

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Meeting held on 5th July 2017.

Present: Councillors Janet Jones (Chair), Pam Barrett, Pamela Forbes, Ron Fox, Mark Maish, Linus McCloskey and Judith Hart (Town Clerk)

In attendance: Amy Luxton, Enabling Officer (Teignbridge District Council)

Part I (Open to the Public)

17/39. Questions raised by the public: None

17/40. Apologies for absence: Cllr Andy Stokes

17/41. Declaration of Interests: None

17/42. To approve & sign as a correct the Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee meeting on Wednesday 7th June 2017.

Signed by Cllr Janet Jones

17/43. Presentation by Amy Luxton, Teignbridge District Council Housing Enabling Officer re Community Led Affordable Housing in Buckfastleigh:

Amy Luxton: There is a real need to link housing need into the planning system such as Section 106 deals and affordable housing schemes.

Amy works within the Teignbridge District Council (TDC) planning team and gives advice to the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) planners. There are three Enabling Officers working for different District Councils across Devon that cover the National Park.

TDC are aware that affordable housing need is not being met in Buckfastleigh which is causing frustration and no developments have yet been forthcoming for the three allocated sites at Holne Road, Barn Park and Devonia designated within the Dartmoor Plan. There has been some interest in self-build and shared ownership, but no projects have progressed satisfactorily.

The Housing Needs survey has identified a need for affordable housing within the parish, but the Council does not agree with the results of this survey as many residents did not complete it due to the type of questions used. It is believed that the survey had more answers from homeowners and that as a result the need for social housing is underestimated. There was also a lack of community engagement when the survey was delivered.

Amy Luxton: There is now the ability to have a community led approach, but people will not engage until there is an actual site identified and building starts.

Cllr Mark Maish: There is a core group of pro self-build residents who would like the support of TDC to progress this.

Amy Luxton: If a planning application is submitted for dwellings outside the permitted development boundary this would be assessed as an exception site and would have to be 100% affordable if the site is deemed viable.

The Town Council does not understand the relationship between TDC and DNPA. The National Park has identified the need for 54 dwellings and yet the proposals for the allocated sites are higher?

Amy explained that the Government has powers to encourage the right-to-buy initiative again, but homes bought under this can only be resold to people with a Devon connection. The Council/community can however, look at setting up a Community Land Trust to prevent the sale of publicly owned homes.

Cllr Pam Barrett requested that another Housing Needs survey is commissioned which is less intimidating and establishes a picture of current need.

The Town Council, under its Neighbourhood Plan, has looked at the Devonian site as an area for mixed use development and would like to see this brownfield site brought forward to develop in preference to the allocated greenfield sites at Holne Road and Barn Park. It was suggested that a community engagement event is organised by TDC to examine this further. The Council would also like to hear of any proposals regarding the neighbouring parish of Dean Prior as there is little input from South Hams District Council and the village uses Buckfastleigh for amenities.

Amy Luxton: DNPA has an adopted plan with a five year land supply and it is acknowledged that there is some poor housing stock in Buckfastleigh. TDC is therefore working with Teign Housing to build a few small properties in the Glebelands area to start to address this problem.

The Council do not believe that Barn Park is a suitable site for development due to poor access, its topography, flood risk and opposition by local residents. It is not understood why the greenfield sites are given preference over the brownfield site in the centre of the town and Members would like to see both the Barn Park and Holne Road sites de-allocated? There is concern that developers do not acknowledge the high flood risk that any new development in these areas could pose to existing properties and businesses and that preventative drainage measures will only be short-lived remedies that will require maintenance that is unlikely to be retained once all the new dwellings are sold.

Members also raised concerns about the shared ownership which is perceived as unpopular due to the restrictive conditions imposed by the Housing Associations.

Action: Second meeting to be arranged in the early autumn with Amy Luxton who will liaise with the Clerk.

Cllr Mark Maish left the meeting at 8.30pm.

17/44. Review of actions from previous meeting:

Buckfastleigh Helipad – Due to further restrictions imposed by TDC, Toby Russell, Community Landing Site Development Officer for Devon Air Ambulance continues to negotiate terms.

Footpaths – see Agenda Item No. 11)

Devonia – Email 15.06.17 from DNPA Enforcement Team to confirm that the new business activity operating from the Devonian site is within permitted light industrial use as defined by the planning permission B2/B8 use classes. Noted

17/45. To discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee:

Discussed under Agenda Item No. 6) Review of actions from previous meeting.

17/46. Planning Applications:

0312/17 Proposed: Erection of replacement dwelling at Outer Finches, Hembury Cock Hill, Buckfastleigh

No objection

17/47. Planning Applications received after Agenda set: None

17/48. To discuss the use of non-organic herbicides and pesticides by Dartmoor National Park Authority following initial discussion at the June Town Council Meeting:

Item deferred until the August meeting in the absence of Cllr Maish.

17/49. Maintenance of footpaths by Teignbridge District Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority around the Parish:

Cllr Janet Jones reported that Ella Briens, DNPA Park Ranger, has applied for funding to carry out maintenance to the paths around Holy Trinity Church and will be in discussion with the Devonian site manager concerning the paths and fallen trees at Hillah Woods.

It was noted that the Environment Agency will take enforcement action if landowners do not take any action regarding fallen trees.

Action: Clerk to contact the Park Ranger regarding the pursuit of the landowner(s) responsible for the repairs of the subsoil to the footpath running behind the Fore Street allotments which is now dangerous to pedestrians.

17/50. Allotment land to the rear of 10-13 Church Street, Buckfastleigh – consideration of draft Heads of Terms for an interim lease of the site:

Information and proposal from TDC circulated to Members prior to this meeting.

Action: Clerk to contact TDC and request that negotiations are resumed before the proposed lease arrangement is considered further.

17/51. Correspondence:

Response from Devon County Council Civil Parking Enforcement 03.07.17 to a complaint from the Town Council over alleged aggressive ticketing by Parking Enforcement Officers in the town.

Action: Clerk to post advice online regarding the reporting of parking enforcement complaints to DCC.

17/52. Items requiring urgent attention: None

Meeting closed at 9.00pm