

EXBOURNE WITH JACOBSTOWE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council was held on Wednesday 25th April 2018
after the Annual Parish Meeting in the Village Hall, Exbourne

Councillors Present: Steve Blakeman (Chair), Adam Hedley (Vice Chair), Kirk England, Rose Williams, Ulrik Lawson, John Guy and Borough Councillor Lois Samuel

Parish Clerk: Zena Tett

Also in attendance: 3 members of the public

Business Transacted

137. Apologies for Absence: Councillor Brian Cobb

138. Minutes of the Last Meeting: the minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2018 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record, proposed by Cllr Hedley, seconded by Cllr England, all in favour.

139. Declarations of Interest: Cllrs England and Hedley reference 143.1

140. Public Speaking Time:

140.1 A parishioner objected to planning application 0891/18/OPA: Land at Town Living, Blenheim Lane, Exbourne and stated the following:

This parishioner stated that the application was inappropriate at this time. She reminded Parish Councillors that the proposed field for development was nominated as a local green space and at the Consultation Day last year other sites had been put forward for development that received more votes. Blenheim Lane was probably once a medieval cart track and would not be able to sustain the amount of traffic produced by this and other such developments in the future. The Parish Council should represent the whole community and if this application is approved it would open up the flood gates to other such developments.

Cllr Blakeman responded and explained that in many respects he would agree, however an application had been made and WDBC must deal with it. He explained the Parish Council doesn't have to comment but Councillors probably will and they would either support, object or take a neutral stance. The Parish Council would generally use material planning considerations as a basis for its comments and, although the Neighbourhood Plan is ongoing and can be material for planning, it would depend at what stage the Plan is, but at this stage it would probably only have limited weight. Cllr Blakeman reassured the parishioner and said the Council understands and hears what she is saying about the Village and its preferred sites.

140.2 Cllr Hedley objected to planning application 0891/18/OPA: Land at Town Living, Blenheim Lane, Exbourne and stated the following:

Cllr Hedley explained that he lived in the Manor House opposite Town Living and thought there were a number of material planning reasons for objecting to the planning application. Firstly, it would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the settings of a number of important listed buildings. From a heritage perspective, the site is located in one of the most sensitive sites in the village – it's in the Conservation Area and bordered on 3 sides by listed buildings, with more in close proximity. Inserting two modern dormer bungalows into this heritage scene will not fit well and have an adverse impact on a number of views into and out of the village. Cllr Hedley also questioned how the removal of part of an ancient Devon Bank to create access and visibility splay could conserve or enhance the Conservation Area – the Council was given the example of the current work at Wood Close to show the damage that could be done. Cllr Hedley hoped the Council had seen the pictures he had provided showing examples of how the setting of the Conservation Area and Manor House will be adversely affected. The settings of Town Living itself, Swallows Rest and the Church are also diminished. He

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offered West Devon Borough Council's own negative appraisal of Town Living's green field land to support his arguments relating to heritage.

Cllr Hedley also stated that the proposed development was not in line with a number of other planning policies. Development in open countryside should only occur when there is a demonstrable essential local need and 3-4 bedroom open market housing was not required in Exbourne. Planning policy also protects Grade 2 agricultural land, on which this development will be built, and the Neighbourhood Plan consultation showed that the location is not favoured by the community.

Finally, Cllr Hedley asked the Council to urge Highways to look closely at the application given how many members of the community have raised highway safety concerns.

Blenheim Lane is very narrow and there are no passing points at all between Town Living and the High Street. This is dangerous for all road users and when vehicles meet one either needs to back down a narrow stretch of lane to the blind junction at Duck Lane or reverse up a steep hill dangerously into the High Street. He again explained that the Council didn't need to take his word for it - West Devon Borough Council's own appraisal of Town Living stated "There is generally poor vehicle access to the site due to there being a narrow lane with no passing places." Also, when a previous planning application was made on this site in the late 80's, one of the reasons that application was refused was Devon County Council's opinion that Blenheim Lane was "a narrow approach road which is not suited to further development."

- 140.3 The applicant of 0891/18/OPA: Land at Town Living, Blenheim Lane, Exbourne made his comments:

He referred to Cllr Hedley's objections, the first was entitled "impact on the character or appearance of a conservation area or listed building". He said Cllr Hedley had quoted the Joint Local Plan in his objection, however, what he had failed to make clear was that the quote he had used was in relation to a proposed 48 house development on the 1.6 acres of land put forward to the Council. This was a major application with completely different implications and layout concerns. His development is for a small low-density application with far less impact and different policy considerations. The applicant said the Cllr Hedley also failed to state that the Council did not rule out development on this site but noted that if any development did take place it 'would need to consider its impact on the setting of the listed buildings and the conservation area'. The applicant felt this had been covered in some detail in his supporting statement.

Cllr Hedley had also used historic planning history to object to the development. The application cited, which the applicant was unaware of, was some thirty years old and the applicant did not see the relevance. Cllr Hedley stated that the key points of the refusal had not changed, however, the applicant said this was totally unfounded as the type or style of building has not yet been proposed or where it will be placed on the site or where the access would be.

