

BUCKFASTLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee Meeting held on 18th July 2018.

Present: Councillors Janet Jones (Chair), Pam Barrett, Huw Cox, Ron Fox, Andy Stokes and Judith Hart (Town Clerk).

In attendance: 10 members of the public and Peter Sheldon, agent for planning application 18/01387/MAJ (Minute No. 18/48ii)

Part I (Open to the Public)

18/41. Questions raised by the public:

A member of public raised concerns about the safety of children having witnessed vehicles speeding along Duckspod Road adjacent to the football field which was noted.

18/42. Apologies for absence: No apologies received from Cllrs Mark Maish and Pamela Forbes.

18/43. Declaration of Interests: Cllr Janet Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in the proposed development of Barn Park (Minute No. 18/47)

18/44. To approve & sign as correct the Minutes of the Environment and Transport Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6th June 2018.

Signed and approved by Cllr Janet Jones

18/45. Review of actions from previous meeting:

No items outstanding

18/46. Comments on planning applications received prior to this meeting and after Agenda set:

The Chair summarised 3 recent planning applications which were noted: alterations and extensions at St. Josephs, Grange Road, use of school playing field for an educational farm and erection of associated buildings at the Devon Cambian School, Oaklands Road and the erection of a single storey extension at 1.St. Bernards Close, Buckfast.

18/47. To consider and respond to the Development Brief for land at Barn Park, Buckfastleigh BCK1 Site

A member of the public asked if the Town Council can object to this development due to the lack of infrastructure and flooding issues.

The site was allocated for development by Dartmoor National Park approximately 8 years ago. The Town Council has asked for it to be removed from the Local Plan but this is not permitted.

The Council can challenge the Housing Needs Survey which was undertaken in 2014. The results from this should not be used to define current need which will not be met from the type of development proposed for the Barn Park site.

Cllr Pam Barrett: We have objected all through this process, but the decision is made by an unelected body and we have no power to stop it. This is the reason why we agreed to remove planning from the purpose of this meeting as we have as we have no influence over planning

decisions. The planning authorities also give us limited time to respond to long technical planning documents.

A member of public asked if there was an issue with the bats?

Devon Wildlife Trust has plotted many sites in Buckfastleigh and the data is now filed. The developer will have to undertake an ecology survey and put mitigation in place, but this could be to simply plant a hedge.

All views must be submitted to Dartmoor National Park (DNP) and should be based on facts. A new call for sites has now been announced. The Town Council will be informed of sites when found and then invited to comment.

Cllr Andy Stokes: Affordable housing provision should be included in new housing developments, but this rarely happens. Affordable is defined as 70-80% of market value, but in reality, these will just be open market properties.

A member of public asked if they could be second homes?

It was noted that the site constraint plan included in the Development Brief is poor and inaccurate and it was agreed that a traffic survey is needed.

Decision: Clerk to respond as follows:

- We are disappointed that despite the published guidance for development briefs and masterplans the developer has chosen not to consult adequately with the community having attended only one Town Council meeting in June 2017 during which time two representatives of Buckfast Estates were not formally introduced and remained silent throughout the discussion.
- Guidance encourages engagement with a broad range of stakeholders. We have seen no evidence of this with no publicity, public meetings, consultation or publication of this document which we believe was only forwarded to the Town Council following the intervention of the planning authority.
- We understand that the developer has based this brief on an out of date consultation that took place four years ago and was undertaken by a different developer. We do not believe that the reliance on a historical document is adequate or relevant to the current situation.
- Access problems to the Barn park area, parking congestion and flooding issues have significantly increased in recent years. We do not agree with the assessment of the previous consultation.
- The Development Brief indicates that ecological, habitat and traffic surveys have not yet been undertaken and again there appears to be a dependency on reports commissioned by a previous developer.
- The content of the Brief is limited with little detail or supporting evidence concerning the proposed development.
- The Site Constraint Plan is inaccurate, of poor quality and provides little helpful information.

18/48i). Amended Planning Application 0253/18 Proposed: Demolition of garages and erection of 3 dwellings and parking together with additional replacement parking on separate land parcel at land between 13-24 Glebelands and land adjacent to 53-56 Glebelands, Buckfastleigh:

The amended application includes two new disabled parking bays. This does not address the comments submitted by the Town Council to the original application.

