to ask whether there is a suitable area within the wood for tree planting. Cllr Lowrie will contact Cllrs Sumner and Garvey (CWAC) to enquire whether there is an appropriate location around the American Park in Castle Park for this purpose. The Town Clerk was asked to prepare a tree planting policy for future use and will respond to the requester to confirm that their request is currently under consideration.

**ACTION: RD, PL, JO**

### **13. Crowmere Lake**

- (a) To receive a verbal report from Cllr Lowrie.

**NOTED:** Cllr Lowrie noted that the lake is prone to drying out during the summer months as had been previously noted in a report provided by the Town Clerk to the Amenities and Planning Committee.

- (b) To agree any action to be taken.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Cllr Lowrie will investigate the situation and provide a written report to a future Amenities and Planning Committee Meeting with recommendations for action.

**ACTION: PL**

### **14. Active Travel**

- (a) To note the maps of cycle routes in the Frodsham area and consider their suitability for distribution by FTC at community events and similar activities.

**NOTED:** Cllr Holman provided copies of the maps to all members.

- (b) To consider a request for £250 to help fund this project.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to provide £250 to fund the project from the current Active Travel budget.

### **15. Close of meeting**

The meeting closed at 20:08



**Response to Planning Application 25/03864/PIP  
Proposal to build 9 dwellings on Hawthorne Road,  
off Ship Street, Frodsham**

This response sets out Frodsham Town Council's reasons for objection and explains why the proposal does not comply with the development plan, including the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan (FNP).

**Relevant Development Plan Policies:**

**ENV1; ENV9; STRAT 9; M4; DM11; DM17; DM44**

**Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan policies: H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, CA1, CA3, GSRL2, GSRL4**

**1. Objection in Principle and Position of Frodsham Town Council**

Frodsham Town Council formally objects to the grant of Permission in Principle for this development.

The Town Council has serious concerns regarding the Design and Access Statement, which contains numerous discrepancies, factual inaccuracies, and misleading statements. Taken collectively, these issues indicate that the submission is a generic exercise, rather than a document genuinely informed by, or specific to, the site in question.

This approach conflicts with the intent of the Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan, which requires proposals to be clearly justified against local character, constraints, and community priorities, particularly where development in principle is being sought.

**2. Site Designation: Green Belt, Countryside and Settlement Boundary  
(FNP Policy H1 – Location of Housing Development)**

The application site lies within designated Green Belt and Countryside and is outside the Settlement Boundary, as defined by the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan and the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan.

**Policy H1 of the FNP** directs residential development to sites:

- within the settlement boundary,
- on brownfield land, or
- specifically identified through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The Hawthorne Road site is not identified or allocated within the FNP and no exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify development outside the settlement boundary. The Design and Access Statement incorrectly describes the site as "underutilised grass land", whereas it is in fact protected Green Belt and Countryside land.

The proposal therefore conflicts with FNP Policy H1, alongside STRAT 9, DM17, and ENV9.

**3. Impact on Adjacent Protected Community Orchard  
(FNP Policies H2 and GSRL2)**

The site is immediately adjacent to the FTC-owned Community Orchard, a protected community and environmental asset.

FNP Policy GSRL2 seeks to protect and enhance green and open spaces of community value, while Policy H2 requires development to respect green infrastructure and sensitive edges to the settlement.

The application provides no assessment of the Orchard's sensitivity, no landscape buffer, and no mitigation strategy. Increased residential activity, lighting, and domestic pressure would place the Orchard under significant threat.

The proposal therefore conflicts with FNP Policies H2 and GSRL2, as well as ENV9 and DM44.

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#### **4. Highway Access, Capacity and Estate-Wide Congestion (FNP Policies CA1 and CA3)**

Hawthorne Road is a narrow no-through road accessed solely via Ship Street. The Ship Street Estate comprises over 1,000 dwellings, all dependent on Ship Street or St Hilda's Drive.

Much of the estate was constructed 60–70 years ago, prior to widespread car ownership, and suffers from a chronic lack of off-road parking, resulting in severe and persistent congestion.

FNP Policy CA1 prioritises safe and sustainable movement for pedestrians and cyclists, while Policy CA3 requires parking and access arrangements not to undermine highway safety or residential amenity.

The application fails to assess cumulative impact, emergency access constraints, or estate-wide congestion, and is therefore contrary to FNP Policies CA1 and CA3, as well as DM11 and M4.

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#### **5. Flood Risk and Reclaimed Marshland (FNP Policy H2 and Local Plan Policy ENV1)**

The site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and is located on reclaimed marshland. Extensive drainage works were required approximately 55 years ago to facilitate construction of the M56, with further flood mitigation undertaken during the Marshes Wind Farm development.

The Cheshire West and Chester Landscape Character and Townscape Assessment – LCT4 Drained Marsh (pages 112–118) identifies the importance, sensitivity, and flood management function of this landscape. Existing dwellings on the opposite side of Hawthorne Road are significantly elevated to mitigate flood risk.

The site itself currently performs an important flood attenuation and water storage function, helping to mitigate flooding on Hawthorne Road.

