

# BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017.

Present: Councillors Janet Jones (Chair), Pam Barrett, Andy Stokes, Pamela Forbes and Judith Hart (Town Clerk)

In attendance: Dan Janota (DNPA Forward Planning Manager), Alex Gandy (DNPA Forward Planner) and 26 members of the public

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

#### **17/97. Questions raised by the public:**

Various members of the public had come to discuss parking issues in the town. 3 people were particularly concerned about Jordan St.

Member of the public: *It is often difficult to drive through Jordan St. Bottlenecks are within the vicinity of Numbers 13 and 23.*

Member of the Public: *It is essential that farmers who live beyond Jordan Street have 24-hour access.*

Member of the public: *Parking at the junction of Barn Park also restricts farm vehicles.*

Member of the public: *There should be restricted parking on one side of the road. Emergency vehicles cannot get access, and this is likely to be of concern to Camphill.*

It was acknowledged that placing restrictions only moves the problem to other areas.

Member of the public: *There is derelict land at the Devonia site that could be used for parking that could help alleviate some of the problems together with an area of land under the A38 at Old Totnes Road.*

It was noted that gaining the co-operation of landowners is problematic

Cllr Janet Jones: This situation can be highlighted again to Devon County Council and Devonia

Cllr Pamela Forbes: Access and parking issues throughout the town needs to be addressed.

Cllr Andy Stokes said he will distribute more of the emergency access/bad parking leaflets along Jordan street to highlight this issue.

Member of the public: *There are also parking and access issues at the top of Silver Street.*

Member of the public: *Parking should be addressed when considering new developments.*

Cllr Barrett pointed out there are serious parking issues around the town. The Town Council needs volunteers to participate in a parking working party. The Council is also requesting more Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) leverage with regards to the future development of the Devonia site.

Member of the public: *People should be encouraged to write letters to Cllr Stuart Barker to support this. Letters should also be written to our MP and the owner of Devonia*

Member of the public: *There are security issues for Devonia if they make some of their land available for car parking.*

*The police should be contacted if a vehicle is causing an obstruction on a public highway.*

Cllr Stokes also suggested that residents could contact the media to highlight their concerns.

**Action:** Clerk to check with the emergency services as to whether they report vehicle obstructions and to whom?

Clerk to write to Devon Highways to draw attention to the problems identified by residents at this meeting and copy to Cllr Stuart Barker as an elected representative of Devon County Council.

Member of the public: *I would like it minuted that Cllr Barker is not in attendance at this meeting when the DNP Local Plan is being discussed and to ask why?*

4 members of the public left.

**17/98. Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Linus McCloskey, Ron Fox.

Cllr Mark Maish did not attend

**17/99. Declaration of Interests:** None

**17/100. To approve & sign as a correct the Minutes of the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee meeting on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017.**

Signed by Cllr Janet Jones

**17/101. Dartmoor Local Plan – discussion with Dan Janota, Dartmoor National Park Forward Planning Manager:**

Dan Janota explained that he is visiting the larger communities in Dartmoor National Park regarding the next steps in the Local Plan Review. A paper was published in October 2016 which discussed the strategic issues. The next step is to have a draft plan ready for summer 2018. His department's role is firstly to protect the National Park, but they also have a duty to support planning applications within the park. Clearly parking needs to be looked at carefully. Central Government is highlighting that there is a housing crisis, but this does not apply to National Parks, only to District Councils. The type of housing that is needed is a combination of shared-ownership, affordable and if there is significant demand, self-build. Nationally the population is aging, but on Dartmoor the population is static. Do we need more economically active people living in our Dartmoor communities? There is also an opportunity to look at sustainability issues in this context but there are constraints. Economy and employment are very important, and we need to consider what works within this context. What should the Local Plan try to achieve?

Member of the public: *The school is now at capacity with no room to expand.*

Member of the public: *The school has a small amount of room but there are funding problems. The number of children with special needs in Buckfastleigh is also quite high.*

Cllr Janet Jones: Buckfastleigh Primary School has not yet reached its planned admission level, but the children also need a good environment in which to thrive.

Cllr Pam Barrett: This is a funding issue rather than a structural one.

Member of the public: *Having more houses will mean there is more school traffic*

Cllr Pam Barrett: The town has lost a nursery too. We are now self-reliant regarding leisure facilities, public transport is limited, there are significant traffic concerns and we have almost

reached sewage capacity. There are a lot of amenity and infrastructure issues involved when considering further housing.

Dan agreed that there are many areas that need to be examined and this requires an infrastructure delivery plan which looks at education, waste disposal, traffic etc. All of this will need to be costed as part of a viability study.

Cllr Andy Stokes: Service cuts mean we have more residents with less facilities. If the problem is not being created by urban migration, it is an increase in the demand for second homes?

Dan was asked to provide information about the proposed plans that are within the boundaries of South Hams, particularly the Dean Prior/A38 corridor in relation to noise, accidents and pollution. The A38 has reached capacity and yet more housing is planned with no noise alleviation or pollution mitigation in place. How is the housing need calculated? The current level of house-building is not warranted unless it is affordable. It is not necessary to sacrifice more green belt areas in Buckfastleigh to build executive housing.

