MINUTES OF TORQUAY NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
Steering Group

Thursday 10th October 2024, 6.30pm
At CDT Offices

Officers of the Steering Group: Present Rodney Horder (Chair), Mike Cowdery, (Vice-Chair), Nigel Goodman (Treasurer)
Steering Group Members: June Pierce, Margaret Forbes-Hamilton, Anna Scarborough, Julie Brandon, Beth Huntley, Alan Griffey, Pat Bishop (part),
Other: Chris Marsh – Pegasus, Bill Richardson – Strongvox, Cllr George Darling, Tracey Cabache - Torbay Communities

Item	
1.	**Minute taker:** Tracey Cabache
2.	**Apologies:** Cllr Nicole Ami, Roger Carter, Iain Collinson, Darren Cowell, Anthony King,
3.	**Sladnor Park – Strongvox/Pegasus** Chris Marsh – Pegasus – Planning agent, and Bill Richardson – Planning Manager of Strongvox presented their plans for Sladnor Park. Strongvox is a small SME developer with projects in eg Taunton, S Glos, Bristol, Sedgemoor etc Operating from 2014 not a typical developer – bespoke housing design and small scale - generally build sites 50 -100. Option agreement with Gallagher– will purchase subject to planning outcome. They do not sit on sites, but mobilise within 6 months of Planning Consent. Full detailed application from the outset. They like to work with local communities and do listen eg Town Council support. Strong consultation in advance of planning. 120 units are planned for this site. Aim to submit planning application end of November. Existing consent is for 188 unit care development. Site is not allocated for housing under the current Local Plan, but is allocated in the draft refreshed plan (paused in 2022). New Govt policies will require more housing development in Torbay. Chris will lead on the planning application, we do want to listen and we do expect to negotiate through the planning process. Building will take place on the previously developed area, plus some dwellings on the south side which may lead to an acceptance in principle. Not central Torquay – will have to build in active travel. Modal shift in travel.

	Public open space – promoting public access – currently used informally. Formalise the walking and cycle paths Plus Biodiversity new gain in excess of 10% SE edge of the site. Ecology – lots of historic surveys which will inform bespoke lighting. Iterative process. Going to the Design Review Panel next week. (There was a discussion about the independence of the Design Review Panel – Chris and Bill confirmed there were no conflicts of interest and cannot comment on the previous situation). <u>Questions</u> PB: Maidencombe is a gem of Torquay. Village is below the surface drainage line – we understand the problems. Any development is going to cause problems for the village. What is the mitigation? Drainage is often one of the top concerns – we will have to provide the plans for the management of runoff. This will improve the current situation as there is currently no management. Model to the authority's Climate Change requirement of 50%. Strategy is much more varied that the previous planning application. Will include underground storage and pumps. Has there been a conversation with SWW about Foul Drainage? Not known. Brunel Manor development will also use the same public sewer system. Improve access for pedestrians – but just on site. Bus currently is only one per hour and stops at 7pm. Expect a mixed age range and we do not expect everyone to be walking or cycling to work. This site is not in the middle of open countryside – it does have services either side. Planners have not engaged the Forum on the proposed sites – this is not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan currently. The previous application was very controversial – refused. Appealed. Eventually won the appeal at High Court. It is a material consideration but we are not hanging our plan on this. Chronic shortage of affordable housing – not general housing. What is the % of the affordable housing? Local Plan sets out the affordable targets for brownfield and greenfield sites we expect to have to deliver 20-30% and these will be delivered on site – likely to be social rented. Usually 75% are rented and 25% shared ownership. Prices will reflect the local housing market. Who are we aiming the open market homes at? Hard to say that the moment as there will be a range. School places? The local authority need to advise and we may be asked to contribute. Informally we have been told that the local schools are not full. NPPF rise to 1,000 target for Torbay - Council and local MP will challenge this. Compared with the 2006 consent this plan has a bigger footprint. What will be the impact?

