

Thurlestone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held in the Parish Hall, Thurlestone on Monday 7th October at 7.30pm.

There was an open forum at the beginning of the meeting to allow members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Council or other items which affect the Parish. The following points were raised:

An update was requested about DCC's recent speed survey carried out in Bantham and how representative it had been. Residents consider that recent events continue to show that the behaviour of drivers is irresponsible and that action is required.

The new Head of Thurlestone Academy introduced herself. She is very interested in how the school can build links with the community and the school will be organising events in the coming months to which all are invited.

The meeting convened.

1. To receive apologies.

There were no apologies.

2. To receive any amendments necessary to Members' Registers of Interests.

There were no amendments.

3. To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings on Monday 9th September and Monday 23rd September 2019.

The Minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed.

4. To consider any matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

5. Planning

- To discuss the outcomes of the NP Committee Meeting on 1st October and to agree the next steps for the community led housing initiative.

A public session had been held before the meeting to discuss the comments from the meeting on 1st October and to allow members of the public to make further comments as appropriate. (See separate minutes)

The Chairman explained that the duty of the Parish Council was to support a site for Community-led housing that could be delivered in accordance with the Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan and which:

- could demonstrate identified local housing needs
- was small scale, less than 10 dwellings, with an appropriate mix of sizes (2/3 beds)
- was located where it would enhance and maintain the vitality of a village and the parish as a whole

- was occupied by people who meet Local Connection eligibility criteria
- was subject to a principal residency requirement and affordable in perpetuity

The government's Community Housing Fund has been set aside for areas such as Thurlestone Parish because it has one of the highest percentages of 2nd homes in the District. The Parish is also well qualified to obtain funding from Homes England, as our CLH site will be 100% affordable, with no open market cross-subsidisation. However, the Chair explained that we have to be aware that there is growing competition for this funding, with other schemes underway already benefiting from it.

As to the location, councillors had read the comments in full obtained on 1 October about the West Buckland and Buckland Park Farm, North Upton site. They had also read comments about the site recently suggested by the Estate on land opposite the village shop in Bantham and were aware that, as yet, there was no planning application on the table for this site and it was not considered in our January consultation.

In view of the above, the Chairman invited councillors to vote for which of the two sites that were already on the table in January, at the start of the consultation, would deliver this Community-led Housing initiative for the parish: the West Buckland site or the Buckland Park Farm site. He advised councillors that, if they voted for the Buckland Park Farm site, it would then be possible to make an application for the Community-led Housing scheme at Buckland Park Farm.

A vote was held and the unanimous decision was made to proceed to make an application for the Community-Led Housing scheme at Buckland Park Farm forthwith and without delay.

- The following planning applications were discussed:

2613/19/HHO Mr & Mrs Meredith
Householder application for extensions to existing dwelling
Sanderling Eddystone Road Thurlestone TQ7 3NU

Thurlestone Parish Council supported this proposal for extensions to the existing dwelling comprising the construction of a new garage on the West elevation to replace the existing garage on the East elevation, which is to be converted into living space and utility room, and a new gable end on the South elevation.

Councillors considered that the extensions were subordinate in scale and form to the existing dwelling (in accordance with Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Policy TP7.2i); that although the new windows on the South elevation are slightly larger, they will not increase overlooking and are unlikely to result in any loss of residential amenity (NP Policy TP1.1); and that the changes to roofing materials and wall finishes are all in keeping with the area and will be an improvement, in accordance with NP Policy TP1.2, which supports the use of natural building materials.

3979/18/FUL Mr John Braithwaite
Erection of agricultural store building (Revised plans)
Western Lodge Kerse Cross To Whitley Cross Thurlestone TQ7 3LR

Thurlestone Parish Council objected to this proposal for the erection of an agricultural store building.

