

## **Minutes of the Totnes and District Society meeting held virtually on 11th January 2022**

Present: Jim Carfrae, Paul Bennett, Dave Mitchell, Jeremy Logie, Kate Wilson (minutes)

In the absence of a formal agenda, the meeting agreed to follow the pattern of the standard TotSoc agenda.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Tom King.
2. There were no minutes from the previous meeting.
3. There were no relevant action points.
4. Contact Magazine: Nothing to note.
5. AGM: has taken place
6. Monitoring Planning Applications. It was noted that Tom and Kate will continue to do this with Kate focusing on Dartington
7. Planning Officer:  
Baker Estates applications:

Kate had circulated the planning application references for the two Baker Estates applications in Dartington, Broom Park and Sawmills Field West. The documents for Sawmill West have yet to be uploaded to SHDC's planning portal. There is an impressive amount of information in the 78 documents available for Broom Park, some of which are quite large. Kate noted the Design and Access statement and the Planning Statement which say little in spite of their length and Jim felt the Energy Statement contained little of any substance, while discounting potential renewable energy measures as ineffective – air source heat pumps for example – in preference for combi boilers. It was felt that as gas prices are due to rise, and the government may be outlawing gas boilers in the near future, it would be a mistake to install these in new builds. Ground source heat pumps are expensive to install, but the technology supporting air source heat pumps has improved significantly.

Jim expressed concerns about the construction methods – masonry construction is effectively concrete blocks which have high embodied carbon. Developers cite the benefits of high thermal mass, but this is outweighed if the walls are covered in plasterboard for example.

The relative internal areas of the houses was discussed, and the affordable units appear to be very much smaller in comparison to the market housing units. It was noted that the percentage of Affordable housing is 30%.

The site layout was felt to be acceptable, but the design of the houses was criticised as being pedestrian and not reflecting the local area. The houses at Great Court Farm were felt to be better designed and more interesting. Kate agreed to find whether DHT still retained an interest in the site and could exert any influence over housing design.

It was noted that there is a significant amount of open space, trees, a play area and allotments.

8. Neighbourhood Planning:

The Dartington NP Steering Group is not sure that it wants to use its advisers as contracted and this has caused the NP to stall. Little progress has been made over the last year and the NPSG is rewriting the Vision.

The Totnes Neighbourhood Plan recently consulted on an additional policy re the Dairy Crest site, and it is understood that this and future stages of the process are being dealt with by SHDC.

9. Committee member reports:

There was no report from the Secretary or the Chair, but the Treasurer expressed discomfort about the large amount of money being held by Totsoc on behalf of Baltic Wharf and would like to move it into another account. It was suggested that a building society account might be suitable, and Jeremy will investigate this.

10. Major Projects:

1. Baltic Wharf – It was noted that the committee needs to reengage with the project and that Tom's absence had slowed progress.
2. Dairy Crest/Atmos – FastGlobe are understood to be talking to planners and the indications are that a project which looks similar to the Atmos designs, but without the same amount of Affordable Housing will come forward. It is expected that the Brunel building will be a community building.
3. Churchill retirement complex – Paul noted that significant work is needed to comply with the conditions and S106 agreements.
4. KEVICC – Kate will try and find out what progress has been made by Totnes Town Council in its attempt to buy the Elmhurst site.

11. Annual Accounts – nothing to report

12. There were no issues raised by members

13. There was no AOB

14. It was agreed to wait until Tom is better before setting the next meeting date. Jim to contact him with wishes for a speedy recovery.