

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Friday 4 March 2022

Present: W Dracup, G Gribble, P Harper, G Hill, J McInnes, S Morgan,
D Moyse, J Nutley, N Oakley, C Pannell, M Renders, L Samuel,
P Sanders, P Smerdon, D Thomas, P Vogel, P Woods

Officers: C Hart, Head of Development Management
P Twamley, Planning Officer

Apologies: A Cooper

The Chairman welcomed Mrs C Shewen, Independent Person and Ms J Young, Lawyer, Devon County Council Legal Department.

The Committee took a moments silence in respect to the situation in Ukraine.

1479 Declarations of Interests and Contact

Members agreed to declare those interests set out in the matrix attached to the Agenda (Membership of other Councils).

1480 Minutes of Meeting held on 4 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2022 were AGREED as a true record.

1481 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

None.

1482 Applications to be Determined by the Committee

Members received the report of the Head of Development Management (NPA/DM/22/003).

Item 1 – 0266/21 - Development of 41 houses (22 open market, 19 affordable dwellings), associated access, parking and creation of open space - Land at Binkham Hill, Yelverton

Speakers: Cllr R Cheadle, Buckland Monachorum PC,
Mr P Atkin, Pegasus Group, Agent for the Applicant

The case officer detailed that the application related to the development of 41 houses (22 open market, 19 affordable dwellings), associated access, parking and creation of open space. The full planning application proposed 41 residential units, comprised of 19 affordable units and 22 open market dwellings (46% affordable provision).

A new access was proposed from Dousland Road (B3212) to the north-western border. A walking and cycling link was proposed to the southwest of the site and beyond to Yelverton including a future link between Yelverton and Dousland. The allocated Local Equipped Area for Play space had been positioned close to the eastern boundary of the application site to provide self-contained open space.

Electric vehicle charge points were provided in accordance with policy in addition to considered storage for waste and recycling at each property.

There was a correction noted to paragraph 7.26, page 22; 89 parking spaces were provided on site including 4 visitor spaces; 9 of the dwellings had garages in addition to this allowance therefore, parking was in accordance with policy.

The application was policy compliant regarding the site allocation with 46% affordable homes proposed. There was a tenure mix of 9 affordable rentals and 10 shared ownership dwellings proposed. The s106 legal agreement would allow shared ownership dwellings to transfer to affordable rentals to allow for flexibility if needed.

The proposed materials were light coloured timber cladding and off-white render throughout the development, with vernacular stone introduced to some houses to offer tonal and textural variation. Timber construction windows and doors and natural slate roofing were proposed.

Devon County Council Highways had assessed the application, and requested changes be made to the road layout and rear access be provided to properties adjacent to the main entrance. The applicant had provided an updated site plan agreed by Devon County Council Highways.

Objectors had raised comments regarding access safety concerns onto Dousland Road. Devon County Council Highways stated that the proposed development was compliant from a highway safety point of view. Devon County Council Highways requested contributions of:

1. £5,000 towards the investigation, consideration and, if approved, the installation of signage associated with the revision to the limits of the 30-m.p.h. speed limit on B3212.
2. £20,000 towards the pedestrian / cycleway extension between Yelverton and Dousland

A potential revision to the 30mph zone at the new access point was considered worthy of further investigation. The request for £20,000 towards the pedestrian / cycleway extension between Yelverton and Dousland was not considered to be justified at this time.

The applicant had provided an ecological appraisal, biodiversity enhancement plan and biodiversity metric calculation that indicated an overall biodiversity net gain of 66.6%. The authority had received an objection from Devon Wildlife Trust; the applicant responded with justification of their methods and results. The County Ecologist had concluded that the proposal was acceptable subject to conditions.

Whilst it was recognised that development at this scale would change the character of this green field site, the site had been subject to scrutiny when allocated in the Local Plan and the visual impact and its impact on the character of the local landscape had been considered. Access onto the site would be from Dousland Road and would require the removal of a small section of hedgerow. The trees growing along the boundary of the site had been assessed and appropriate tree protection had been set out. In accordance with the recommendations of the authority's Trees and Landscapes Officer, an appropriate landscape plan would be secured by condition.

The site was bounded to the southwest by an existing residential estate set at a higher level to the site and would be partially screened by the landscaping proposed. Proposed properties were aligned to minimise the potential for overlooking, the majority being orientated at right angles. Two detached properties featured rear elevations that face southwest, however the proposed separation and landscaping were considered sufficient to protect local amenity.

Disturbance during construction was inevitable with any development. Controls on hours of construction will minimise disturbance to surrounding properties from noise, dust, and lighting. A detailed Construction Method Statement would be required to ensure the development meets policy objectives.

Regarding drainage and floodrisk, objections were received with concern on the potential for flood impact. The applicant had provided a feasible surface water management strategy in line with Devon County Council's Guidance (2017). Future maintenance of the proposed surface water network including SuDS were to be secured by condition. The proposed development complies with Policy P2.5 which serves to conserve and enhance Dartmoor's water environment.

The case officer made members aware that a late representation submitted after the report was issued had highlighted the proposed site extended beyond the site allocated for development in the Dartmoor Local Plan. The adopted site allocation included 1.48ha of land, the proposal includes 1.73ha. (a 17% increase in the overall land area).