Councillors considered that the proposed building is too large and will have an unacceptable impact on the AONB (contrary to Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Policies TP1.2 and TP1.5) which require proposals to be proportionate and appropriate to the rural location of the parish within the South Devon AONB and to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB; and that the proposed access is unsuitable, being located at a three-way junction on the main road leading out of Thurlestone to Kingsbridge. Further, no details have been produced of the proposed access track from the highway to the building.

If the Council is minded to grant permission for the application, then Councillors request that the building is used solely for the purposes of agriculture as defined under Section 336 of the TCPA 1990 (as amended).

3074/19/OPA

**Outline application with all matters reserved for the construction of a single dwelling
(Resubmission of 2405/19/OPA)**

Plot 29 Highfield, Eddystone Road, Thurlestone, Devon, TQ7 3NU

Thurlestone Parish Council objected to this outline application with all matters reserved for the construction of a single dwelling.

Councillors considered that a Section 106 Agreement to secure the principal residence requirement in Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Policies TP4.2 and TP6 to be so fundamental to the nature of the development that it cannot be considered a reserved matter. A condition on the outline permission to limit the size of the property to 3 beds max (in accordance with NP Policy TP4.1) is also requested.

6. To receive a report from County Councillor Rufus Gilbert.

Councillor Gilbert reported that Glebe Field has been allocated funding for the repair of the road surface and that the work will be carried out before spring.

DCC Cabinet will discuss the process by which utility companies apply for road closures so as to make the closure times shorter and the work more efficient.

7. To receive reports from District Councillors Judy Pearce and Mark Long.

Councillor Pearce reported that there will be a consultation about Supplementary Planning documents covering the Joint Local Plan and that we will be invited to contribute. These documents are guidance rather than policy on important matters such as extensions and rooflines.

SHDC needs to find £200k in savings and they will be discussing this in the next few weeks.

SHDC has agreed to take on 2 more Planning Enforcement Officers and there is a new section on the website for reporting a planning enforcement which should make it more straightforward.

The tree, or part of it, opposite Mallards has now come down and needs to be removed. Councillor Mitchelmore agreed to speak to the landowner.

Councillor Long reminded councillors about the SHDC Planning training sessions on 15th and 29th October. All councillors were encouraged to attend.

8. To receive an update about the handover of the Thurlestone public toilets.

The Golf Club had agreed to discuss whether or not they would be able to provide a subsidy towards keeping the toilets open and Councillor Marshall was awaiting news. He mentioned a recent newspaper article that described public toilets as an asset and considered that we must give proper consideration to their importance when we make a final decision.

9. To discuss the future funding for the Avon Estuary Patrol and Ferry.

Councillors discussed the need for the Patrol and the level of service it provides. They agreed that it would be useful to see the document awarding the 5-year contract to the Bantham Estate so that they could better understand exactly what service level has been agreed. A question was also asked about whether the ferry was the same boat as the patrol boat and if the two services could be combined. It was decided that there were a number of questions which needed to be addressed before looking at additional funding. This will be discussed again at the November meeting.

10. To receive an update about the DAAT Night Landing Site and set a date for the official opening.

Councillor Crowther reported that the site has now been cleared and is ready to go live. The tariff on the electricity contract needs to be changed once the account is up and running and then all is ready.

It was agreed to ask the landowner to open the site formally. We are awaiting dates from DAAT and will then coordinate with the landowner to confirm a date and time and this will be publicised on the website once it is agreed.

11. To receive updates about Parish matters, including: Highways, Parish Hall, bins, trees.

DCC has taken some sample speeds in Bantham and these did not provide any speeding results. There is some question over whether or not the 30mph speed limit is properly signed and DCC is considering installing more signs. As there was some disagreement about the time at which the speed survey was taken, and as councillors feel strongly that this needs more investigation, it was agreed to have a site meeting with the DCC Highways Officer and County Councillor Gilbert on 31st October to discuss this in more detail. Councillors were asked to provide questions in advance to the Parish Clerk so that she can forward them to the Highways Officer.

Grove corner in West Buckland needs to be swept and the Clerk was asked to contact SHDC about this.

