



Bratton Clovelly Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting 187, held on Wednesday 5th August 2020 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall, Bratton Clovelly

Time commenced: 7.31pm

Those present: Cllrs. Wallbank, Wallwork, McNelis, Rocket, Hughes, Waters

Ward Cllr: Mott

Mrs R Ward (Clerk) Mrs C Atkins (Steward)

16 Members of the public

Public participation: to ensure that everyone had the chance to speak, Cllr McNelis went around the room in turn. All but three parishioners spoke on item 4.1.1 – the comments were almost all in opposition to the development for a number of reasons. The only person who spoke in favour of the application was the applicant when he explained his plans and reasons for them.

One parishioner spoke about her planning application 4.1.3

Parishioners' objections received in writing and read at the meeting are attached

1. **Apologies:** None

2. **Declaration of interests:** Cllr Wallwork declared a personal interest in item 4.1.1 – He spoke as a member of the public and did not vote on this item. Cllr Waters declared a personal interest in item 4.1.3 he spoke as a member of the public and will not vote on this item.

3. **Correspondence:** Only one item had been sent in but it was read out by the author during the public participation item.

4. **Planning:**

4.1.1 2847/19/FUL Proposal: Erection of 10 houses (including 4 affordable houses for local residents); the provision of new access, road and associated landscaping Site Address: Land north of the Old Rectory Bratton Clovelly Okehampton **Object** on the following grounds:

1 This development is too large and the wrong type of housing - This development would form an extension to the charming historic main thoroughfare of Bratton Clovelly which currently visually presents as a traditional Devon village with a mix of buildings adjacent to the road. This proposed development consists of a modern housing estate whose layout and type of houses fails to take any account of the village's character. Furthermore ten new houses in one place is an entirely inappropriate scale in such a small village. It equates to something like 12% of the village stuck in one place, tacked on to the end of the historic Devon thoroughfare. Therefore, it is neither appropriate in scale nor does it respect the historic character of the village.

2 There is the wrong proportion of market value to affordable housing - planning proposal has 67% market housing by number of units or approximately 84% of the land is taken by market housing rather than the recommended 60:40 mix (Policy TTV27 (JLP p242))

3 Local need has not been established – An objective up to date housing needs survey is required. The Parish council has previously stated that the proposed developments are too large and not required due to other local expansion (Bratton Clovelly Parish Council minutes 181:3.4 13/11/2019)

4 Dangerous access - the suggested new road into the development meets the existing Castle Cross Road some 34 meters below the brow of a blind hill, with its bend down to the village centre. With the provision for parking for 31 cars within this development, plus Guest, Delivery and other Vehicle usage, would make this thoroughfare meeting a narrow busy road extremely dangerous to traffic and pedestrians. This is a substantial hazard to the potential residents and other residents of Bratton Clovelly. This section of Castle Cross road has a 30mph speed limit and would give a vehicle using the exit only 2.7 seconds to safely leave the site. In particular this stretch of road forms the pedestrian access to the Pack Horse trail, the only amenity public footpath circular walk close to the village and much used by the residents and their dogs.

4.1.2 2000/20/FUL Proposal: Demolition of redundant agricultural buildings, erection of stable and agricultural building - Site Address: Little Northcombe Broadbury Okehampton EX20 4LL – **Support** comments: The current building is not suitable for the required needs of five horses.

4.1.3 1955/20/FUL Proposal: Creation of new gateway entrance and erection of new log shed with trailer store Site Address: The Barn Lower Brockscombe Germansweek EX21 5AL – **Support** comments: It was pointed out that the photographs supplied with the application seem to be views of the same sides of the proposed access and do not show the steep hill on one side. A councillor who has lived in the village all her life pointed out that the old “gate” referred to by the applicant, was in fact not a gate but a gap in the hedge at the ford before there was a road bridge, to her knowledge there had never been a gate in the applicants hedge previously. Having said that, it was agreed that it made sense to have a safe entrance to the site through the hedge

5. Date of next meeting: TBA

6. **Meeting closed:** 8:39pm

Written response one: relates to 4.1.1

Rectory Field Planning Application July 2020

Whilst I have an obvious personal interest in this as I live next to the site, I am not suggesting that there should be no development if it is needed, however I am setting out here the reasons that this particular application should be rejected on planning grounds:

- ❖ The local need for it is not established.
- ❖ It has the wrong mix of houses.
- ❖ It has inappropriate scale and is the wrong type of development which spoils the historic character of the village.
- ❖ It has a dangerous access.
- ❖ Most importantly, it is the case that housing developments in West Devon must meet criteria set out in the Joint Local Plan (JLP). This submission demonstrates that this planning application fails to meet JLP criteria in most respects.

