

Minutes of Clovelly Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 5 September 2023 at 7.30pm in Clovelly Parish War Memorial Hall.

The meeting had been brought forward by one week due to a number of Councillors being unavailable on the scheduled day and in addition, the deadline date for a major planning application to be considered was before the scheduled meeting date and it was considered that all Councillors, if possible, should be present to consider it.

Present:

Councillor C West (Chairman), Mrs V Foster, D Garnett, C Huxtable, S Perham, R Phelps, N Sanders, P Slee, A Tucker.

County Councillor J Wilton-Love

District Cllrs Harding until Minute No. 67 and Dart (Mrs Dart between Minute No. 59 & 67)

5 Members of the public, including Stephen Twiss, Lakeshore Leisure Group representing them, Liam Bennett MBDA Architects, and Tara Stanbury, Partner of the Milky Way in connection with the Planning Application to be considered later in the meeting.

Mrs S Squire, Parish Clerk

58. Representations from the public limited to 3 minutes in line with DCC & TDC.

59. Apologies. None.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow a question and answer session to be held in connection with the Planning Application for Downland Farm.

Stephen Twiss explained how, as a group and why after spending a lot of time with the Stanbury family, the Planning Application was prepared.

Lakeshore Leisure Group has three holiday resorts in Devon, two within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, considered to be in a very natural setting, the nearest being Clawford Lakes near Holsworthy and the most comparable to what is proposed. The resorts provide alternative accommodation, alongside some higher end Lodges.

The Lodges proposed at Downland Farm (the site of the Milky way) was a holiday prospective and an alternative to a traditional holiday park or caravan site, more like a boutique report or combined with Centre Parcs. The intention is to use the natural landscape and make good use of existing buildings and materials.

They wish to work with the Stanbury family, owners of the Milky Way and intend to build something to compliment the community and the people who live there and to support jobs. At Clawford Lakes, over 60 people are employed who are paid more than the minimum wage. It is planned to compliment the existing business of the Milky Way and contribute to the economy.

Tara Stanbury confirmed that the Milky Way would continue to operate next to the development. She and her family felt it was right for the business and the family who had taken a lot of time and spoken to a lot of potential partners before making a decision to go with Lakeshore Leisure Group. There is a lot to do to ensure a building can be built responsibly and the way it impacts on the community, and it commercially viable at the same time. All the different Surveys had to be taken into account to ensure it is viable for that particular space. The Stanbury family do not want to go into something that cannot be delivered and there is planned interaction with the local community to ensure they are on the right track.

There was the opportunity to ask questions and Councillors raised the following points:

Access. Would there be just the one access, especially when building work was taking place?

Answer: Yes, Highways has no connection with the plans and the plans need to include full disclosure. It was acknowledged that there would be some level of disruption, but in scale of traffic on an A road, it would not make a big impact. Highways were not in favour of a separate additional access on the straight piece of road as it was felt this would cause more danger with lorries slowing down to turn in, whereas by using the existing exit on a bend, traffic would be naturally slowing down to allow for this.

The bus stop is a separate issue and it is expected this would mainly be used by people who are employed on the site, rather than visitors arriving who would be expected to come by car. It was acknowledged that there will be some level of disruption during the construction which would be in three phases, with the biggest impact being during the first phase involving 100 Lodges and essential facilities which would take between 6 & 9 months. Trucks will not be needed to take material away.

Councillors pointed out that despite this, the lorries still have to leave the site.

When digging the lakes, what will happen to the spoil?

Answer: Very little spoil will be created as the contours of the land will be used to compliment the area to make a less visual impact of the Lodges and accommodation.

It was noted that the application was for 250 Lodges and the question was asked 'do we need that size next to the Bideford Bay caravan park, will they struggle to keep going and will any of the Lodges be sold off?

Answer: There will be an upper price but not super expensive. The performance of upper and middle areas of the market is still extremely strong. Claford Lakes has outperformed itself each year and the question about figures taken during Covid meaning less people were staying in the area has not had an effect – and this was also confirmed on behalf of the Milky Way.

The Lodges will be more expensive to rent than a static caravan. The sale of Lodges stopped in November 2022 within the Group with a clear focus on the provision of holidays.

Where will the staff come from as it was known that some places cannot recruit cleaners.