FNP Policy H2 requires layouts to respond to environmental constraints and landscape function. No site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been provided, and flood risk cannot be deferred at the Permission in Principle stage. The proposal therefore conflicts with ENV1 and FNP Policy H2.

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#### **6. Failure to Properly Engage with the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan (FNP Policies H1–H5, CA1, CA3, GSRL2, GSRL4)**

The application does not meaningfully acknowledge or engage with the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan, despite it forming part of the statutory development plan.

The proposal conflicts with:

- H1 – inappropriate location outside the settlement boundary
- H2 – failure to respect landscape, green infrastructure, and settlement edge
- H3 – failure to demonstrate an appropriate housing mix
- H4 – no clear commitment to affordable housing or local connection
- H5 – lack of character-based design analysis
- CA1 and CA3 – unsustainable access and parking impacts
- GSRL2 and GSRL4 – failure to protect or enhance green and open space

These conflicts go to the heart of whether development is acceptable in principle.

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## **7. Inaccurate and Misleading Supporting Information (FNP Policy H5 – Design and Character)**

The supporting documentation is poor and contains numerous factual inaccuracies, reinforcing the conclusion that the Design and Access Statement is a generic submission rather than a site-specific assessment, contrary to FNP Policy H5.

By way of example, the Design and Access Statement incorrectly claims that the site:

- Is “underutilised grass land” (it is Green Belt and Countryside)
- Is 4.8 miles from Northwich (it is approx. 11 miles from Northwich)
- Is 2.2 miles from Delamere Forest (it is approx. 6 miles from Delamere Forest)
- Has a secondary school (this closed in 2009)
- Has a golf course (this closed in 2020)
- Has local banks (the last bank closed in 2022)
- Includes “Riverside Park” (does not exist)
- Has nearby venues “The Swan” and “The Old House” (do not exist)
- Will provide large front and back gardens, which conflicts with the submitted layout

These inaccuracies materially undermine the reliability of the applicant’s assessment.

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## **Conclusion**

For the reasons set out above, and having regard to the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan, the formal objection of Frodsham Town Council, and the relevant Local Plan policies, the proposal is contrary to the development plan and unacceptable in principle.

The identified harms cannot be resolved through planning conditions or reserved matters. I respectfully request that full weight is given to the development plan and that the application be refused.

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## **In Summary**

- **Inappropriate development in the Green Belt and Countryside**  
The site lies within designated Green Belt and Countryside and outside the defined

settlement boundary. The proposal fails to demonstrate exceptional circumstances to justify residential development in this location and would result in inappropriate development harmful to openness and countryside character.

*Contrary to STRAT 9, DM17, ENV9 and Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1.*

➤ **Conflict with the spatial strategy of the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan**

The site is not allocated or identified for housing within the Made Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan. Housing needs can be met within the settlement boundary on identified sites, and no justification has been provided for releasing non-allocated land.

*Contrary to Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1.*

➤ **Unacceptable impact on protected green and community assets**

The development would be directly adjacent to the FTC-owned Community Orchard, a protected community and environmental asset. The proposal fails to provide adequate assessment, buffering, or mitigation and would place the Orchard under significant pressure from residential activity.

*Contrary to ENV9, DM44 and Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policies H2 and GSRL2.*

➤ **Unsustainable and harmful access arrangements**

Hawthorne Road is a narrow no-through road accessed solely via Ship Street, serving over 1,000 dwellings on an estate already subject to severe congestion due to historic layout and lack of off-road parking. The proposal fails to adequately assess cumulative traffic impact, emergency access constraints, or estate-wide capacity.

*Contrary to M4, DM11 and Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policies CA1 and CA3.*

➤ **Unacceptable flood risk and loss of marshland function**

The site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 on reclaimed marshland and currently performs an important flood attenuation and water storage function. The proposal fails to provide a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment or demonstrate that flood risk would not be increased elsewhere. Flood risk is a matter of principle and cannot be deferred.

*Contrary to ENV1 and Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy H2.*

➤ **Failure to demonstrate appropriate housing mix and affordable housing provision**

The application fails to demonstrate compliance with Neighbourhood Plan

requirements for housing mix, including downsizing and adaptable homes, and does not commit to the required level of affordable housing or the Local Connection Test.

*Contrary to Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policies H3 and H4.*

➤ **Failure to demonstrate high-quality, locally responsive design**

The proposal fails to demonstrate how the design has been informed by the Frodsham Design Code and Town Design Statement. The inward-facing layout, lack of character analysis, and absence of evidence-based justification fail to reflect local character or settlement edge sensitivity.

*Contrary to Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy H5.*

➤ **Failure to protect and enhance green and open space**

The proposal relies solely on private garden space and fails to provide communal green space, biodiversity enhancement, or wider environmental benefit, contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan's objectives for health, wellbeing, and green infrastructure.

*Contrary to Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policies GSRL2 and GSRL4.*

➤ **Inaccurate and misleading supporting information**

The Design and Access Statement contains numerous factual inaccuracies regarding site designation, distances, local facilities, and services, undermining the reliability of the applicant's assessment and indicating a generic rather than site-specific submission.

*Contrary to the evidence-based requirements of Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Policy H5.*