

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 29TH July 2014 AT MILTON ABBOT VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM.

(available at www.chillaton.net and www.miltonabbot.net).

PRESENT: Cllrs J. Anderson (MA) (Part), H. Asbridge (C), R Brewer (C), D. Gradidge (D), P. Hough (MA), M. Pahlsson (B), J Spurr (MA), R. Tucker (MA) and Mrs A Westcott (C) (Chair)

Cllr Bob Baldwin (WDBC) (Part)

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd July 2014 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

2. DEVELOPING A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Consideration was given to a progress report by the Parish Clerk following the decision at the last meeting to inform WDBC of the Parish Council's intention to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan [NDP] for its area.

Kelly Parish Meeting had asked if its parish could be included, as this would create a logical NDP area.

It was noted that no grant aid was available for expenses incurred after 31st December 2014 and that meant it would not be possible to obtain funding for support from a planning consultant throughout the NDP process. However, it should be possible to obtain a grant for the cost of consultant input to the early stages of the work of the NDP Steering Group, which would provide some initial training, a project plan and other support for its work in 2015.

It was essential for the Steering Group to be provided with its own website, to act as a focus for community awareness of the progress of its work and the content of the draft NDP. The functionality of the Chillaton website was suited to this purpose and could be exported to a new site at minimal cost.

In order to apply to WDBC for the designation of the NDP area it was also necessary to submit a map showing the area concerned and the constitution of the Steering Group. It was pointed out that the map attached to the Parish Clerk's report did not show the inclusion of Bradstone and Dunterton in the NDP area.

It was agreed that:

1. Application be made to WDBC for the designation of the area of the NDP, being the area of the Parish Council, including Bradstone and Dunterton as well as that of Kelly Parish. That application to include the following statement as to the appropriateness of the Plan area:

The proposed NDP area is appropriate because:

- a. It covers the whole of the combined areas of Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council and Kelly Parish.
 - b. It avoids the area of Kelly Parish being left isolated among neighbouring parishes that are developing Neighbourhood Plans.
 - c. It does not impinge on any other area that is, or is likely to be, included in another Neighbourhood Plan.
2. The Constitution of the Steering Group as set out in Annexe 3 to Appendix A of the Agenda be approved and that Councillors Asbridge, Pahlsson and one other, to be

chosen by and from Milton Abbot Councillors, be appointed to the Steering Group, as the Parish Council's three representatives.

3. Application be made to Locality for grant aid in the sum of £1,610, the Parish Clerk being authorised to make any necessary adjustments to that application should any cost components be revised.
4. Subject to the approval of grant aid, Stuart Todd Associates be appointed to provide support to the Steering Group on the basis set out in Annexe 2 to Appendix A of the Agenda.
5. The Parish Clerk be authorised to publicise and make arrangements for a public meeting in September to promote the idea of the NDP and to invite residents to join the Steering Group.
6. Once grant funding has been obtained, a NDP website with a similar functionality to the Chillaton village website be developed by Chris Beighton at a cost of £150, plus estimated annual running costs of £50.
7. The timetable for the initial stages of the NDP process be approved, as follows:

31 st July	WDBC asked to approve the designated area of the NDP and the terms of reference of the Steering Group.
1 st August	Application made to Locality for grant aid.
During August	Advance publicity for a public meeting in September.
2 nd week of August	WDBC gives six week's notice of proposed area of Plan.
September	Public meeting to gain support and allow potential Steering Group members to be identified.
7 th October	WDBC Resources Committee approves Plan area.
October	Briefing/Training for Steering Group.
November	Consideration of project plan by Steering Group.
December	Consultation and Engagement Plan agreed.
2015	Further action as determined by the Steering Group and the NDP process.

3. WDBC CONSIDERING SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Having considered a report by the Parish Clerk combining the previously agreed views on potential development sites in Chillaton with those since expressed by Milton Abbot Councillors regarding sites in that village, it was agreed that the combined statement as set out in Appendix A to these Minutes be forwarded to WDBC for consideration.