Answer: This is a year round job on a permanent part time basis. 60 – 70 people are employed at the Milky Way. Employment has future prospects and they are proud of their staff retention figures.

Referring to the entrance, is a roundabout or traffic lights needed?

Answer: The Transport Survey showed pre-Covid levels and can back up the fact that the junction has capacity to handle the amount of traffic. The lane was put in after planning permission had been obtained for 52 two storey houses, the original planning permission for this was approved 15 years ago and at that stage, Highways insisted the right turning lane was provided. The Stanbury family no longer wish to build these properties as they do not feel it is the best thing for the site and what Lakeshore is proposing is, they feel, better for the site. The Stanbury family want it to happen and are confident it will benefit all, adding that the Milky Way will not be running it or have control over it, and this was the reason why they had gone into partnership with Lakeshore. The Milky Way will not get any bigger as they have massive capacity.

This application, if approved, will replace the original application which will become null and void.

Who is funding it?

Answer: Lakeshore Group is funded by an equity firm in London and is one of the largest operators in Europe and is financially security. No Authority (meaning TDC in this instance) wants to give permission for something that will not be built and it must be viable and funded.

There will be a visual impact on the A39 as many of the Lodges will be seen.

Answer: The biggest impact Lakeshore see is if they cannot get it correct, they would then be doing an injustice to the scheme. The key principles are natural materials and a landscape that will detract from buildings using natural foliage.

At this point, the architect expanded on details of the landscape and foliage.

How far apart are the Lodges?

Answer: 6 metres, looking through the road rather than at the road. There will be a minimum 8 metres from the initial bank. There are already some established trees and there is a growth plan consisting of native shrubs and trees.

Are they mobile homes?

Answer: The Lodges are permanent structures on a chassis on wheels.

How big is Claford Lakes?

Answer: 80 acres with a similar number of lodges.

What will the road surface be?

Answer: Porous material consisting of red and brown gravel.

What about car parking places.

Answer: It depends on the size of the unit. A one bedroom unit will have space for one car.

Councillor Garnett was overall positive of the scheme but felt it was too large.

Response: It needs a tipping point to become commercially viable. The scheme would take more but it has not been designed for this.

Councillor Slee felt the Parish Council's comments would not count and asked if TDC had commented.

Answer: TDC's stance is positive. At Clawford Lakes there had been a lot of engagement with the Parish and whether Clovelly Parish Council is in favour or against it, this would not change the way they communicate with the Parish Council.

There are solar panels on the main building but none on the main units.

Answer: There are no panels on the main units and it would be getting close to running it from the main building for the facilities, not the whole site. The ecology side of the proposal was spoken about – there will be many EV charging points, electric heaters and LPG. A new sewerage system will be set up, there is sufficient water for this and a lot of surface water to feed the lakes.

What is the height of the water park slide?

Answer: It is hidden into the side of the building and the flumes go around the other side, reaching two storeys. They will not be yellow or blue in colour.

What provision has been made for a s106 agreement.

Answer: Details about a previous arrangement for a junction was talked about, there was no agreement at Clawford Lakes and the last four applications has not involved a s106 agreement.

If the site was smaller, would it be unviable?

Answer: There are 1,000 visitors to the Milky Way and Clovelly. The proposal will have all the requirements visitors need to stay there and there is no need to use a car. There is a holiday experience outside of the grounds though which has an impact on the local community and it was not certain what the extended negative impact would be. The site is not designed for visitors to stay there all the time and it will not be marketed as a Milky Way attraction. It was thought that 500 or 600 would be there at any one time.

The Chairman thanked them for coming and they left the meeting.

As two members of the public missed the Public Participation slot due to a late arrival, the Chairman gave them the opportunity to speak at this point and the following was raised:

On the road from the entrance to Clovelly Court, Garage Hill is a Clearway. The signs are not clear due to being obscured or are facing the wrong way. Could yellow lines be painted to highlight this?

The parishioner was advised that yellow lines could not be painted on a Clearway and it was suggested that they contact Devon Highways.

60. Declarations of Interest.

Councillors Mrs Foster, Perham, Phelps and Slee have a Dispensation for matters relating to the Clovelly Estate.

61. Approval of the Parish Council Meeting Minutes held on 11 July 2023

Approved and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by Councillor Tucker

Seconded by Councillor Slee and unanimously agreed.

