

**Minutes of Woolfardisworthy Parish Council Planning Meeting held on the
28th May 2019 at 7.30pm at Bucks Cross Village Hall**

1.0 Attendance

Cllrs: Hamilton (Chair), Hill and Heywood.
Members of the public.

Apologies

Cllrs: Spittle and Ashworth.

2.0 Public Comment Session

It was noted that no neighbours have been notified on the planning application. Responses to TDC are due by the 2nd June, it was questioned whether there could be an extension to this, due to neighbours not being notified.

It is the parishioners' view that this planning application cannot be considered in isolation, as it forms part of the larger development and planning application 1/0018/2019/FULM.

Concerns were raised with regards to the timescales documents are appearing on TDC planning portal website. For example, a document was uploaded today, which appears to be dated March.

The points raised by parishioners' at the February 2019 Parish Council meeting still remain, which includes:

- Development within AONB, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve & Coastal Protection Area.
- Contrary to planning policies ST09, ST14 and SM08.
- Over development of the site
- Environmental and visual impact
- Foul water system
- Impact on Highways
- Residential use.

Additional points to raise include;

- Reduction in tranquillity
- Not in keeping with a Grade II Listed Building
- To question why neighbours have not been informed of the planning application

A Freedom of Information Act for correspondence between the developers, park and TDC was requested, but refused, due to sensitive commercial information.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

None

4.0 Planning applications

1/0335/2019/FUL and 1/0336/2019/LBC – Erection of new fence boundary, Brackenside.,

Response to TDC:

Woolsery Parish Council has reviewed planning application 1/0335/2019/FUL and 1/0336/2019/LBC and make the following comments.

Planning application (1/0018/2019/FULM) has been submitted for the development of 21 lodges on the site. The planning applications 1/0335/2019/FUL and 1/0336/2019/LBC are integral to the overall development of the site, and therefore in the opinion of the Parish, must be considered together to understand the full impact this development will have on the area and the residents of the small village of Bucks Cross.

The Parish Council has written to District Cllrs Anna Dart, Stephen Harding and Richard Boughton requesting that the application is called in for scrutiny.

Additional concerns raised:

Tree and Landscape Officer's Report dated 15th August 2017

The following is taken from the Tree & Landscape Officer's report, dated 15th August 2017, for the since withdrawn application for Brackenside ref: 1/0511/2017/FULM, however, it remains relevant for this application:

"A Woodland Tree Preservation Order covers the whole site due to the woodlands value in this AONB protected landscape and its ecological importance as a link between the valley woodland and the coastal oak woodlands of the Hobby to Peppercombe SSSI which is located 0.5km north of the holiday park, and the Tintagel-Marshland-Clovelly Coast Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) runs along the coastline 0.5km north of the site.

As stated above the site lies within the North Devon AONB and borders two significant areas of woodland; the sessile oak woodlands along the coastal slopes and cliffs and the Bucks Valley Woods (Managed by the Woodland Trust) either side of the valley down to Bucks Mills. These woods are Ancient and semi natural ancient woodlands which are linked together by the deciduous woodlands of Brackenside and the fingers of woodland left running through the holiday park.

These woods are the main landscape feature surrounding the site and would have a high landscape receptor value, the criteria being: Landscape of distinctive character, highly valued to a wide range of public, regional, national and international designation or within designated areas; valued specifically for its landscape character, cultural and historic association, habitat and / or nature conservation status; and uniqueness and rarity and including undesignated sites of national importance.

The site does in fact act as a woodland buffer separating the park from the Bucks Mills valley and helping to maintain the landscape character of this ancient woodland. Users of the footpaths and the road to Bucks Mills will experience an unspoilt landscape with higher levels of tranquillity than experienced by users of the Southwest Coastal Path adjacent to the northern boundary of the park. Therefore, although the woodland site is not a semi ancient natural woodland it can be seen as part of the wooded valley and should be viewed in the context of dominant feature of the immediate surrounding landscape which is woodland."

The woodland in this area is not divided up by manmade fencing and this division of the Brackenside wood would be

out of character for the surrounding woodland and area.