	We will submit a full traffic assessment and this can be compared with the previous plan. We will submit a full landscape assessment. Currently Maidencombe sits in the Neighbourhood Plan as a Rural Country Village see policies C1. C2. Residents will not accept the building on the greenfield areas. Need to keep in line with the policies and within the existing brownfield area. 120 is too high. For the site to come forward there needs to be a certain level of profit. It is a difficult site to develop and needs to be viable. Traffic access and junctions as it is a busy road. Traffic counters have been out collecting data and speeds – this will inform the plans. There will be a replacement junction. Would be better to have counted in the summer. Current averages we have seen 36mph in one direction and 37mph in the other. It is a 30mph area. Best is we can engage and work on this together. We will be making a CIL contribution and a section 106 contribution. It is a site that does not have many facilities – no nearby school, shops, GPs, just about walkable to the village pub. Aim is 15-20 mins walking distance for infrastructure. On this site people would have to get in their car. If we could find a better site we would be happy – Hollacombe? Torbay needs lots of sites to meet the need. Does the traffic data cover potential school traffic and summer increases as the road is lethal. We have to take into account the RTAs and fatalities in the travel plan. Chris and Bill were thanked for attending. Rodney updated the Forum that the Maidencombe Residents Association had a meeting of all residents this week following the Strongvox exhibition on 02 Oct. There were 65 in attendance plus 35 emailing apologies and against the development., 2 abstained and the rest voted against. Gallagher are trying to off load the site. Presenters do not seem to be very aware of the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan policies. Pegasus did work with Gallagher previously on the Refused 2018 Retirement Village.. Residents open to 8-10 houses on the brownfield area. They believe the draft revised Local Plan has an allocation of 60 homes. Why did the High Court judge over-rule the first planning application outcome? They misled the Judge and there was not sufficient funds to challenge this.

4	**Membership of Forum** Please remove from agenda until we have an update. **Action: Cllr Steve Darling will find a rep for Barton and Watcombe – Cllr George Darling to follow up** **Action: Sarah O'Connor to find replacement for Ellacombe CP rep** Hele and Lower Barton CP still developing There was an action from the last meeting re Shiphay CP – Should we be inviting Davina to attend instead of Darren? Rodney has asked Darren. Tracey has followed up with Davina.
5.	**Minutes of meeting 10 September 2024** These were approved as a true record.
6.	**Matters arising (not covered elsewhere below)** Re 20mph speed limit – Anna Semlyen **ACTION: Beth and Tracey to confirm if Anna can attend the next meeting** Re Bancourt Hotel **ACTION: Rodney to contact McCarthys to invite them to engage with the Forum and attend a Forum meeting**
7.	**Bank accounts/balances** Balance is £3,500.47
8.	**Website – maintenance** Julie and Mike met with Hubert and he had provided a proposal (free of charge). Need better format for mobiles Some pages need better formats Need to add CIL **ACTION: Mike to give Hubert the go ahead.** **Julie to continue to send content to David Gledhill and redesign info** **Rodney to draft intro to the CIL.**
9.	**Possible training seminar**

	Tracey updated that Locality had reopened its grant fund as we could apply for training. The Basic Grant is £10,000 and the additional Grant £8,000 any previous grant has to be deducted from this. **ACTION: Nigel still to calculate the amount of Locality Neighbourhood Planning funding the Forum has received to date** **ACTION: All to think of training that would be useful.**
10.	**Housing supply** • Demolition and Retrofit in National Planning Policy – Research Survey for MHCLG - Nigel updated • HELAA follow-up – no engagement from Future Planning • Response from Housing Minister on Consents vs Delivery – not helpful. **ACTION: Rodney to request meeting with Future Plaaning** **Rodney to Send the list of consents not yet delivered to Steve Darling tofollow up with Minister**
11.	**Neighbourhood Plan update** Draft plan now submitted to Adam Luscombe, with the shop front guidance as a supplementary document. We are expecting feedback in mid Oct, but nothing received yet.
12.	**Local Plan update** Local Plan working party has been set up. Rodney was away. Darren Cowell attended and will report back. Transport Consultation is live. **ACTION: Beth to draft a response on Traffic Consultation**
13.	**Planning Concerns** **Planning/Enforcement Concerns (Overview & Scrutiny)** No further feedback from Overview and Scrutiny. Notices have been served on Langley Manor.

	ACTION: Cllr George Darling to get an update Stoodley Knowle development poor quality of walls. **ACTION: Mike to follow up with residents** Noted the disproportionate and inconsistency in their approach experienced in Wellswood. Are they possibly targeting smaller issues. The Council are looking at this issue.