4. PROPOSED WIND TURBINE - CARDWELL FARM, LONG CROSS

It was noted that WDBC had decided that an Environmental Impact Assessment was needed before a planning application could be considered for a 54.7m [180ft] high wind turbine at Cardwell Farm, Long Cross.

The consultants for the applicants had initiated a pre-application public consultation process, but it was currently unclear as to whether or not that would meet the requirements of WDBC. The consultants had agreed in principle to the request of the Parish Clerk that the current deadline for comments of 7th August be extended, but no revised date had yet been determined.

5. ANNUAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

It was reported at the last meeting that the annual audit of accounts had not been completed by the statutory deadline of 30th June. The Parish Clerk reported that he had since been able to prepare the accounts for 2013/14 and complete the necessary return for the Parish Council's external auditors. However, before the return was submitted and the delayed

process of public consultation on those accounts could begin, it was necessary for the Parish Council to formally approve the accounts and the return.

The Parish Council gave consideration to an analysis of income and expenditure and a Bank reconciliation, as well relevant extracts from the accounting statements to be submitted to the Parish Council's external auditors.

It was agreed that:

(i) the following statement be sent to the Council's external auditors:

The Parish Council has properly accounted for every item of expenditure and income during 2013/14 and has reconciled that account with its bank balances at 31st March 2014. Although this demonstrates that the day to day financial practices of the Parish Council are sound, it does not yet have in place a sufficiently robust system of in-year reviews of risk management or of internal audit. It has also failed to complete the annual account process in sufficient time to meet the deadline of 30th June.

These deficiencies are due to a combination of factors. Firstly, the Parish Council has had three different people employed as Parish Clerk during the last 15 months; the last two being in post for a very short period of time before resigning. That rapid turnover of staff created a deficient handover process and as a result, the deadline for publicising the accounts was not achieved.

Those difficulties have been compounded by a lack of external information and advice on the general operation and audit of the Parish Council's finances, as a result of it not being affiliated to any local or national body supporting Parish Councils.

The following measures have been taken to resolve these issues:

The Parish Council has now joined the Devon Association of Local Councils, through which it can also access the resources of the National Association of Local Councils. With advice and information from these agencies, a thorough review of the Parish Council's financial processes will now be carried out.

No action is being taken to fill the post of Parish Clerk until such time as the Parish Council has been able to review the hours of work and level of remuneration, so as to be sure that a candidate with the right experience and ability can be appointed and that there are sufficient paid hours available in which to carry out the duties concerned. In the meantime, a parish councillor with extensive local government experience at a senior level is acting as a temporary Parish Clerk.

(ii) that the accounting statements and annual governance statement for 2013/14 be approved.

6. INSURANCE

It was noted that the previous insurance cover arranged for the Parish Council had expired at the end of May. In accordance with the Council's procedures for urgent action, the Parish Clerk had, with the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, arranged cover from the same insurance company [Zurich Insurance] and the same cost as last year [£144.59], taking effect from 1st July 2014.

7. PAYMENT OF INVOICES

Due to pressure of other Parish Council business, it had not proved possible for the Parish Clerk to submit details of outstanding creditors to this meeting, so that the Parish Council could approve orders for payment in accordance with Standing Order 28. Several accounts were now due and the Parish Clerk was authorised to make any necessary payments, subject to the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.30pm.

There was then an informal discussion of various matters upon which the Parish Clerk intended to seek the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, in accordance with the Council's procedures for urgent action, as follows:

TAP FUND APPLICATION

The Parish Clerk stated that Lifton Parish Council had now considered this Parish Council's request to make a joint application to the Town and Parishes [TAP] Fund to pay for the clearance of neglected areas of highway and pavements, blocked gullies and drains, etc, so that they can then be brought back into regular cleaning/maintenance cycles in future.

Lifton Parish Council considered instead that it would be preferable to make a joint application for funding to enable the purchase of additional Vehicle Activated Signs [VAS] to deter motorists, travelling along the route from Tavistock to Launceston, from speeding in Chillaton and Lifton. Milton Abbot Parish Council had already earmarked funds towards the purchase of one VAS for Chillaton but two were needed and a similar situation existed in Lifton.