Description of the Site

The applicant states that the site is surrounded by the Holiday Park. The site actually borders on two sides, being The Old Shippon to the South and The Old School House and Highstead Farm to the East. Brackenside was not part of the Park until it was purchased in 2016 with the sole intent to develop it contrary to Local and National Planning Policy.

Construction of the fence and free flow of wildlife

The proposal describes the new boundary fence as providing division between the meadow/former paddock and Brackenside House and grounds, yet the conservation officer, in their report for the application regarding the lodges (1/0018/2019/FULM), describes that proposal as: "not preserving the setting of Brackenside by removing the grounds which would have been appropriate to a Rectory of this size and status. The grounds which have historically been used by the house are considered curtilage and this information and the history of the house is supplied in the Heritage appraisal."

The use of a 6ft fence will adversely affect the character of the Grade II listed building as well as the undeveloped coast, the main feature of which is the broad sweep of woodland running from near the house down the valley towards Bucks Mills.

The wildlife checklist is limited to certain species, parishioners who have lived in the neighbouring properties know that it is a haven for wildlife who currently live in and pass through unhindered. A fence will prevent this free flow of wildlife and will adversely affect the fauna of the woodland where the fence posts are buried.

Planning application 1/0018/2019/FULM

Previous comments regarding planning application 1/0018/2019/FULM remain below, these are relevant to this application and the overall development.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The proposed development site falls within the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as well as being in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and the Coastal Preservation Area. All carry the highest level of protection from inappropriate development. Due to the importance of the site it should be protected from any development.

Local Plan Policies

The development is within the AONB and contrary to local plan policies ST09, ST14 and SM08. The applicant has not proven that the development is within national interest, or justifies the environmental impact and visual harm on the area.

Over development of the site

The existing site is already saturated, it is at maximum capacity. Any further development would have a considerable impact on the area. Many of the current units are being lived in for 12 months of the year. The view is that any further development represents the creeping urbanisation upon the small village of Bucks Cross.

Environmental & Visual Impact

The environmental impact on the AONB will be catastrophic, with the use of 21 plastic lodges, which only have a 25 year life span. In 25 years those living in Bucks Cross, will be left with a large amount of plastic, which in today's environmentally conscious society, where we are encouraging plastic free lifestyles, is not acceptable. The levels of concrete and tarmac required for the site will be vast, with the high risk of pollution with run offs into the stream and sea.

The trees have Tree Preservation Orders which should be strictly adhered to. With the use of concrete, concerns were raised as to whether there will be any soil left for their roots to grow.

The Ecology Report is inadequate. The report is not structured in the way required, there is no breakdown of species, no survey evidence, no inclusion of desk studies or evidence of the wildlife importance. There is also no list of plants, birds, animals on the site, no list of protected species, or the likely impact that the development will have, including any mitigating measures

Foul Water System

Previous planning application 1/0995/2015/FUL states that prior to the commencement of any further works, a drainage investigation shall be carried out to confirm that the sites existing package treatment plant has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional foul sewage that will be produced in association with any further development. Whilst work has been carried out on the sewage system, it is not clear from the application whether this was on the existing structure. In this case, it is questioned whether the foul water system is adequate to accommodate an additional 21 lodges. Should TDC grant this application permission to progress, then a further drainage investigation should be carried out to confirm that the sites existing package treatment plant has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional foul sewage that will be produced from a further 21 units.

Impact on Highways

With the proposed development of 21 units and the increase of potential visitors to the area, concerns were raised with regards to the increase in traffic on the Highway with units having two allocated parking spaces

Residential

Some existing residents already reside in their homes 12 months of the year, despite this not being allowed, under occupancy restrictions. Therefore, concerns are raised as to whether this development will be permanent homes, despite occupancy restrictions.

Site Visit and request to call in application

Woolsery Parish Council requested former District Cllr Julian to call in the application 1/0018/2019/FULM for scrutiny, as well as a site visit to be undertaken by Torrington District Council.

5.0 Decisions

None