

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of St Martha Parish Council held in Chilworth C of E Infant School on 5th May 2026 at 7 p.m.

2026-59 - Present:

Parish Councillors:

Cllr Mrs. P. Allen (Chair), Cllr Mrs M. Osman, Cllr Mrs. J. Tantram, and Cllr R. Young

In attendance: Parish Clerk - Anne Tait

2029/60 Public participation session

A resident of Old Manor Lane, Chilworth voiced his own concerns and other residents of Old Manor Lane regarding Planning Application:

- **26/P/00264 - Old Manor Farm, Old Manor Lane, Chilworth, GU4 8NE**

Proposal: Erection of 4no. 4-bed dwellings and associated landscaping with access from Old Manor Lane.

The residents' main concerns is the narrowness of the Lane and have numerous photographs as evidence of incidents of cars mounting the private drives in order to pass.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council object to this planning application on the following grounds:

The applicant has attempted to resolve the unequivocal access safety issues by proposing to build a passing place. The design of the passing place is, however, fundamentally flawed for several reasons.

Culverting of the ditch to create a passing place:

Firstly, the creation of a passing place requires the open ditch to be culverted. We, along with the Countryside Access Team, object to the ditch being culverted because this will inhibit surface water runoff causing the Right of Way to become waterlogged leading to damage, especially when combined with vehicular traffic. Surface water drainage is a material planning consideration, and the application has provided no drainage design.

Furthermore, culverting requires not only the permission of the riparian owner - in this case the resident of the house adjacent to the ditch and not the owner of the lane - (because they have the responsibility for all future maintenance), but also from the Lead Local Flood Authority, as well as likely requiring its own planning permission to be granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see Appendix 1, taken from Culverting Watercourses Guidance 170-19).

In support of our position, we further note that the government guidance *Owning a Watercourse* (a term that includes ditches) issued by the Environment Agency and updated in 2026 states:

Culverts

The risk management authorities are unlikely to give you permission to build a culvert - an underground structure that a watercourse can flow through. Culverts can increase flood risk and damage the environment.

Passing place design:

Secondly, there is no evidence that the passing place will be of the width or length required by Highways because, despite their request, this information has not been provided by the applicant.

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

Although the diagram provided by the applicant via the Transport Note shows a total width of 4.8m it does not provide the length of the passing place.

When considering the amount of room required, it should be noted that vehicle widths available in the UK do not include wing mirrors. Given the design and size of the proposed properties it is not unreasonable to consider that future owners would have larger than average vehicles (2m without wing mirrors). Normal sized refuse vehicles are 2.6m, but again these measurements exclude wing mirrors, which may account for the recommended total width for a passing place of 5.5m.

HS2 Rural Road Design Criteria (see Appendix 1) states that:

The combined width of single-track road plus passing bay shall be 5.5 metres over a length of 5 metres (or 15 metres where likely to be used by buses or heavy goods vehicles). Tapers 5 metres long shall be provided at each end.

Feature	Typical Dimension
Running lane width	3.0–3.5m
Passing place overall width	5.0–5.5m
Usable passing length	5–6m minimum
Passing length for vans/HGVs	12–15m
Entry/exit tapers	4–5m each end
Spacing between passing places	100–200m depending on visibility

The measurement of 4.8m shown on the Transport Note diagram, which is taken from the absolute furthest edge of the ditch/hedge right up to the opposing fence is well below the recommended 5.5 metres for a passing place and does not appear to provide the 12 – 15m length required for refuse or emergency vehicles.

Furthermore, the diagram does not show the street furniture currently in place or how this would be managed. Instead, the diagram suggests an entirely clear area for passing, which is not the case on the ground.

Right of Way User Safety:

Thirdly, this is not solely an access route for vehicles or the residents that live along Old Manor Lane, but, due to the Right of Way, has a significantly higher level of pedestrian usage and joint vehicle and pedestrian routes require greater, not less, space.

While the passing place may allow two of some combination of vehicles to pass pedestrian safety is still a material consideration, for example, where pedestrians must step into mud/verges to move out of the way of oncoming vehicles. In this case, due to the narrowness of the passing place, there is nowhere for pedestrians to step at all.