An issue had been raised about the lights along the pathway near Homefield: the lights are on all night and residents are querying whether this is correct. Councillor Rhymes agreed to speak to neighbours about this.

Bins

Councillor Pearce is still trying to sort out the dog bin by the war memorial. SHDC has bought new litter bins but they are not fit for dog litter purposes and she is working on trying to get proper dog litter bins to replace them.

The West Buckland bin is now being emptied more regularly.

12. To discuss a request for the placing of a memorial bench within the Parish.

Councillor Rhymes had carried out a survey of benches in the parish and there is quite a lot of work to be done on the ones we have already: approximately 12 need a great deal of work and that is just within Thurlestone.

Councillors agreed that it would be more appropriate to ask anyone who would like a memorial bench to make a contribution towards an existing bench, which could then be refurbished and fitted with a memorial plaque (not all of the benches have memorials at present).

13. To discuss the Island View play area.

The Parish Council took on this area as a green space for the Parish and we pay to maintain it: it is well-used. The deeds were lost, probably at the time when the Rural District Council was dissolved. The PC needs now to consider registering the title with the land registry, which would involve instructing solicitors. It was agreed that Councillor Crowther would review the legal position. The Clerk was asked to speak to the insurers to find out what cover might be required.

14. To discuss the requirements for a Parish Lengthsman.

It was decided that this would be discussed at the November meeting.

15. To note that the 2018/19 accounts have been signed off by the external auditor and are now available to be published.

This was noted.

16. To note the current account balance of £22,960.53 to date 2nd October 2019 and to approve the following payments:

Sue Crowther	NP Expenses	£102.74
Thurlestone Parish Hall	Hall Hire	£37.00
Helen Nathanson	Parish Clerk pay and expenses (26/8 – 7/10)	£484.60
Total		£624.34

The current account balance was noted and payments were approved to a total of £624.34.

17. To note the date of the next Council Meeting: Monday 4th November 2019 at 7.30pm.

This was noted and the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Councillor Rhymes
Chairman

Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee on Tuesday 1st October 2019

Present: Councillor Crowther (Chair), Councillor Williams, Chris White, Frith Chadwick, Richard Boughton

Apologies: Graham Gilbert

In Attendance: Helen Nathanson (Parish Clerk), District Councillors Long and Pearce, Parish Councillors Munn and Mitchelmore and 40 members of the public

1. The apologies were accepted.
2. The Minutes of the Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Advisory Group on Tuesday 11 June 2019 were confirmed.
3. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.
4. It was noted that the Thurlestone Parish NP Advisory Group has been renamed the Thurlestone Parish NP Committee and that its Terms of Reference are available on the parish website.
5. To receive an update on the NP Community Led Housing initiative.

The Chair explained that, on account of objections received by the Bantham Estate by residents of West Buckland (WB), the former had proposed an alternative site for community housing, which was the site opposite Bantham Stores. At this stage there was no further information about what size the development site would be and whether or not it would only include the 6 houses for the community housing.

The potential reasons for supporting this site could be that this is a more sustainable location; there would be no overlooking of other houses; it can be coordinated with increased parking proposed for the village shop; and the houses could be below the crest of the field to minimise skyline impact.

The Chair explained that the West Buckland site was not being removed altogether but that the Bantham Estate does not want to upset local residents in West Buckland by offering a site for which there is not universal support. The landowner would like the communities to come together and agree what is acceptable.

By this stage in the community housing project the Parish Council had expected to be sharing the design plans with residents, having signed the Option Agreement with the landowner. This is now not the case and the Chair considered that it is causing unacceptable delays for the families involved.

6. To consider the location of the NP Community Led Housing.

Members of the public were then invited to ask questions and make comments on the above and the following matters were raised:

If the WB site is chosen will the landowner proceed with extending the car park opposite the shop anyway? Would residents therefore support development opposite the shop or on the corner in WB as preference?

