

Good evening and welcome.

Representatives from the PC are here tonight as well as Mr Ed Lewis, whose role will become apparent as we proceed, plus Mary Ridgway, the TDC Housing Enabling Officer. DNP were also invited.

I will start with a short summary of the project history. Mr Lewis will then outline where we are now and possible timelines going forward before we open up to questions from the floor.

A housing and Infrastructure committee was established in 2019 by the PC to progress the issues raised in replies to the questionnaire about the Parish Plan and at the drop-in meeting. There were 3 councillors and 3 non-council village residents.

The first concrete action was the 2019 HNS, managed/analysed by DCT on behalf of DPC.

- **The survey identified** a need for 10 affordable homes within the next 5 years.
- The survey found 10 households in housing need who could not afford to buy or rent in the open market.
- All of the households in need qualified for affordable rent.
- So the survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. 350 surveys were delivered and 112 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 32%.
- 79% of those who answered the question said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. 10 households did not answer this question

**So by the end of 2019 we had the Housing Need defined and it is the responsibility of the PC to try its level best to deliver that AH identified.**

**While a HNS is valid for 5 years, due to concerns raised about this current surveys age and the fact that no development has yet started, a new HNS will be conducted within the next month, with results available in early summer, hopefully.**

The team next made contact with local landowners to explore possible sites for the development. 6 sites were put forward by 5 different landowners ie 2 sites were proposed by one source. All the landowners were met by delegates from the team and the RES rules applying to this project explained, in particular the maximum permitted price per property site, which is £10K per house/plot. All agreed they were still willing to be involved.

So which of these 6 sites was the best option for the AH/car park and wild area that the community had identified as things they wanted to see happen?

It is important to point out NOW that the Parish Council are statutory consultees and have no decision-making powers in respect of planning applications or site selection. The Developer, with the Planning Authority make those decisions. Dunsford has two Planning Authorities it has to work with. The core of the village ie most of the households are within DNP; the larger part of the parish which is much more thinly populated is within TDC.

Sites 2-6 are within the Park, site 1 within TDC but as it butts up to the Park Boundary, they are consulted on Planning and effectively have a veto on Development, should they deem it to have an adverse effect on the Park.

The PC and the whole community are consulted, and should there be widespread objections to any particular site, it is unlikely a Developer would proceed.

So the newly established HWG consisting of 2 reps nominated by the PC, DNPA, TDC and Hastoe, the preferred Developer, started the process of reviewing these sites against the legally specified criteria. The two most important of these being:-

1. The site must be within or abut the Settlement boundary.
2. the developer must select the site with the lowest flood risk initially and only explore other options if there is a compelling reason/benefit

Based on this site 6 was selected as the preferred site and the Developer (Hastoe) entered into negotiations with the owner.

Please remember there was a global covid pandemic at the time, so things did not progress particularly quickly.

After many months (nearly a year!) of failing to reach agreement with the Landowner, the HWG decided it needed to look again at alternative options.

This meant going back to square one. Hastoe visited all six sites (for completeness) with DPC in Apr 22. Subsequently Sites 4 & 6 were not considered as the owner was not willing to sell at the maximum permitted price for a Rural Exception Site (RES). Sites 2 & 3 do not abut the Village Settlement Boundary, so do not fit the criteria to be considered for RES Development. The Landowners were informed. That left sites 1 & 5. Again, under the rules governing such development, site 1 (Thomas Cross) must be considered before site 5 (Cawte), as the latter is inside flood zone 3 while Site 1 has no flood risk. The owner of site 5 was informed of the situation and discussions are on-going with the owner of Site1 and we hope to have a mutually acceptable agreement in the short term.

The owner of Site 1 then entered into an Option agreement with Mr Ed Lewis, which means he is acting as the site owner, to develop the site.

Ed will advise the meeting shortly of the current situation and then we will take your questions.

But I will finish by telling you that the most recent survey of the community about the suitability of this site produced a very low return (20%) and was inconclusive with approx. 50% in favour and 50% against, with a high proportion of those against coming from residents living in close proximity to the site.

Subsequently the owner of sites 4 and 6 has said he is ready to re-engage with the PC with no pre-conditions. To date no further action has been taken on this, while we await the outcomes of the pre-app made to TDC for site 1 by Mr Lewis.

So that is the history. Ed will now talk briefly about where we are today and the next step, before we open up for questions.