15.	**Planning Committee**
	
	• Meetings
	  ○ Brends Orchard, Edginswell – Forum to object. Mike presenting.
	  ○ NF statement agreed
	
	ACTION: Rodney to invite Cllr Martin Brook to the next TNF meeting
	
	Re: Cllr Adam Billings' position
	ACTION: Rodney to draft a letter to Cllr David Thomas quoting the Council constitution and use the Nolan Principles.
	
	There was a discussion re the Paignton NF and how can we help that to re-emerge so we are collectively stronger.
	Tracey has asked David Edmondson if a CIL bid could be put in the cover this development work? No response yet.

16.	**Planning Applications**
	• Current specific Applications:
	  ○ Corbyn Head Hotel P/2024/0264 – another application to come as previous one was due to be refused.
	  ○ Land off Nicholson Road – Submitted but not validated
	  ○ Singleton Gardens P/2022/1186 – Appeal – no update
	  ○ Shedden Hall (Enforcement) - Dormant
	  ○ 111 - 117 Teignmouth Road P/2023/0932 – response submitted15 July, not yet decided

	○ Palace Hotel P/2024/0336 – re: poor infrastructure and road access Forum objected – but they agreed the variations. Documentation was not clear and the officers were not available to clarify. ○ Sladnor Park – application to come in end of Nov ○ Lucius St – went to appeal – outcome not known yet ○ Oddicombe Hall Hotel – went to appeal – outcome not known yet
17.	**Town Deal & Levelling-up Funding** Re Torquay Town Deal – meeting on the 18th Oct for the Community Board to have a presentation on the revised master plan and Union Square. Spiraling costs lof the Harbour Public Realm. Road closure 15th Oct for 6 weeks and will be complete 29th Nov, but there are lots of snags eg the seats. Has not be dealt with well. Debenhams will not be demolished yet – other sites are being acquired. GPO roundabout is on hold – but the current design looks different from those consulted on. Pavilion lease has not been surrendered yet. Once this has been achieved there will be opening up works. Save the Pavilion Group are lobbying MDL because of the lease delay. Edginswell Station on hold – the funds are moving to the public realm project as that is overspent. • Cary Green There is now a proposal to make the taxi rank on Cary Green permanent. Julie spoke to David Carter after the Town Deal meeting. The 2 different taxi groups are struggling to work together (Hackney and private). Isn't the solution to reconfigure where they are and make the rank totally on the highway? NB the original proposal in the designs was not workable. David Carter suggested that the compromise might be to leave it temporarily in situ as there is a funding bid to upgrade Cary Green currently being developed. Why has the Community Board not been involved in the discussions? There is also the issue of the setting of the Pavilion - historic building. Council are going to submit a TRO to keep the rank there (and the one in Fleet Street) for another 12 months. This will possibly make it harder to change in the future. **ACTION: Forum to send a message to David Carter and Emma Falconer, copied to Rob Palmer, requesting that the rank be moved. Julie to draft** Learning is that if we have a community board in future then retailers, hospitality, taxi drivers etc need to be part of it so that we are not having parallel conversations.
18.	**Section 106/CIL** • CIL Applications – process & funds available - £185,000 CIL currently available for Torquay • New proposals: ○ Beacon Cove – the full form has been received but we have not reviewed

	ACTION: To be circulated and agreed by email ○ Turning Heads – Alan Tilley has responded. Now agreed. ○ Unleashed Theatre – Rodney to forward for review by email ○ Maidencombe beach access – supported Need to encourage other CP areas to apply.
19.	**Torbay Council** • **Peer review** Report has been circulated. Mediation is on-going re political groups and discussions re the Cllr/officer relations.
20.	**Any other business** Beth raised an issue re the cycle provision in the Paignton Flood Defence scheme. Glossed over at the Planning meeting. **ACTION: Tracey to send Beth the contact details for the Paignton Community Partnership Chairperson, Beth to speak to Jim Blackwell.** **Cllr G Darling to ask Cllr Law to give some advice on judicial review.**
	Meeting closed 9pm **Next meetings:** Next meetings: 5 November, 10 December, 7 January 2025