If the landowner builds a car park opposite the shop, community housing at Bantham and then the proposed vineyard, there will be significant building work in a localised area around Aune Cross.

If they build at Bantham, how will this affect the roads particularly in the summer?

If the Bantham site were taken up and then the vineyard warehouse put in the corner, would this change the building line in Bantham and allow infill?

The Settlement Boundary is clearly defined and this site is outside that. It was never envisaged that there would be affordable housing in Bantham.

There is room for approximately 8 houses alongside the Sloop where the allotments are and the intention would be to relocate the allotments.

We don't have definitive information about how the Bantham site would be configured so it is difficult to make a decision.

It was noted that the North Upton site should be referred to as Buckland Park Farm.

Who sets the eventual market price of the houses? The Chair explained that the landowner is not involved in any part of the process after the Option Agreement has been signed and he would not therefore be involved in setting the price of or selling the homes.

Is it right that the landowner would be given the statutory amount of £10,000 per plot?

How can residents have a discussion at this stage when there is not enough information to make a comparison? We need to know how big the sites are before a decision can be made.

What has the Parish Council done to ensure that representatives of the different areas are invited to the meetings? How do we make sure that the message gets out to all residents?

Why does it have to be decided so quickly when we do not have all the information?

Was anyone from the Bantham Estate invited to attend the meeting? Yes but they could not attend at short notice.

The Bantham site would allow parking outside individual houses whereas in WB the parking would be on site but not adjacent to houses.

Parking and traffic issues apply equally to both sites.

The WB site as shown at the meeting was smaller than that previously agreed: why has it changed?

The new proposed site in WB seems far too small for the housing.

Where are the reports that have already been produced by SHDC?

Where are the objections from residents in WB? Are they in the public domain?

Who is controlling this process?

Bantham Lane is too dangerous for pedestrians so the Buckland Park Farm site does not allow for connections without a car.

If there was an evaluation of the Buckland Park site where is it and can we see it?

Why don't we just say no to Bantham?

Is the community's decision dictated by the planning authority's decision on the preferred site? Yes - the plans still have to go through the application process this may be a problem if it is not the authority's preferred site.

Is there a timescale on funding? Are we at risk of losing the funding or have we spent our allocation if WB does not happen? No – there has been very little work done yet on that site so not much money spent and there is no time limit on the community housing spending.

The Chair proposed that the Parish Council be asked to write to the Bantham Estate to give them 14 days in which to confirm whether or not there is a site available at WB on which the Option Agreement will be signed.

The date of the next quarterly meeting on Tuesday 10 December 2019 at 7.30pm was noted and the meeting closed at 9.14pm.

Councillor Crowther

Chair

Notes from the public session on Monday 7th October 2019 to discuss Community-led Housing.

Present: Councillors Rhymes (Chairman), Munn, Crowther, Hurrell, Mitchelmore, Marshall and Williams

In Attendance: Helen Nathanson (Parish Clerk), District Councillors Pearce and Long and 46 members of the public

The Chairman opened the session by recapping on the findings of the Open Forum/Workshop held in January.

Of the two sites on offer:

55% of respondents favoured West Buckland (WB)

35% favoured North Upton (Buckland Park Farm)

10% said they liked both

North Upton was considered to be an easier site to develop, with more scope, better road access and better drainage. But WB was considered the natural choice, as it already had a full-time community, closer to all 3 existing villages and within walking distance of the schools, shop, pub and other facilities.

In March, the landowner of the WB site (Bantham Estate) agreed to sell land for 6 community-led houses, without any strings attached, and SHDC was notified in April. We then focused on identifying the households that may be eligible for the scheme. SHDC carried out ecological and topographical surveys, they sent the landowner draft heads of terms for the option agreement to buy the land (end of May) and instructed architects to prepare site and concept design drawings (July/August).

However, by the end of September, the parish council learnt that the landowner had concerns about the number of local residents who didn't support the site, leading us to believe that the WB site was in doubt. We therefore contacted the landowner direct to find out if the site was still available.