In light of late representations, the recommendation was to defer the decision to a later committee meeting to allow a potential site meeting and consideration of those points raised.

In response to member questions Mr Twamley clarified:

- With regard to the conditions as included from page 7 of the report the following amendments and additions should be made:
 - Condition 21 should read '19no. affordable dwellings'
 - Additional conditions are recommended as follows;
 - No work shall commence on the development hereby permitted until a written scheme providing for an appropriately qualified archaeologist to carry out a full archaeological watching brief during all stages of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The watching brief shall include all associated ground works, both internal and external, the laying of services and landscaping. The scheme, which shall be

- written and implemented at the applicant's expense, shall provide for the observation, recording and recovery of artefacts and post-excavation analysis. A full report detailing the findings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the substantial completion of the development.
- Notwithstanding the provided detail, prior to the commencement of development, full details of the Local Equipped Area for Play, to include play equipment, landscaping and railings/fencing shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall be carried out in accordance with these agreed details and retained and maintained thereafter for the lifetime of the development. The play area shall be substantially complete and made available for use prior to occupation of the 25th dwelling, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - The application was submitted prior to the adoption of the New Local Plan and that the applicant at the time of submission believed the land to be within the boundary.

Mr Sanders proposed that the application be deferred for a site inspection to be undertaken, which was seconded by Mr Vogel.

Mr Cheadle noted that the Authority had concluded that this application does not constitute a Major application. However, it was the largest housing estate to be proposed in Yelverton in the last 40 years and seeks to build two thirds of the estimated housing need for the next twenty years. Mr R Cheadle questioned if such a scale was not a Major application, what was?

Before commenting on this application, the Parish Council took advice from the Authority, whose view was that housing on the site would only come forward if there was a valid Housing Needs Assessment. The last independent Housing Needs Assessment, conducted in 2013, led to the development of Briar Tor phase 2, delivering 16 affordable homes. The Housing Needs Assessment accompanying this application was commissioned by the Developer and while it links Yelverton and Horrabridge in its analysis, it does not mention Crapstone, where a development is currently under construction and will deliver 10 affordable homes. Furthermore, it fails to mention Devonian nursing home in Yelverton which delivers both flats and small homes. Mr Cheadle questioned whether the Housing Needs Assessment was independent and whether proper scrutiny had occurred.

Mr Cheadle noted that the Officer's report referred to an application to construct a cycle path from Yelverton to Dousland. Although Devon County Council had requested a £20k contribution towards the cost of this cycle path, the recommendation was to not support this. The application was approved in August 2017 and conditioned that the construction should commence within 3 years. So far this has not happened and failure to secure funding would exacerbate that.

Furthermore, Mr Cheadle noted that the proposed houses, did not have solar panels included as standard although they did have EV charge points.

In conclusion, the Parish Council was not against development of the site, only if it was justified by the Authority, however, they did not believe this is the case. In answer to member questions, Mr Cheadle clarified that the closest primary schools were in Horrabridge, 2.5 miles away and Walkhampton 1.5 miles away. However, the issue was not with the distance to the schools but the access, as both schools were only accessed along narrow country lanes.

Mr Atkin stated that this application represented over 2 years work and engagement with Officers at the Authority and the local community to enable a policy compliant scheme for 41 high quality new homes. The proposal would deliver market and affordable homes to address an identified need delivering a range of dwelling types and sizes to help young families grow; aid elderly residents to downsize; and to help first time buyers onto the housing ladder.

The Application was supported by a Local Housing Needs Assessment, which found a minimum of 15-18 households were in Affordable Housing need and would be supported by the Affordable Homes as proposed. In line with Local Plan Policy 3.1 the area for assessing need included Yelverton and the adjoining Parishes which were wholly or substantially within the National Park. The Council's housing register identified 14 households from Yelverton; 10 households from Buckland & Crapstone; 1 household from Milton Combe; and 32 households from Horrabridge which were in housing need. The delivery of 19 Affordable Homes would make a significant contribution towards local needs in a sustainable location where new growth was planned.

The scheme proposed an Affordable tenure mix of 50% Social Rent and 50% Shared Ownership, provisions were to be included within the S106 to increase the proportion of Social Rented units should this become necessary.

The proposals would deliver ecological net gains and high-quality design to ensure the proposal sat comfortably within and contribute positively towards the character and appearance of the local area.

In response to member questions Mr Atkin clarified:

- The applicant was aware of various developments elsewhere in the area; however, those did not diminish the results of the local needs assessment.
- The comments from Devon and Cornwall police had been taken into consideration, however, the objectives the Police in terms of design and that which the planning process has in trying to deliver an accessible site, which people can live in easily.

RESOLVED: The application was DEFERRED in order that a Site Inspection may be undertaken.

1483 Appointment of Site Inspection Panel and Arrangements for Site Visit

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The Site Inspection to be undertaken on Friday 18 March 2022; the following Members were appointed to the Site Inspection Panel: W Dracup, J McInnes, D Moyse, J Nutley, N Oakley, M Renders, L Samuel, P Sanders, P Smerdon, D Thomas, P Vogel, P Woods.

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