

Review of Planning Applications

Between 2006 and 2021, other than applications for works to trees, there were 240 planning applications registered with Wiltshire Council in Chute Parish and 77 in Chute Forest. The outcomes were as follows:

	<u>Chute</u>	<u>Chute Forest</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Approved	200	65	265
Refused (no appeal)	17	6	23
Refused (after appeal)	4	1	5
Withdrawn	16	3	19
Other	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>
Totals	240	77	317

Overall, only one in ten applications was refused with 84% approved and 6% withdrawn. It is apparent that the majority of planning applications are not controversial and have led to acceptable development in the community.

It is worth noting that amongst applications refused or withdrawn in Chute Parish 40% were submitted by one firm of architects, six times as many as by any other architect. In Chute Forest no architect accounted for more than one such application.

The most controversial applications have included the following:

Infill Dwellings

Two significant proposals for infill dwellings were subject to appeal decisions - adjacent Prospect Cottages (Upper Chute) and adjacent Chute Forest Cottage (Lower Chute). In each case the independent planning inspector considering an appeal against refusal found that the site was not a suitable infill plot. Both proposed dwellings were thus prevented from changing the character of the settlement. The latter had been recommended for approval at the Officer level but was called in to Planning Committee and finally rejected following a community campaign. An appeal was dismissed.

New Housing

A community campaign also prevented the development of four new houses in Upper Chute. This was presented first as an outline application, but withdrawn, and then a Permission in Principle application which was refused.

Less successfully there was a community campaign to prevent/alter the development of two adjacent sites in Lower Chute: Stable Cottage and the adjacent Stables.

Loss of Community Asset

The loss of one of the pubs in the Chutes has been controversial. This largely revolved around the loss of a community facility. Although the pub had been listed as a community asset it was not able to operate successfully as a community venture and planning permission for a change of use back to a private dwelling was granted. The future of the site is currently still uncertain as a planning application for a replacement dwelling has been refused after an appeal.

Replacement Dwellings

Another key controversy has been the development of replacement dwellings. Several large houses that stand out in the landscape have been built since the 2005 VDS under the guise of replacement dwellings. Some of the replaced buildings were formerly relatively small and could have been regarded as part of the affordable housing stock. The loss of these smaller dwellings to significantly bigger ones means the stock of affordable dwellings is decreasing.

In two cases increases in the size of replacement dwellings have been sought via applications for extensions made after the successful application to replace the original dwelling. This has resulted in the new dwellings being several times the size of the original ones.

Research demonstrates that in the six applications where there was significant objection from the community about the potential harm to the area only two were refused. In those cases the reason given was that the proposed developments would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. The harm would be “less than substantial” to the conservation area but there were little or no public benefits to outweigh the harm. In all other cases objections based on the harm caused by the proposals were ignored. Accordingly this VDS seeks to clarify what would constitute harm in the Chutes.