Cllr Hedley had included some photos of how the view of the Manor House would be affected by the bungalows, one from the Wollacotts field opposite the A3071 and the other from the road near the entrance to the Solland Cider Farm Shop. Both of these had been taken with either a telephoto lens or somehow enhanced to strengthen the point. These photographs do not show the true views from these two positions as seen with the naked eye.

The applicant explained he had opted for bungalows to make them as visually low impact as possible on both the existing street scene and from the wider countryside. He has purposely cited them on the plot to be the least intrusive on the two properties that have a view into the land from their upper stories. He has also placed them towards the rear of the site to further reduce their impact on the surrounding buildings and made them as invisible from Blenheim Lane as possible. In his opinion, in no way do the two bungalows impact on the setting of the surrounding listed buildings and will not be seen from Blenheim Lane. The street scene of the listed buildings in the area, Swallows Rest, The Manor House and his own house, Town Living, will remain as they are now. The only difference will be the new entrance at the bottom of the site which is well removed from Swallows Rest. Town Living will still be seen from Blenheim Lane surrounded by open fields on three sides. Swallows Rest will still be seen sitting on its own with the entrance to his site a long distance away. The Manor House will be unchanged. Swallows Rest will be able to see into the site from its rear garden but not from the house itself and once the planting in the bank is more mature, even this glimpse from the garden will be very minor. The Manor House will have oblique views from its upper stories as will Number 1 Manor Gardens. Once again he has tried to minimise these as much as possible by the strategic placing of the bungalows.

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The applicant strongly disputes that there will be any loss of light or over shadowing of any of these properties as the bungalows are some distance from each other and set much lower than them all, again, made clear in the supporting statement.

People walking down Blenheim Lane can, at present, see obliquely into his field as Cllr Hedley has so kindly pointed out with one of his photographs. When the applicant has finished rebuilding the curved stone wall that he has planning permission for and completed the entrance to his property, this view will be restricted. The application also clearly shows an area of landscaping at the top of the site which will also screen the views from Blenheim Lane. This was also explained in the supporting statement.

The applicant disputes that in any way the bungalows impact on the setting of or the views from the Church. As to the views from Hole Hill, this is a busy main road with no public footpath or pedestrian access. It is a main road and the bungalows cannot be seen from the road as it is so far removed from the site. He stated that this was also explained in the supporting statement.

Along Blenheim Lane there are already five bungalows and three on the road from Brightly into the Village and there are most probably more tucked away out of sight in the Village as he would like his to be.

The new access onto Blenheim Lane will be positioned at its widest point and there is plenty of visibility both up and down the road. He has placed the access at this point for the obvious safety and highway reasons and also to encourage people to drive down Blenheim Lane and onto Holbrook so keeping them out of the Village centre.

The field at Town Living has not been used as agricultural land for at least the last seven years and is under a strict mowing regime as his neighbours will know. It is far less agricultural than the proposed site at Stowe Lane which is currently working farmland. West Devon Borough Council said of his land (he asked us to remember this was for 48 houses) "The site is within Grade 2 agricultural land but as the site is already partially developed it would not lead to the loss of significant amounts of higher quality agricultural land". He feels the argument has not relevance.

The applicant will have to remove a small section of bank for the access and he has already undertaken a wildlife survey to make sure that he will not be removing any endangered species of both flora and fauna – the survey found evidence of none.

Also, he proposes using native species on the site for landscaping that will more than compensate for the loss of the small section of bank.

He said comment had been made about the land being nominated for designation as a Green Open Space, however, he said it is not currently designated and the fact that there is a proposal in the pipeline would have no impact whatsoever on his application. The application has to be judged on current land use and policy considerations and he believes this argument holds no relevance to this meeting.

He stated his proposal complies with current planning in terms of its location and an identified housing need. It proposed low density housing in an area of infill along a road frontage with good access. It will not have a detrimental impact on the conservation area or on any of the listed buildings in the area. There is an identified need for mixed housing in the Village and this proposal meets that need in some part. He would therefore hope the Parish Council would support this application especially in view of the written and verbal support he has received for this project. He believes these wo bungalows meet all the relevant criteria that the Village voted for in the planning referendum and will provide two lovely, low impact homes for people looking to settle, or continue living in this beautiful village.

141. Matters Arising

141.1 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Hedley stated there had been no NP meeting since the last meeting of the Parish Council and therefore nothing new to report.

141.2 Devon Air Ambulance Trust

The Clerk has written directly to the Playing Field Committee Chairman but has not yet received a response.

141.3 Super Link Meeting

It was decided to remove this item from the Agenda as it was now no longer relevant.

141.4 Maintenance of Parish Assets

Ongoing with Cllr Blakeman.

141.5 Play Area Inspections
The Clerk has written directly to the Playing Field Committee Chairman but has not yet received a response.