62. Reports

62.1 County Councillor J Wilton-Love. Not present.

62.2 District Councillors Mrs A Dart & S Harding:

Councillor Dart advised that a full Council meeting had been held the previous evening where there had been a Notice of Motion regarding the proposed scrapping of the mobile library service and to bring forward an appeal for land specifically for affordable housing, which she supported but there is no one in the TDC area to enable the project, going on to say that in rural communities, the desire is to provide affordable housing but no support network in place and providers are not interested in rural properties. The whole bigger issue than the land coming forward is that it must be suitable.

The project to bring solar electricity from Morocco is going via the Secretary of State, as it will contribute to national carbon aims. TDC want to harness work at the shipyard and help with employment.

Councillor Harding advised that the Council Leader and Chief Executive were meeting with Sir Geoffrey Cox MP and civil servants in connection with the levelling up bid and to obtain more details.

He had arranged planning training at Woolsery Village Hall, about which Councillors had been made aware.

62.3 Defibrillator Check – Councillor Sanders. In order.

63. Finance.

63.1 Payments. The following payments were approved and authorised.

Proposed by Councillor Garnett

Seconded by Councillor Sanders and unanimously agreed.

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|--|----------------|
| Mrs S Squire September Salary £178.20 and Expenses | £202.50 |
| HMRC PAYE July and August | £118.80 |
| Town and Parish Websites. Renewal of website domain and hosting | £175.00 |

63.2 Online Banking – Cllr West. He is waiting for Councillor Garnett to sign the form electronically to add him as a signatory. Councillor Phelps is also to be a signatory.

Action: Councillor Garnett to arrange for the form to be signed.

Councillor West to arrange for Councillor Phelps to be added.

64. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 11 July 2023.

64.1 Clerk's Actions:

Defibrillator on The Street. It was noted that the sum of £500 had been donated towards the device by Clovelly Estates and a letter of thanks sent.

Action: Clerk to apply to District Councillor Dart's allocation for further funding.

65. Planning & Planning Correspondence. The following Application was considered:

- **1/0604/2023/FULM – Erection of 250 holiday units, facilities building, lakes and associated infrastructure – land at Downland Farm, Bucks Cross**
Councillor Sanders proposed to recommend approval with the comment that there is concern that the units are too close to the A39 and the Parish Council feel there should be a reduction in the total number and sited away from the main road.
Seconded by Councillor Garnett.

Councillor Slee proposed to recommend approval without any comments.

Seconded by Councillor Tucker.

Councillor Sanders withdrew his proposal.

Vote: To recommend approval without any comments: Unanimously agreed.

Planning Correspondence.

- Planning approval for application 1/0502/2023/FL – retention of temporary shelter at the Lime Kiln, The Quay, Clovelly

66. Correspondence

- **Letter of thanks for donation from The Village News**
- **Holsworthy Motor Club will be holding their Roger Pole Taw & Torridge classic reliability trial on 17/9/23 starting at the overflow car park of Clovelly Visitors Centre, 9am**

- **Devon Association of Local Councils AGM at Exeter Racecourse on 27/9/23**
- **Planning Training organised by District Cllr Harding at Woolserly Sports & Community Hall on Monday, 11/9/23 at 7.30pm.**
- **Email from Chard Eco Group regarding street lighting. Already done it.**
- **Email from DCC Stakeholder Liaison Team**

67. Highways. Snow Warden Training – Councillor Slee. This had been completed.

Action: The Clerk to report:

- ⇒ Dirty signs on the A39 near the Woolserly turn off
- ⇒ Chevrons require attention on the A39 near the Hartland turn off
- ⇒ Surplus tarmac thrown in layby. Other potholes were nearby and this could have been used to fill them

68. Matters Raised by Councillors / Clerk.

Councillor West advised that he had obtained plants for the village plants from Clovelly Estate and the invoice for £48.00 had been written off.

Action: Clerk to send a letter of thanks.

69. Any matters raised under Public Participation for further consideration. None.

70. Urgent items raised at the discretion of the Chairman.

Councillor Perham tendered his resignation as a Parish Councillor due to many other future commitments.

Action: Clerk to advise TDC Elections Department and send a letter of thanks.

71. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 10 October 2023 in Clovelly War Memorial Parish Hall at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.27pm.

Summary of Decisions:

- **Approval of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11 July 2023**
- **Payments**
- **Planning**

Chairman

Date