Taking first point 1 – Local need not established

Policy TTV25 (JLP p238) - Development in the Sustainable Villages states amongst other things: Within sustainable villages without neighbourhood plans the LPAs will still support development that meets the identified local needs of local communities and development which responds positively to the indicative housing figures set out in Figure 5.8. In Bratton Clovelly’s case that is 20 houses by 2034.

This application has not objectively identified any local needs although it does “respond positively to the indicative housing figures”.

As far as identifying local needs for affordable housing goes, an authorised and objective up to date housing needs survey is required and this simply does not exist. Indeed this is acknowledged in the Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the planning application. Further, there is no evidence in terms of house sales of a general demand for more housing in Bratton Clovelly, possibly because of the lack of school, shop, bus service and general facilities. On the second point, the indicative housing figure of 20 was NOT agreed with by the Parish Council and many individuals in the parish objected in writing at the time it was set, on evidenced grounds of low sustainability in terms of the lack of available services in the village; views which were

formally submitted to the JLP consultation but ignored, so the figure of 20 stands but demonstrably does not have local support.

Local support for this application?

It is claimed in the application that in the public parish council meetings discussing an earlier version of this planning proposal, the applicants established support and the need for the project. It is true that general statements were made by various parishioners that low cost housing is a good thing (as you would get anywhere in the country) however the proposal was opposed on the grounds of scale as reflected in the official minutes from that meeting as follows:

Bratton Clovelly Parish Council.

Excerpt from the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 14th November 2018

7.30pm in the Parish Hall, Bratton Clovelly

Time commenced: 7.30pm

Those present: Cllrs. McNelis, Hughes, Rockett, Wallwork, Waters Williamson-Cary

WDBC Cllr Mott, Mrs R Ward (Clerk)

3.4. Development on rectory field – Two parishioners and a Cllr. had written to the PC about this potential development and all comments have been negative. The clerk will forward depersonalised comments to Mr Bury's planning consultant. The new proposal included some affordable housing at 25% off the market value for local people in perpetuity. The written responses were read out (see attached word document) and there was a general discussion. The overall feeling was that this development was too big for the area. It was also pointed out that there were new developments in the wider area that could meet the limited housing needs of the parish.

Point 2. The wrong housing mix

The Design and Access statement presented as part of the planning application clearly accepts that this development should meet the requirements of Policy TTV27 in the JLP and from statements made in the Design and Access statement this would also appear to have been in the pre-planning advice received by the applicant. This proposed development will not meet these requirements - see Policy TTV27 requirements below. Policy TTV27 (JLP p242)

Meeting local housing needs in rural areas

Proposals for residential development on sites adjoining or very near to an existing settlement which would not otherwise be released for this purpose may be permitted provided that it can be demonstrated that:

1. It meets a proven need for affordable housing for local people.
2. It includes a mix of affordable and market housing products where necessary to be financially viable. This includes open market housing, providing it does not represent more than 40% of the homes or 40% of the land take excluding infrastructure and services.
3. Management of the scheme will ensure that the dwellings continue to meet the identified need in perpetuity.
4. The proposal meets the requirement of all other relevant policies of the Plan.

As already stated, there is no objective proven need for affordable housing in Bratton Clovelly as no recent housing needs assessment survey has been carried out. Therefore condition 1 of TTV27 is not met.

The Rectory Field planning proposal has 67% market housing by number of units or approximately 84% of the land is taken by market housing. Therefore condition 2 of TTV27 is not met.

Point 3 – Inappropriate scale and out of historic character.

Policy TTV25 (JLP p238)

5.161 The JLP does not identify sites for development in the villages defined as being the Sustainable Villages. Rather, an approach is taken which aims to enable development to come forward in these villages which reflects their sustainability, and which will respond to local needs. In these locations, it is clearly important to strike a balance so that development maintains or improves the viability of the villages whilst also being of an appropriate scale and meeting the needs of local people. It is also important that any development in the Sustainable Villages also respects the character of the villages, and particularly of any landscape designations such as the AONBs.

This development would form an extension to the charming historic main thoroughfare of Bratton Clovelly which currently visually presents as a traditional Devon village with a mix of buildings adjacent to the road. This proposed development consists of a modern housing estate whose layout and type of houses fails to take any account of the village's character. Furthermore ten new houses in one place is an entirely inappropriate scale in such a small village. It equates to something like 12% of the village stuck in one place, tacked on to

the end of the historic Devon thoroughfare. Therefore, it is neither appropriate in scale nor does it respect the character of the village.

