

Notes of a meeting held at 1p.m. on 15 November 2017 at Follaton House to discuss South Hams District Council's Reg. 14 responses to the Thurlestone Parish Pre-Submission Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Present:

Thurlestone NPSG : Sue Crowther (SC), David Houghton (DH), Gary Luddington (GL), Judy Pearce (JP)

SHDC: Phil Baker

Aims of the meeting: set out by DH:

1. To agree a position wherever possible
2. To agree constructive cooperation on the remaining steps to maintain momentum

1. PLAN WORDING AND POLICIES:

Vision: This had been through two rounds of public consultation in the parish - 98% of respondents to the parish questionnaire had supported it - and it was therefore unlikely to change (SC). Position agreed.

Objectives: Agreed that the words 'for local people' in the Local Economy Objective would be removed. It was also agreed that the type of infrastructure supported by the Plan, i.e. community Wi-Fi, the air ambulance night landing site and car park would be likely to be funded by grants and/or the community, rather than needing to rely on developer contributions for delivery. Position agreed.

Policy writing: PB suggested that the wording of some policies needed to be checked against the wording of local and national policies in order to avoid ambiguity over their interpretation. SC said the Basic Conditions Statement should pick this up and that she had sent the LPA a copy of the draft statement some weeks ago. PB did not provide examples of the policies he was referring to and had not seen the statement, but said it was not a question of compliance so may just be a word here and there. SC would check the policy wording. Position agreed.

TP1: SC referred to an EA letter sent to PB in 2015 in response to the neighbourhood area designation consultation. The letter was enclosed with the EA's Reg. 14 response and highlighted issues with regard to flood risk, coastal erosion and water quality in the parish. SC said that another development principle may be added in TP1 to address these issues, if necessary. Position agreed.

TP2 Settlement Boundaries (SB): PB objects to this policy for the following reasons:

1. Bantham and Buckland are not defined as 'sustainable settlements' in the JLP;
2. SBs need to be defined in a way that is consistent with adopted or emerging local policy; and
3. SBs cannot be used to identify a development site.

On the first point, SC pointed out that NPs could designate settlement boundaries. The purpose for doing so in our case was to provide an extra layer of protection on the countryside/AONB, rather than rely on the countryside policies that are applied on a case-by-case basis. She said the criteria used were identical to those in the JLP, except the last two. It was agreed that using physical features to define SBs was standard practice, but PB did not agree to the 'rounding off' principle. SC said this principle was used in other local plans and NPs which would be referred to in the SB topic paper. They include the Herefordshire Council Guidance that allows the development of small sites that cannot be identified as allocations to be included within settlement boundaries. JP pointed out that generally sites of 5 dwellings or less would not be allocated anyway, but be counted as windfalls.

PB said he feared the SBs would not achieve their aim and that site allocations were needed. SC said that NPs are not obliged to allocate sites and that the rural exception sites supported by the NP would be achievable. Neither the NP nor local opinion was at all anti-housing, but absolute certainty was needed as to what type of housing could be built outside the SBs.

SC then asked PB to explain why he does not want SBs round Buckland and Bantham because they allow development (infill) but would like to see site allocations in the countryside, as this seemed to be contradictory. PB said the problem he had with the SB policy was delivery and the criteria used, which he considered were not totally consistent with the JLP, particularly the 'rounding off'. SC agreed to look at this again and in particular at any conflict with TTV31 in the emerging JLP. She said the justification for the SBs would be set out in the Housing topic paper in the evidence base.

Conclusion: Agreement reached to disagree for the present.

TP3 Affordable Housing: The preference is not infill, but an either/or with rural exception sites (SC). SC queried why PB thought the Plan seemed to place an over-reliance on community-led housing. Members of the Steering Group had attended workshops only recently, and SC and JP had had discussions with the Lead Housing Specialist about this new initiative. SC said there was a group of young working families who were interested in progressing this initiative and there were a number of possible sites that may be suitable. This would be pursued with the new officer and the families interested, with a possible public meeting in December. Position agreed.

TP4 Open market housing: SC: Part 1.iii and Part 2 i-iv of this policy have been deleted. Position agreed.

TP5 Reuse of farm and rural buildings: Adopted and emerging local plan and national planning guidance allow reuse of redundant buildings in the countryside. See current DP16, para 55 of the NPPF and TTV31, paras 2 iii and 4 ii (SC). Position agreed.

TP6 Principal residence: Evidence to be produced in the Housing topic paper. Position agreed.

TP7 Replacement dwellings and extensions: A lot of evidence on prices and scale of replacement dwellings had been amassed. This was an important local issue and the principle of this policy had been supported by 94% of respondents to the parish

questionnaire. It was the issue that most often led to the complaint that, 'South Hams isn't listening to local people'. PB acknowledged the issue and agreed that Thurlestone, in particular, the Mead and Yarmer estates, could be referred to in the policy. Position agreed.

TP9 and 10 Expansion of existing, and new businesses: Cafes etc. came out of the evidence and survey. It was agreed that these policies could be amended so they refer to the expansion and development of new 'tourist related' businesses. B Class Uses would be too wide. Position agreed.