141.6 Emergency Assistance Volunteers
The Clerk has contact details for two volunteers who are willing to assist people in need during an emergency. They have a long wheel based Land Rover and they have quick access to the Village Hall facilities. One of the volunteers has a medical background and is also a qualified tree surgeon which may prove useful. The Clerk was asked to thank them for their support and add to the next Agenda for further discussion. **Action Clerk**

141.7 St Marys Church – Tower Clock
The Clerk has received a communication from Smith of Derby Group stating that if they repair and re-fit the motor with the planned service visit for 2018 then they will reduce the quotation from £988 to £606 plus VAT. This would be in addition to the invoice for the 2018 planned service visit at the agreed price.
Cllr Blakeman read out an email from the Treasurer of the PCC explaining they had received a generous donation of £400 towards the cost of repairing the Church Clock. On this basis Cllr Blakeman proposed we go ahead with Smith of Derby's most recent quotation and this was seconded by Cllr Guy, all in favour. **Action Clerk**
The Clerk was asked to write a letter of thanks to the Treasurer of the PCC and also inform Smith of Derby to carry out the necessary work. **Action Clerk**

142. New Items

142.1 Planning Fees
Cllr Blakeman explained WDBC no longer accept cash as legal tender and in future all applications must be made to WDBC online or via telephone using online banking. They will, however, make special arrangements if applicants are unable to use online banking. He also mentioned planning fees have increased.

142.2 Donation to the Church
Cllr Blakeman proposed, in light of the goodwill of Jacobstowe Church for allowing the Parish Council to hold its meetings in the Vestry at certain times of the year, a donation should be made to the Church to the equivalent of that paid to the Village Hall in Exbourne for room hire. This was seconded by Cllr Lawson, all in favour. **Action Clerk**

143. Planning

143.1 0891/18/OPA: Land at Town Living, Blenheim Lane, Exbourne for outline application with all matters reserved for two bungalows.

Decision: Object

Comments: The outline planning application does not provide sufficient information to determine whether or not the development of the site will maintain enhance or adversely affect the conservation area. Likewise, it is also difficult to determine the effect of development on listed buildings without further information of the actual development proposed. The Council is aware of a recent appeal decision at Downs Tenements, Exbourne where the Appeal Inspector made it clear, for that application, the outline proposal had provided insufficient information to properly determine the application. Proposed by Cllr Lawson, seconded by Cllr Williams, motion carried with 3 in favour.

Action Clerk

143.2 To discuss any other planning matters which have arisen between the date of the Agenda and this meeting: there were no planning matters to be discussed.: there were no other applications.

144. Clerks Report

144.1 Correspondence

The Clerk has distributed various correspondence/newsletters to Councillors since the last meeting. The following correspondence was noted/reviewed/discussed:

144.1.1 NHS:Local GP retires at Hatherleigh and Shebbear Surgeries

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- 144.1.2 South Devon and Dartmoor CSP Community Safety Forum Event
- 144.1.3 Devon Community Resilience Forum: Newsletter
- 144.1.4 WDBC: Keep Your Tops On: Newsletter

144.2 Parish Paths Partnership

The Clerk can confirm the Parish P3 allocation is £110.00 for the 2018/19 year. The Clerk was asked to invite the P3 Co-ordinators to a meeting in the future to give a short precis on what they have been doing. **Action Clerk**

144.3 Review of Asset Register

Cllr Williams offered to find out who paid for the clock initially. **Action Cllr Williams**

145. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Agenda

145.1 Cllr Williams

The Battle's Over – A nationwide day of commemorative events making the centenary of the end of the First World War and paying tribute to the millions killed or wounded in battle and those on the home front who struggled amidst pain and loss to help ensure freedom survived. Suggested events:

- 1000 individual pipers across the United Kingdom and countries around the world commence the day's commemorations with the traditional Scottish lament played at the end of battle.
- 1000 individual Buglers sound this historic tribute at WW1 Beacons of Light locations across the Nation and UK Overseas Territories
- Over 1000 Beacons of Light symbolising an end to the darkness of war and a return to the light of peace.
- 1000 Cathedral and Church Bells ring out across the Nation, and beyond, in celebration of peace.
- 100 Town Criers throughout the United Kingdom and other countries around the World join together in an International Cry of Peace around the World

Cllr Blakeman said that the Council can use the Beacon if it can be located and Cllr Williams to determine whether they will ring the Bells at the Church. **Action Cllrs Blakeman and Williams**

Clerk to put on the next Agenda. **Action Clerk**

146. Finance

146.1 Payments for Approval

The following costs were approved by the Parish Council.

146.1.1	Exbourne Village Hall: room hire	£45.00
146.1.2	Grant Thornton: Audit Fees	£120.00
146.1.3	Clerks Expenses	£106.91
146.1.4	DALC: Subscription	£125.40
146.1.5	Came & Company: Insurance	£588.49

Proposed by Cllr Lawson, seconded by Cllr Hedley, all in favour. **Action Clerk**

146.2 Review the Bank Balance

The balance as of 12th April was £13,747.40. Outstanding transactions, including the cheques above, total £2,132.84 and once these payments have gone through the total balance will be £11,614.56

147. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be the AGM and will take place on Wednesday 30th May at 8pm in the Village Hall, Exbourne,

With no further business, the meeting closed at 9:40pm

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: *S Blakeman* (Chair)

NAME: *STEPHEN BLAKEMAN* DATE: *30/5/2018*