On the afternoon of the NP Committee meeting on 1st October, the landowner informed us that it was clear that there was not universal support for the WB site and that he had no desire to be trying to support a community-led scheme for which he could be criticised when there was so little financial logic behind the project, other than intangible goodwill. He suggested an alternative site in Bantham that would have benefits in community and planning terms. Whilst confirming that he was not removing WB as a possible site, he is firmly of the view that all members of the community should support the scheme, not just some members.

We therefore decided to open the matter up for public discussion at the quarterly meeting of the NP Committee on 1st October, at which we obtained detailed comments about the WB and Buckland Park Farm (North Upton) sites and, as requested by the landowner and SHDC, for Bantham, although we had no further details.

Starting with **Bantham**, a summary of the 'pros and cons' for Bantham based on the comments obtained on 1st October (attached) was displayed on an overhead projector. The Chairman then asked if there were any new issues that the public wished to raise and these were as follows:

- *Opportunity to develop parking for the shop could possibly be a PRO.*
- *Wherever the site is, whether Buckland Park Farm, West Buckland or Bantham, traffic would still be gridlocked at peak times in the summer. People use that road.*
- *Ideally, the site would only contravene a limited number of Neighbourhood Plan policies.* In response, it was explained that being affordable housing on a rural exception site, the scheme was backed by the NP provided the relevant planning criteria in Policy TP3 are met. It was also backed by national policy and the JLP.

Turning to the **West Buckland** site, it was again confirmed that the landowner had informed us that the WB site is still on the table. Also, that in the course of the day, SHDC had confirmed that the parking spaces on the adjoining field at the entrance of the site would be included in the freehold title of the individual houses, but to bear in mind that the landowner will not sell the land without full community support and no local objections.

The Chairman then read out the summary of 'pros and cons' for the WB site (attached) based on the comments obtained on 1st October and asked if there were any new issues that the public wished to raise. The comments were as follows:

- *On infrastructure, this site has or should have access to mains SWW sewage, whereas Bantham does not and would need a whole new plant. Also, that run-off shouldn't be a problem and won't be any worse once the houses have been constructed.*
- *The first CON deals with the site being reduced and that it is unclear if parking is included. Hadn't that been clarified at the last meeting?* Councillor Crowther explained that there was originally room for some 30 houses on the original red line plan for the WB site. The site would have been much too big for 6 community-led houses. Hence, the site was reduced by agreement between the landowner and SHDC, which would not be unusual. The Community Housing officer is here and will be able to confirm this. Does Buckland want 30 houses? However, the issue of the corner of the field remained, but this land could only be a rural exception site, being outside the Buckland settlement boundary. Our settlement boundaries are firm and have been through the process. It had also been confirmed that the parking is included within the red line site, but we don't have a copy of the new site plan. She said that while SHDC and the landowner were progressing the option agreement, we were progressing eligibility to show housing need, as we are competing for the Community Housing Fund and Homes England money and we have people who are eligible. As to the parking, since it had now been confirmed that this was within the site, that CON could therefore now be removed.
- *The site has been reduced to such an extent that parking cannot be in front of the houses, which is inconvenient for the people living there, and probably there is not much garden either associated with the houses.*
- *The 4th PRO was that traffic was no worse at WB than anywhere else in the parish, but the traffic at Buckland Park Farm (North Upton) is far less congested than WB and has easier access to where people are going to work in Plymouth and Kingsbridge. Not enough attention has been given to the North Upton site.*
- *It is not true to say that there isn't congestion on the lane between WB and Bantham. The lane is well used, particularly by people with push chairs, dog walkers and surfers. It is dangerous and it is a public safety issue. It was agreed to add this to the list of CONs for the WB site.*
- *We're supposed to be an independent group. The fact that SHDC has jumped the gun and done a survey on a site shouldn't be considered a PRO for WB.*