As the Highway Authority had agreed that two VAS were appropriate in Chillaton, the Parish Clerk then sought the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, in accordance with the Council's procedures for urgent action, to make the necessary application for funding and this was obtained.

APPLICATION 00846/2014 ERECTION OF FOUR INDUSTRIAL UNITS AT HAYEDOWN.

The Parish Clerk stated that an application had been made to provide four more industrial units at Hayedown industrial estate, but that no information was available other than the size of the development [375 sq metres] and the Use Classes applied for. They were for industrial use including uses not allowed in residential areas, plus storage and distribution.

Although these uses were appropriate for the Hayedown estate, there was no reference in the application to any constraint on the number of HGV journeys that this development would be allowed to generate.

As nearby villages already had a significant number of HGVs travelling through them, the Parish Clerk then sought the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, in accordance with the Council's procedures for urgent action, to discuss this issue with the Highway Authority and if no suitable constraint was forthcoming, to object to the proposal on that basis and also to seek Section 106 funding to offset the adverse effects of additional HGV traffic in the villages concerned, and this was obtained.

APPLICATION 00797/2014 DUNTERTON FARM, DUNTERTON

The Parish Clerk stated that this application should be determined by the Dunterton Planning Sub Committee. As Cllr Gradidge had already declared an interest in this application, it would be necessary for either the Chair or Vice-Chair to join with Cllr Pahlsson in determining the Parish Council's views thereon. The Vice-Chair stated that he would be prepared to act in that capacity.

NOTE. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 3rd September 2014 Marystowe Church Hall

Wednesday 5th November 2014 Milton Abbot Village Hall

Wednesday 7th January 2015 Marystowe Church Hall

Wednesday 4th March 2015 Milton Abbot Village Hall

Wednesday 13th May 2015 Parish Meeting for Milton Abbot, Dunterton and Bradstone at Milton Abbot Village Hall.

Thursday 14th May 2015 Parish Meeting for Chillaton followed by the AGM and an ordinary Council Meeting.

Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council Minutes 29th July 2014 Appendix A

The views of Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council on the sites being considered for development in the parish are as follows:

Generally:

The sites concerned have not been identified as part of a rational review of the need for more housing or of potential development areas in the parish. It is therefore possible that other more suitable sites will emerge within the relevant time frame. The current site of the Chillaton Garage is one example. It has outline permission to relocate and if it does so, the existing site will no doubt be re-developed for housing.

Given the constraints identified in developing the sites put forward and the lack of facilities within both villages, there needs to be a better understanding of the future housing needs of parish residents and others with a valid local connection. It is therefore essential that a Housing Needs Survey, designed to identify a wide range of requirements, is carried out in the parish before any new housing developments are considered.

Comments on the specific sites in Chillaton:

Overview

As the technical officers group noted, the question of whether or not Chillaton is capable of further development, because of its lack of facilities and the impact that has on private car usage, has not been determined. That study should be done before any application to develop a particular site is encouraged.

Chillaton already has a good mix of housing stock, including lower-cost homes that are either for rent or purchase. Generally, there are always houses for sale or rent in the village. However, new development should not be discouraged if it makes a contribution to the viability of the village. Examples include; housing that meets the needs of local residents who require affordable housing, enables younger families to remain in the village or allows older residents to move to more easily managed properties. The aim should be to encourage a balanced, mixed village community in Chillaton.

Land west of 1 Springfield Cottages [Ref: WD 42 07 08/13] Although the point made by the technical officers group about additional traffic on the narrow access lane is understood, its impact depends on the scale of the development proposed. At this time, the views of the technical officers group are endorsed, but it might be that some small scale development here would be viable.

Land east of Marlow Crescent [Ref: WD 42 08 13] The views of the technical officers group are endorsed, with the additional comment that if this site and the adjoining one [see below] were developed, there would be a significant increase in the village's housing stock, far in excess of what may be required for any local needs.