As stated by the Countryside Access Team the figures and statistics used in the Transport Note to evidence minimal impact to pedestrians using the Right of Way are inherently flawed. Our previous objections indicated that this was already evidenced by regular reports of both vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to pedestrian conflicts that occur with the current level of usage. Increasing the amount of traffic will lead to a material increase in conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

For clarity we are listing examples of vehicle and pedestrian conflicts, taken from the national guidance Manual for Streets 2, as this term is far broader than accidents and near misses:

- pedestrians being forced aside,
- constrained walking conditions,
- uncertainty over priority,
- vehicles waiting behind pedestrians,
- pedestrians feeling pressured by vehicles, and
- impaired accessibility for wheelchair or pushchair users.

Old Manor Lane exit onto Dorking Road:

In addition to our view that the passing place is unsuitable both in design and due to requiring culverting, we are further concerned that a material increase in traffic exiting Old Manor Lane onto the Dorking Road is of far greater concern now that Network Rail have implemented changes to the level crossing that lies a very short distance away. Since implementation there has been a noticeable increase in traffic conflicts arising from the greater length of time the barriers are down, combined with significant tailbacks that has entirely changed the risk at the Old Manor Lane junction. Drivers losing patience are turning in the road, or overtaking standing traffic to enter Blacksmith Lane and then meeting cars head-on when, unbeknownst to them, the barriers have been raised. It is also noticeable that cars are driving at greater speeds towards Old Manor Lane due to either wishing to avoid the chance of waiting at the barriers or being impatient after having to wait for the train, or sometimes trains, to pass.

Surrey Hills National Landscape

We wish to highlight that the access issue was not the only issue raised for this application when it was first considered. We note that the Surrey Hills National Landscape Planning Adviser (SHNLPA) has not felt it was worth reiterating the concerns for this application because they were not considered by the planning committee. We understand that on the evening the application was heard, the focus was firmly on the access issues, however, we support the SHNLPA's view and given that it is a material consideration, include the concerns in full at Appendix 2.

Conditions

If the planning decision is that the benefit of the development somehow outweighs the objections (both locally and nationally) to creating a culvert for a passing place that does not appear to meet the minimum recommended design requirements or ensure the safety of the users of the Right of Way we strongly request that conditions are applied to the planning application:

**Example condition relating to the passing place, using wording from multiple Councils:
No development shall commence until full details of the proposed passing place and associated access arrangements have been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority.**

The submitted details shall include:

- engineering drawings showing dimensions, levels and construction materials;
- pedestrian priority arrangements and safety measures;
- visibility splays;
- drainage proposals;
- measures to prevent obstruction of the Right of Way by vehicles;
- details of surfacing, edging and demarcation between pedestrian and vehicular areas;
- swept-path analysis demonstrating safe vehicle passing manoeuvres;
- and details of any signage, markings or traffic management measures.

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

The approved passing place shall be constructed in full accordance with the approved details prior to first use and shall thereafter be retained and kept available for that purpose.

Example condition relating to the building of a culvert, using wording from multiple Councils and LLFAs:

No development shall commence until full details of the proposed culvert works, along with all required consents, have been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

The submitted details shall include:

- engineering drawings and specifications;
- hydraulic calculations demonstrating that the culvert will accommodate surface water runoff ensuring the integrity of the Right of Way;
- details of materials and construction methods;
- evidence of compliance with the Building Regulations and Approved Document H;
- details of maintenance and access arrangements;
- confirmation that all necessary consents, including Ordinary Watercourse Consent under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, have been obtained.

The culvert shall thereafter be constructed and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Appendix 1

What is the legal framework?

Any culverting of a watercourse, or the alteration of an existing culvert:

- on [main rivers](#), requires a [flood risk activity permit](#) from the Environment Agency under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016. Conditions can be imposed on such permits.
- on all other watercourses, except within the district of an internal drainage board (IDB), requires a land drainage consent under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).
- in an IDB district, is likely to require the consent of the IDB under the Land Drainage Act 1991.
- Highway authorities are also required under Section 339 Highways Act 1980 to seek the consent of the drainage authority before carrying out any works affecting a watercourse.

The Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016: Flood Risk Activities states, in paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 25, that the Environment Agency must exercise its relevant functions for the purposes of achieving the following objectives -

- (a) managing flood risk;
- (b) managing impacts on land drainage;
- (c) environmental protection.

Planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is also likely to be required.

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

2026-61 - To accept apologies and reason for absence in accordance with the LGA 1972, Sch 1 para 40.
St Martha Parish Councillors Peake, Toynbee and Brown; Mark Dawkins - St Martha Tree Warden;
Guildford Borough Councillor Danielle Newson

2026-62 - Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) - by Councillors on any of the agenda items below in accordance with The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. (SI 2012 No. 1464)

No declarations were made.