Finally, the Chairman turned to the **Buckland Park Farm (North Upton) site** and a summary of the 'pros and cons' for the site based on the comments obtained on 1st October (attached) was displayed on the overhead projector. The Chairman then asked if there were any new issues that the public wished to raise and these were as follows:

- *Willing landowner, not a developer? Isn't that the position with the other sites?* It was explained that these comments were not the parish council's comments, they were obtained from the public on 1st October. The comments were then summarised by grouping the issues as we did on the Neighbourhood Plan. She also confirmed that the landowner

remained willing to offer this site, emphasising that tonight we need to know of any new issues that should be considered.

- *On the PROs, it says fewer highway issues. Well that's the busiest road in our three villages, especially in the summer. A mother with children couldn't walk anywhere along that road with a pram, to the Buckland Park Farm site. Prospective owners would use the pub and shop in Churchstow and the school in Aveton Giffard. The parish would not benefit. Also, it says willing landowner, not a developer. Have we cleared there were no strings attached?* It had been confirmed there were no strings attached.
- *Getting out to work in the Churchstow Business Park in the morning and returning at night, with all the traffic from the beach, presents worse highway issues, not fewer. WB also has other options, the Clanacombe road and Thurlestone roads. Also, the infrastructure at this site is just not there.* The highway issue would be added to the CONs.
- *In the PROs, it says the site is easier to develop but we all know how it is when one house is being developed, like Clock Cottage, and how many deliveries and lorries are coming down.* It was explained that construction issues were not a material planning consideration, but a good point and relevant to all the sites. People talk about loss of value on their homes because of the affordable housing, which is another one.
- *Shouldn't we be considering that young people need homes and they need somewhere within a community. Try and get out of Buckland Park Farm in the summer. We have 50/60 cars come into our caravan park in North Upton in the summer period, because the lane is blocked.*
- *The first CON is a big CON. The NP says it will support community housing because it's required for the community. It should therefore be in the best place to support the community.* Policy TP3 was read out to the meeting. The housing would be on a rural exception site, outside a settlement boundary.
- *District Councillor Pearce said that while all the foregoing comments are material considerations, they cannot just be considered in the context of the NP. She said she knew what the NP is trying to do, but that the JLP also needs to be considered, because the JLP and the NP sit alongside each other. She went on to say that when we were first looking at sites, they were looked at by a South Hams planning officer who gave us her opinion on the three sites originally being considered. One of those sites, in East Buckland, was knocked out at that early stage because it was considered totally unsustainable and too difficult to develop. Of the other two, the WB site definitely scored higher than North Upton, which was considered isolated and not attached to a full community like WB. She thought these aspects needed to be taken into consideration as well. Further, that if we decide to go down this route (North Upton), we need to consider whether we would actually get planning permission for that site. She added that the Bantham site hadn't been assessed by the District.*
- *In response, a member of the public asked Councillor Pearce: "Are you saying that Totnes [SHDC] will turn this site at North Upton down because they don't like it. If so, then we are completely wasting our time? Councillor Pearce responded by saying it was not a question of the District not liking the site, it was a question of the NP and JLP needing to be considered alongside each other. Councillor Crowther responded by saying that the assessment [in 2018] to which Councillor Pearce referred was not a formal assessment and that neither she, nor the PC, had ever seen it. Her understanding is that the assessment wasn't actually in writing, being only communicated verbally between the planner and Councillor Pearce. She had asked SHDC for a copy of the 2018 assessment, but it had not been forthcoming.*

- *What is the process and how will the matter be decided?* The Chairman explained that the parish council will decide which site will go forward in the meeting that followed.
- *Scant consideration had been given to the young families with young children hoping to occupy the Community-led Housing. She said that motherhood was already isolating and that the North Upton site would only make it more difficult for them. Bantham and Buckland were closer to facilities.*

The Chairman declared the end of the session and informed those attending that the Community-led Housing will be the first item in the planning section.

This public session closed at 7.30pm.