Land between Sunwaye and Marlow Crescent [Ref: WD 42 09 13] This would represent a significant extension of the village boundary, because it would create a ribbon of development from the new garage site to the village centre. The site is described by the technical officer's group as flat but unsuitable for wholesale development, because of its impact on the character of the landscape. In fact, the site is not flat; it descends considerably from road level, which makes it difficult to see how the technical officer group's idea of a development along the frontage of the site could be achieved.

Furthermore, there are two streams that cross the site in culverts. One is a substantial watercourse in winter and both play a significant part in the drainage of the hillside opposite. The additional cost of accommodating those streams underneath any development of the site suggests that the only area that would be economically viable lies to the side and the rear of Sunwaye. That would create the same objections on grounds of amenity and non-typical village development as the technical officer's group found would apply to the land at the rear of Marlow Crescent.

Conclusions:

As far as Chillaton is concerned, the Parish Council has no objection to the creation of a small number of new homes, if they are needed to respond to the changing requirements of local residents and they contribute to maintaining the viability of the village community.

None of the sites identified is entirely suitable; all have factors that would either affect their viability or have a significant adverse environmental impact, or both. Given the lack of village amenities and the identified need for further study of the impact of any new development, it is not recommended that any of these sites are taken further at this time.

However, it is very likely that a brownfield site in Chillaton will become available [the site of the existing Chillaton garage] and this should be developed with housing that contributes to meeting needs identified in a future housing needs assessment.

The Parish Council has agreed to the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan that will include Chillaton and will identify any additional sites needed to respond to demand for housing in excess of that which could be met on the Chillaton garage site.

Comments on the specific sites in Milton Abbot:

Overview

In the site information introduction, Milton Abbot is described as having a shop. The village shop closed some time ago and the only remaining facility is a Post Office service on two half-days a week.

Therefore, any assumptions regarding the sustainability of development in Milton Abbot that erroneously had regard to the existence of a village shop, should be reviewed.

Land adjoining Fore Street [Ref: 42 01 08/13] Any development on this site should be subject to careful consideration, having regard to its potential impact on the character of the village and Conservation Area and to the fact that the existing access, along Edgecumbe Lane, is already over-used. As stated by the technical officers group, there could be potential for up to 10 dwellings, but that should be regarded as an absolute maximum.

Land adjoining Milton Abbot Primary School [Ref: 42 03 08/13] In view of the dangerous access onto the B3362, the adverse impact on village facilities of any significant development and the creation of dwellings outside the existing built area of the village, the views of the technical officers group are endorsed and this site should not be developed.

Allotment Gardens, Fore Street [Ref: 42 05 08/13] This site has the potential for five dwellings and is the most suitable of all those put forward. However, it should not be considered in isolation from other potential development, as the cumulative effect of this and other sites would undoubtedly have an adverse effect on the character of the village and its Conservation Area.

Land adjacent to Vicarage Gardens [Ref: 42 06 08/13] This is a large site and, as the technical officers group indicated, has significant constraints imposed by the nearness of the AONB and the need not to affect the character of the village. The adjacent sewage treatment works does cause odour problems and would affect the viability of any development. Any development here should be on an extremely small scale.

Land at Endsleigh House/Gardens [Ref: 42 10 13] This does not constitute a realistic site and no development should be permitted.

Conclusions:

Apart from the proposals for land near the School and at Endsleigh House, any of the other three sites identified could contribute some new dwellings. The Parish Council has no objection to the creation of a small number of new homes in Milton Abbot, if they are needed to respond to the changing requirements of local residents and they contribute to maintaining the viability of the village community.

However, there is a danger that by giving some degree of encouragement to several individual sites, the outcome might be that all would be developed, creating a severe strain on village resources and damaging the setting of its historic assets and Conservation Area. It is therefore essential that a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish, that identifies local housing needs and determines the overall level of development required to meet them, is in place before any decision is made with respect to an individual site in Milton Abbot.