2026-63 - Declaration of Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Mrs Allen declared an interest in Planning Application **26/P/00511**- 2 Orchard Cottages, Sample Oak Lane GU4 8QW

2026-64 - Register of Interests

No declarations were received.

2026-65 – Chilworth Village and Correspondence

The Chair announced that she had received a resignation from Councillor Maureen Osman as from 6th May 2026. Maureen will be missed for her valued contribution, particularly with regards to issues in Halfpenny Close and Blacksmith Lane.

RESOLVED The Clerk will contact Guildford Borough Council for a 'Notice of Vacancy' to display in the noticeboards and on the website.

2026-66 - Dates of Meetings in 2026

RESOLVED: the following dates were agreed for full Parish Council meetings from June to December 2026.

Thursday 25/06/26
Thursday 30/07/26
Thursday 24/09/26
Thursday 29/10/26
Thursday 26/11/26
Thursday 17/12/26

2026-67 – Policies, Financial and Regulation Approvals

RESOLVED: The schedule of payments for the period ended 5th May 2026 were deferred and would be presented by the Clerk at the 28th May 2026 meeting.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Allen, seconded by Cllr Young to approve the renewal schedule for St Martha Parish Council Zurich Insurance Policy due on 1st June 2026.

2026-68 - Planning Matters for consideration

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

To discuss and agree the recommendation to Guildford Borough Council on the following application:

- **26/P/00511 - 2 Orchard Cottages, Sample Oak Lane, Chilworth GU4 8QW**

Proposal: Single storey side and rear extension with changes to fenestration.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Tantram, seconded by Cllr Young that the Parish Council comment as follows:

Parish Councillors recommend that Guildford Planning Department **APPROVE** this application - as submitted.

a) To receive and note any outcomes or notices from GBC on applications previously reported:

- **24/P/00749 Flat 3, Oak House, Sample Oak Lane, Chilworth GU4 8QW**

Proposed conversion of existing flat (flat 3) to provide two self-contained flats with addition of one dormer window and rooflights

GBC approved 22/04/26

- **26/P/00236 6 Pine View Close, Chilworth GU4 8RS**

Erection of a single storey rear extension

GBC approved 20/04/26

2026-69 - Date of the next meeting: 28th May 2026 in Chilworth Village Hall

AGENDA PART II

Pursuant to the Admission to Meetings Act 1960 Section 1(2)a in view of the confidential nature of the following business, members of the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting.

2026-70 - Certificate in Local Council Administration – (CiLCA) Training

- a) The Chair reported on her discussions with Celia Price the Lead trainer of CiLCA with regard to whether approval from Members be granted for Councillor Tantram to access the relevant St Martha Parish Council documents so that she may complete the CiLCA training.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Allen, seconded by Cllr Young that access to the St Martha Parish Council documents are made available in accordance with the attached Parish Council's Conditions of Training. **Appendix 1.**

- b) **To discuss and approve** in addition to (a) for the Council to cover the costs of the training at a total of £920.

RESOLVED: following the advice sought from the Internal Auditor Mark Mulberry of Mulberry & Co. the Parish Council do not have the power to make this expenditure.

APPENDIX 1

The Conditions of Training for a Councillor to undertake the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)

1. Documents

The Councillor will annotate documents for the purposes of the training but does not need to share and should be given strict instructions **not** to share these documents with the Council or the Clerk.

ST MARTHA PARISH COUNCIL

However, this doesn't prevent the Councillor from commenting on documents which are being reviewed by the Parish Council in the normal course of its business.

NB there would be no need to convert PDF documents into Word or Excel. If the Clerk does not have the original Word or Excel documents available the training can be done with PDF documents only, as the Councillor will merely be annotating them.

2. Voluntary Hours

Approval is conditional on the basis that the Councillor does **no** voluntary hours 'assisting' the Clerk.

3. Confidentiality

All documents required will be in the public domain, or available under Freedom of Information, except the Clerk's contract of employment. If the Councillor has already seen this, there is no issue. If not, a copy be given to the Chair and a redacted copy given to the Councillor, if the Clerk has concerns.

4. Clerk's Appraisal

The Councillor cannot be involved in the Clerk's appraisal.

5. Conclusion

The Councillor **cannot** share recommendations **nor** do any voluntary hours.
The Clerk would be required to give access to Parish Council documents but **not** do any extra work, **nor** be challenged by seeing the Councillor's comments on any existing documents.

Patricia Allen
April 2026