Dan explained that DNPA has approved that 50 dwellings per year are built over a 15-year period across the 8 main settlements which includes Buckfastleigh. It is not the intention of the Park to build in the countryside so the only option is too building the existing towns. The Housing Needs Survey for Buckfastleigh identified the need for 38 dwellings in the parish which is acknowledged as just a snapshot of the situation at that time. There are now 70 people on the Teignbridge housing register.

Cllr Pam Barrett: There is a social need for housing in Buckfastleigh, but the prospective developers who have come forward will not be building homes that are affordable to this a community.

Dan Janota: Having the 50% affordable housing restriction element applied to any new development puts constraints on the land value, so they must be careful.

Member of the public: *How is the strategy set as need may not be met by what is supplied? Would the Park ever consider building a completely new community on the Moor rather than burgeoning existing towns?*

Dan responded that the Park is looking at this option.

Cllr Pam Barrett: We need affordable homes built on the brownfield sites with infrastructure money coming from the developers. The Town Council have not been able to have meaningful discussions with the landowner for Devonian and would like DNPA to assist with this rather than looking at greenfield sites.

Dan advised that there are extra costs with brownfield sites, so he does not have high expectations for the Devonian site.

2 members of the public left the meeting.

Member of the public: *There are currently numerous houses for sale in Buckfastleigh.*

Cllr Barrett pointed out that new-build is often built to a poor standard. The Town Council would like to work with the Park. Current plans for new development are putting the lower town at significant risk of flooding. The Environment Agency is working on improvements and upstream

land management, but the allocated sites at Holne Road and Barn Park would add to problem of run-off and the Council would like to propose that these sites are removed from the Local Plan and that the Park looks at the Devonian and Buckfast Mill sites. (This was supported by the public in the room)

A strategic flood risk assessment has been carried out, but mitigation for flood management needs to be enforced on the developers. There also needs to be a limit on second homes

New homes in rural areas should be restricted to locals to meet community needs, and should not be second homes or investment properties which are often advertised in London as rural retreats.

Member of the public: *Is it possible to stop further industrial development at the Devonian site?*

Where planning permission is already in place for development in existing buildings, further permission is not required.

Member of the public: *What is an affordable home?*

The government considers affordable as a 20% reduction on the market value of a property. In reality this is not affordable to the average income in Devon.

Member of the public: *New people who move in are generally not from Buckfastleigh, but from areas like Newton Abbot.*

Dan advised that it is possible to look at local letting plans for social housing provision.

2 members of the public left.

Member of the public: *How much housing is allocated for self-build?*

This figure has not been identified as yet, but there is a register for those who have expressed an interest in self-build.

Member of the public: *A sustainable transport infrastructure is needed that includes cycling and walking.*

Cllr Pam Barrett: Locations to charge electric cars will need to be considered. How can this be achieved with so many narrow pavements and roads?

Cllr Barrett summarised the issues that the Park agreed to examine:-

- Community infrastructure
- Brownfield sites and further conservation strategy
- Long-term flood risk and upstream land management
- Information from South Hams District Council re communities who draw their services from Buckfastleigh – what are their plans for housing at other villages and its impact on the A38?

Cllr Stokes asked if DNP could give its support to the new cycle route?

Dan could not guarantee that the other sites brought forward by landowners identified on the maps in the draft plan will not be developed in the future.

Member of the public: *Why was this promised by Cllr Barker?*

Cllr Janet Jones thanked the public, Dan Janota and Alex Gandy for attending this meeting

All but 1 member of the public left.

**17/102. Review of actions from previous meeting:**

**Ducks Pond:** A management plan is being developed and advice from DNPA has been sought regarding the trees surrounding the pond.

**Fore Street Bench:** The bench at the lower end of Fore Street has now been removed due to safety concerns.

**Mineral Safeguarding Draft Supplementary Planning Document:** Comments have been submitted by the Clerk on behalf of the Council.

**17/103. Planning Applications received after Agenda set:** None

**17/104. Whitecleave Quarry update:**

The Cllr Alistair Dewhirst, Chair of the DCC Scrutiny Committee has been contacted for advice by the Clerk who was referred to the complaints procedure.

The letter to the Chief Executive, Dr Phil Norrey of Devon County Council has been acknowledged, but again the Clerk has been referred to the complaints procedure.

The Stage 2 complaint sent on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017 has been acknowledged by the Customer Relations Department.

**17/105. Community Assets update:**

A meeting has been held with the Teignbridge District Council Estates Manager. Teignbridge owned sites around the parish have been identified and information such as costs, covenants and existing lease agreements have been requested.

**17/106. Recruitment of volunteers to Car Parking working party:**

Judith to work with Inga on recruiting members and volunteers to this working party.

**17/107. To discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee:**

Cllr Andy Stokes confirmed that it is expected that the preferred contractor will install the solar panels on the pool in February 2018. Alterations to the roof will be required before this can take place

**17/108. Correspondence:** None

**17/109. Items requiring urgent attention:** None

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm