

# **BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2017.**

Present: Councillors Janet Jones (Chair), Pam Barrett, Ron Fox and Judith Hart (Town Clerk)

In attendance: 7 members of the public, Dan Trundle (Origin 3) and David Matthews (Burrington Estates)

### **Part I (Open to the Public)**

**17/53. Questions raised by the public:** It was agreed by the Chair that the public may postpone asking questions until agenda item Nos 5) Burrington Estates presentation and 12) and Whitecleave Quarry update.

**17/54. Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Pamela Forbes, Mark Maish and Linus McCloskey

**17/55. Declaration of Interests:** None

**17/56. To approve & sign as a correct the Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee meeting on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017.**

Signed by Cllr Janet Jones

**17/57. Presentation by the planning consultants on behalf of the developer for the allocated site BCK2 I the Dartmoor National Park Development Management Plan Document at Holne Road, Buckfastleigh:**

Burrington Estates, represented by Origin 3 planning consultants, would like to bring forward the BCK2 site at the west of Holne Road for a development of housing and will be consulting with the Town Council and community over the coming months. A drop-in community consultation event will be held in the Town Hall in September and further consultation with the Town Council will take place in October.

Surveys of the site are currently being undertaken and the bats and ecology surveys have already been completed over recent months.

The developers do not subscribe to land banking and build bespoke housing, an example of which can be seen at their award-winning development at Clyst St. George. Building will commence as soon as planning permission is approved.

The engineering reports will be available to the Town Council in advance and the developers would like input from the Council regarding the development brief. A scoping brief was circulated at the meeting with a proposal for 50 dwellings including affordable housing, parking and green space.

Substantial infrastructure will need to be put in place across this 4.1 acre site and it was confirmed that 50 units of 1, 2, 3 and 4-bedroom properties is average for this size of site. Burrington Estates do not sell leaseholds and are NHBC registered. The site has been allocated for 4 years, but the developer has only just come forward with a conditional proposal subject to planning permission being granted.

It was clarified that the affordable housing will be a mixture of shared ownership and rent and not outright purchase. Members expressed concerns regarding this type of affordable housing,

the proposed density of the build and the constraints of the site due to its location which includes a diverse range of wildlife and problems with surface water run-off into the river Mardle.

The developer is aware of the constraints and will retain the hedgerow running through the site. It is intended that surface water drainage ponds will be maintained by South West Water or a resident owned management company.

Cllr Pam Barrett explained that the existing flooding issues from the Mardle and surface water run-off are a significant issue and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) do not last indefinitely. Dependency on a resident owned management company is also not reliable.

This issue should be looked at in depth as the lower town area will be placed at further risk if not managed efficiently and effectively.

Member of the Public: *It is not just the river Mardle which poses a risk to the town, the drains cannot cope with increased rainfall and water run-off.*

It was acknowledged that the Holne Road site is very close to a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) which includes the rare Deptford Pink and protected Greater Horseshoe bat. This area is a known foraging area for the bats and any development should not interrupt the view of the Moor.

Copies of the surveys and reports requested by the Council will be forwarded in due course and copies of a community survey will be made available in the Town Hall and on the Council website.

3 members of the public left the meeting at 7.30pm.

#### **17/58. Review of actions from previous meeting:**

The Clerk has arranged a meeting with Amy Luxton, Teignbridge District Council (TDC) Enabling Officer for 26 September 2017.

The Clerk and the Town Ranger are monitoring the footpaths identified by Cllr Pamela Forbes and members of the public which are overgrown and in need of repair.

The Clerk is awaiting further information from the new Estates Manager at TDC regarding negotiations with the Town Council for the transfer of the Church Street allotments.

**Action:** Cllr Andy Stokes agreed to pursue the creation of a community assets register.

The Clerk confirmed that the advice issued by the Devon County Council (DCC) civil parking enforcement team has now been posted on the Town Council website.

#### **17/59. To discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee:**

**Buckfastleigh Helipad** – Cllr Pam Barrett confirmed that agreements are now in place, but John Bailey of the Buckfastleigh Rangers Football Club needs to consult with Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) regarding any planning issues. The Council will also need to liaise with the Football Club concerning the installation and use of the new floodlights.

**Solar Panels** – Cllr Andy Stokes confirmed that he has submitted a grant application to the Postcode Lottery as it has been agreed that the original budget for the installation of the solar panels may only be adequate for the Town Hall. If successful, the grant may cover the whole

installation cost for all the community buildings which are applicable to this project. It was noted that the application meets all the criteria of the fund.

**17/60. Planning Applications:**

0346/17 Proposed: Use of building as community arts hub and café and professional workspace at 34 Bossell Road, Buckfastleigh.

**Recommendation:** Strongly support and wholeheartedly endorse as a positive asset to the town. Proposed by Cllr Pam Barrett, seconded by Cllr Andy Stokes with all Members in agreement.

**17/61. Planning Applications received after Agenda set:** None

**17/62. 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 in the absence of Cllr Maish.

**Action:** Statement to be formulated as part of a Green Policy for the Parish. Cllr Stokes to liaise with Cllr Mark Maish on this matter.

**17/63. Dartmoor National Park Authority consultation on proposals to introduce a Pay and Conserve parking scheme:**

Members agreed to object to the proposals to introduce parking fees to five of the DNPA car parks on the Moor for the same reasons as stated in the original letter sent prior to this consultation and to reiterate the request for free parking permits for local residents who live within the Park.

It was agreed that the Town Council would benefit from better representation to DNPA.

**Action:** Clerk to respond in writing to the consultation citing the responses already given and requesting that DNPA guarantee that parking charges are not increased over the rate of inflation in the future for visitor parking as the area is dependent upon a tourism led economy. The car parks identified, where charges are proposed, are the most used and the most accessible to those who are less mobile and this will have a significant and negative impact.

**17/64. Whitecleave Quarry Update:**

Correspondence received from a member of the public had been circulated to Members prior to this meeting and further correspondence including the response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to Devon County Council dated 21 June 2017 from the Chair of Buckfastleigh Community Forum (BCF), Kathryn Hughes, was read out by Cllr Andy Stokes to the meeting.

Under the FOI request, DCC confirmed that work within the quarry has been suspended, but as the planning officer has now stated in his email dated 21 July 2017, the notice served on the owner and operator of the site to confirm that they are required to apply for the determination of planning conditions within 12 months of the date of the notice was defective. A new notice will now be served. It was agreed that it appears that false information has been provided by DCC either knowingly or due to incompetence. The Town Council would therefore request a response from DCC to the following questions:-

- When was the original notice issued?

- What did it contain?
- Why is the notice defective?
- What element of the notice is defective?
- Who decided this?
- When was DCC aware that the notice was defective?
- What happens now to rectify this error?

**Action:** Members agreed that a formal complaint to DCC should be sent from the Town Council and it was suggested that the BCF bring the DCC FOI response to the attention of the Information Commissioner. Whitecleave Quarry has effected the community for the last ten years and there are serious concerns as to how the DCC planning department have managed this whole process.

Member of the Public: *DCC have a statutory role to deal with this matter and should be held to account for not adhering to their own rules. Their communication with the community has been very poor.*

It was questioned as to why a new notice should be issued for another 12 months when the error was due to DCC? The community now needs the assurance that the correct notice has been served and it was agreed that DCC have failed with the liaison process, mediation and enforcement.

**17/65. Correspondence:** None

**17/66. Items requiring urgent attention:** None

Meeting closed at 8.30pm