TP11 Caravan and camp sites: SC said there had been no objection to current locations so no reason to amend this policy. Position agreed.

TP12 New business hub: PB questioned the need for a hub, given video-conferencing etc. SC described the type of premises and who would use it. She said the policy would be amended to make it clear what the policy was expecting to deliver; a large, multi-use building would not qualify. The hub may occupy a former farm or rural building (under TP15), subject to the general development principles in TP1, but the NP was not required to allocate a site. Position agreed.

TP13 New marine related workshops: Evidence for need is in the Local Economy topic paper. SC said the words 'on or close to the Avon estuary' had been added to the policy to ensure the workshops would be in an appropriate location. GL described the existing facilities at Coronation Quay where boats are repaired and maintained locally. Position agreed.

TP14 Storage space: SC said Class Q PD rights (agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses) do not apply in the AONB. GL described that there was a local need for more storage space for boats, surf equipment etc. PB said there is no need to stipulate B8 use (which it doesn't at the moment). JP said TP1 is the safety net re traffic, location etc. Position agreed.

TP15 Change of use of farm and rural buildings: SC said wording of this policy is consistent with the wording of the adopted and emerging local plans and national guidance. Position agreed.

TP16 Retention of employment uses. SC agreed to amend the title to 'Loss' rather than 'Retention' and to delete the reference to the Devon Covenant and Local Connection requirement in part 2 of this policy (since occupancy requirements are dealt with in TP3). PB said he would come back on Devon Covenants. SC explained there had already been discussion and agreement about these with the Lead Housing Specialist. Position agreed.

TP17 Footpaths and cycle Tracks: Cross reference to TP1 to be added. Position agreed.

TP18 Recreation and sport: There had been majority support for a level sports pitch, but only small numbers involved, so not a priority aim and certainly not enough to warrant a qualifying S106 agreement. Part 2 had been moved to TP23. Position agreed.

TP19 Change of use to open space, sport or recreation: SC referred PB to TP1 which covers an ecological assessment and ecological management plan, but would consider adding a further criterion to deal specifically with mitigation for the loss of biodiversity. Position agreed.

TP20 Change of use from open space, sport and recreation. After explanation from PB, SC agreed to add reference to Sport England Guidance in the supporting text, which would strengthen the evidence required to meet the criteria. PB would check and inform whether the guidance was in the JLP evidence base. Position agreed.

TP21 Non-designated heritage assets: Richard Gage (Heritage Specialist) had since seen the policy and was supportive. Position agreed.

TP22 Natural environment: SC informed PB that both the EA and RSPB had endorsed the policy. Position agreed.

TP23 Coastal management: The purpose of this policy is to cover instances where private works require planning permission. SC said the supporting text would be amended to refer to the Shoreline Management Plan. Policy 18 Part 2, which protects the beaches and their immediate vicinity from inappropriate development, had also been added to this policy. Position agreed.

TP24 Community Wi-Fi: PB said the NPPF already covered infrastructure needs, but SC explained that TP24 is aimed at small-scale parish requirements. NPPF and local policies are referred to on page 86 of the draft. Position agreed.

TP25 Car park: The policy has been amended so that it only applies to land within or adjoining Thurlestone and limited to 20 parking spaces. JP said it was likely to have a gravel/compacted hard-core surface to avoid visual impact on the AONB. Position agreed.

TP26 Air ambulance night landing site: Site agreed with DAAT, but particular circumstances prevented an allocation at this time. It would have a grass surface and is subject to TP1. Position agreed.

TP27 Solar panels and arrays: After a discussion about the definition of 'close', PB suggested minimising impact was the key. SC agreed to look at the wording in the AONB Guidance and to amend as appropriate. Position agreed.

TP28 Wind turbines: PB will send a copy of his source for stipulating wind turbines can only come forward on sites allocated by NPs or local plans. SC had relied on the Winslade Farm appeal decision and 2015 WMS for wording. She explained that 'local community backing' would mean that any proposal must have Parish Council support and recalled that the AONB Unit had requested that this policy should not be deleted. PB agreed we were enabling rather than hindering the general policy. Position agreed.

TP28 Community heating: No change. Position agreed.

2. TIMETABLE AND NEXT STEPS

SC proposed to submit the Submission Version of the NP, the Basic Conditions Statement and Consultation Statement between 4 - 10 December 2017.

For the Reg. 15 consultation, it was agreed that the LPA only had to be satisfied that the statutory requirements had been met. SC referred PB to the NP guidance which states that the LPA has to be satisfied that a Basic Conditions Statement has been submitted, but that the LPA is not required to consider whether the draft NP meets the basic conditions until after the independent examination has taken place and after the examiner's report has been received.

PB said Sarah Packham, case officer, would initiate the Reg. 16 consultation, and JP agreed to email her for assurance on dates and also the timing and procedure for the selection of the examiner. The SEA screening opinion consultation period was due to end on 30 November and JP also agreed to contact Mandy Goddard about this being returned on time.

PB to send:

- link to the Sport England Needs Assessment
- source on wind turbines and NPs
- details of why a Devon Covenant-type agreement was not thought suitable

DH concluded that the meeting had been useful and constructive in aligning positions.