Member of the public: *The new application has made the parking situation worse. The planners have rejected alternatives suggested by residents. We are very annoyed by the lack of consultation by Teign Housing.*

Decision: Members agreed to reiterate the Town Council response to the original planning application. It is felt that the applicant, Teign Housing is not listening to the Town Council or the planning authority and it was suggested that residents lobby the County Councillor who sits on the DNP Planning Committee.

18/48ii). The Chair brought forward planning application 18/01387/MAJ Land to the south of Strode Road, Buckfastleigh – outline application for six self-build affordable dwellings, six starter home and 16 open market self-build custom build dwellings (approval sought for access) which was received after the agenda for this meeting was set.

It was highlighted that the proposed site lies outside the Teignbridge Local Plan and if approved may set a precedent.

Peter Sheldon put forward the views of the developer. The site consists of four acres of land adjacent to Old Totnes Road and the A38. Outline permission was sought in 2015 but was withdrawn in 2017 due to the issues raised. The application has now been re-submitted as the developer believes these issues have been addressed. Starter homes would be 20% below market value and remain so in perpetuity.

It may be considered as an entry level site and would need to be promoted. Affordable housing partners will be sought, and it could offer an opportunity to small local builders. The ecology issues are recognised for e.g. the Greater Horseshoe bats and 73% of the site will be green open space. The developer is looking for approval for a point of access as there is no entrance to the site and this will need to be agreed with Highways.

Member of public: *Access would be on a bend on a busy road.*

The Town Council is lobbying to reduce the speed limit on Strode Road following concerns about access and safety in this area. Peter confirmed that the developer supports this and would like a zebra crossing too.

The site would require a cut deep into the hillside to create an entrance, an 84m visibility splay and would need to be steeply terraced which would change the character of the landscape, the look of Strode Road and how this would impact the conservation area and neighbouring SSSI.

Members agreed that it is difficult to make a reasonable assessment of the application as the scanned documents on the Teignbridge District Council (TDC) website are of poor quality.

Decision: Clerk to respond as follows as detailed above.

Peter Sheldon agree to provide a hard copy of the application and left the meeting at 8.40 pm.

18/49. Parking Review Update:

The Working Party had presented some initial suggestions to alleviate resident parking problems in the town which includes changes to the terms of use for the Teignbridge owned car parks for

eg. changing free parking from 6.00pm to 5.00pm to accommodate people coming home from work.

It was agreed that residents parking needs to be addressed and that the car parks could alleviate some of the pressure for on-street parking. Overnight parking is a significant problem, but people working in the town need parking too. One suggestion is to make the Globe car park long-stay. There is a problem with commercial vans taking up spaces and residents-only parking could offer one solution.

Professional advice should be sought, and proposals submitted to TDC to ascertain what can be done to ease the pressure. Can parking under the A38 be re-visited?

Action: Councillor John Nutley and the TDC Car Parks Manager to be invited to the September meeting to discuss the options available.

Members agreed that there is a case for a new car share and community transport initiative.

18/50. Community Speedwatch update:

There is currently no police officer available to support a Speedwatch scheme for Buckfastleigh. A petition for a 20mph speed limit for the whole town is being circulated and there seems to be public support for this. There is no police presence in the town to enforce a speed limit.

A traffic action group could be initiated by residents to take community action and pursue a variety of projects including the distribution of posters highlighting the dangers of speed.

18/51. Buckfastleigh Neighbourhood Plan update:

Action: Following receipt of the new Green Infrastructure Strategy report, it was agreed that the draft document should now proceed to referendum. Admin Assistant to discuss with Cllr Simon Rines.

18/52. To discuss the planning, management and communications issues for projects which are within the remit of this committee:

Already covered under the above items.

18/53. Correspondence:

It was brought to the attention of Members that Stagecoach have changed the 88 bus timetable to provide seven extra stops for Newton Abbot but discontinue the Sunday and Bank Holiday service for Buckfastleigh.

Action: Clerk to send letters of objection to both Stagecoach and Devon County Council (DCC) copied to the MP highlighting that this will cause financial hardship to residents who have relied on this service for employment and will further limit access to facilities in Newton Abbot, hospital visits etc.

Cllr Andy Stokes: Bus services are not commercially viable following DCC cuts.

One item of correspondence had been received from a resident alleging the use of herbicides by a local landowner requesting that the Town Council intervenes to stop further spraying.

Action: Clerk to advise that if the resident is a witness to this alleged activity and has evidence this must be reported to the Environment Agency, Environmental Health, Police and Devon Highways as this is outside the jurisdiction of the Town Council.

18/54. Items requiring urgent attention: None

Meeting closed at 9.38 pm