Point 4 - Dangerous Access

Finally there is the dangerous access to the site. Referring to another document submitted with the planning application - RECTORY FIELD, BRATTON CLOVELLY, OKEHAMPTON, DEVON. TREE SURVEY, ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND TREE PROTECTION PLAN FOR PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT p12 5.4 The outline design proposals provided are all likely to be unfeasible due to the lack of suitable visibility for the highway access points identified.

This in fact refers to the earlier proposal. The remedy proposed is to move the entrance a few metres further down the hill, but this quite clearly will only exacerbate the problem and the issue of the dangerous access therefore remains. With the provision for parking for 31 cars within this development this is a substantial hazard to the potential residents and other residents of Bratton Clovelly. In particular this stretch of road forms the pedestrian access to the Pack Horse trail, the only amenity public footpath circular walk close to the village and much used by the residents and their dogs.

Strategic Objective SO9 (JLP p237)

Maintaining the viability of the many sustainable villages in the rural area

To enable the development of new homes, jobs and community infrastructure sufficient to meet the local needs of the sustainable villages identified in the area and the village networks they serve. This will be achieved through:

1. Delivering a mix of new homes that add diversity and accessibility to the rural housing stock.
2. Enabling a balanced demographic profile that retains and attracts young people and working age families.
3. Enabling local employment opportunities that can support a thriving rural economy.
4. Delivering digital connectivity that supports the rural economy and reduces the need to travel.
5. Responding positively to rural travel patterns through innovation and investment.
6. Strengthening links between our rural settlements and the surrounding landscapes.
7. Protecting and enhancing the local distinctiveness and the historic character of the smaller towns and key villages.

This application meets none of these 7 objectives and as we have shown it actually runs contrary to 1, 2 and 7

Concluding remarks

Whilst the JLP indicative housing figure of 20 houses in the next 14 years is not agreed with, it is in the JLP and has to be accepted. It is worth noting however that this is not a maximum figure, there is no upper limit set and in the recently adopted Supplementary Planning Document to the JLP page 210 para 11.39 it states that developments of less than 5 houses do not count towards the indicative housing figures. Bratton Clovelly has at least 4 viable identified sites distributed around the village and it's likely that a spread of 5 houses on each site that meet established local needs would be more likely to gain local support. Rectory Field could be suitable for a proposal of say 3 or 4 affordable houses and 1 market priced house all located next to the road, if a local need for these was objectively established. Although there is currently no objectively established need for more houses in the village, such a development would at least be of an appropriate scale and have less impact on the historic character of the village. Further it would be less likely to set a precedent for a much larger scale of development in Bratton Clovelly over the next 14 years.

Written response two: relates to 4.1.1

As a Member of the Parish Council (2009 to 2015) ~ I was involved in advocating the need for affordable & sustainable housing development in this Parish.

A steady Organic Growth was, and is, expected. But this development does not fall into the category of Natural Growth or meet the needs of this Community and Our Rural Area.

In 2014 the parish Council had site visits from West Devon Planning.

The Planning Office stated at that time that housing would need to be in a 'Linear' format, ~ as Estate Style developments would lead to overgrowth on the outskirts of the village.

The Current Proposal of Ten Properties would be a 13% increase on top of existing housing stock within the village and as such an over-development of the field leading to loss of character and have an adverse impact on the village plus the need for these houses has not been proven.

One Key issue with this site is the Suggested New Road into the Estate that meets the existing Castle Cross Road some 34 meters below the brow of a blind hill ~ with its bend down to the village centre. This stretch has already been subject to potential risk.

This section of Castle Cross road has a 30mph speed limit and would only give a vehicle ~ leaving the entrance ~ 2.7 seconds to safely leave the site.

The 31 Parking spaces, advocated in the Estate plus Guest, Delivery and other Vehicle usage would make this thoroughfare meeting a narrow busy road a hazard to traffic and pedestrians.

The Proposal also favours Full Market Value Housing rather than the Affordable Housing this community needs.

In the proposal the developer states “the need to make a small number of houses ‘Market Value’.

I believe 60% Market Value is not the smaller proportion, but the greater.

Most people are aware that the Bratton Clovelly facilities are limited, with no daily bus service, no village school, and no easy commutable route in and out of the village.

A Development of this kind ~ could lead to Bratton Clovelly evolving into a ‘Holiday and Retirement Village’, rather than a sustained Rural community.

Written response three: relates to 4.1.3

“In support to our application 1955/20/FUL, some of our neighbours who have lived in the area all their lives, have stated to us that there was an existing gateway from our land to the lane anyway, where the previous landowners / farmers herded their cattle from our paddock, across the lane by the ford to the gateway opposite, to access new pastures.”

Signed Chairman _____ Date: _____