

# Norton St Philip Parish

## CHICKEN FACTORY SITE DEVELOPMENT

### NOTES OF A PUBLIC FORUM

held at 7.50 p.m. on Thursday 04 August 2011  
at the Palairet Hall, Norton St Philip

**Present:** for Lochailort Investments: Hugo Haig (Managing Director); for Bloor Homes South West: John Lusty (Regional Managing Director), John Gibbons (Construction Director), Warren Jones (Land Director)  
34 members of the public, including parish councillors  
The meeting was chaired by Chris Shellard, Parish Council Chairman

Chris Shellard welcomed the representatives from Lochailort Investments and Bloor Homes.

Hugo Haig said they had found an excellent development partner in Bloor Homes, who would build the open market housing for themselves, and the shop, sheltered and affordable housing for Lochailort. Bloor had already built a scheme at Shepton Mallet designed by Robert Adam (architect of this scheme). Work would start on site as soon as possible, doing necessary demolition and clearance and constructing sustainable drainage ponds.

The shop operator had dropped out but Budgens were still keen and a new operator was being sought. Budgens want to include a mezzanine floor for storage, and velux windows.

Other proposed amendments for planning consideration were

- making the sheltered housing apartment block into 6 not 4 units by (a) dividing the top unit into two and (b) making an extra unit from the ground-floor common room
- looking at the potential for an extra housing unit behind unit S6.

He introduced John Lusty.

Mr Lusty has worked for 27 years for Midlands-based Bloor Homes, a private firm solely owned by John Bloor and divided into eight regions. He and his colleagues, based in Swindon, had come so that people would know who to contact if necessary. He said the firm stood for quality, honesty and transparency. They had worked for 10 years with Robert Adam, who had been retained for this scheme and would ensure its integrity. He was glad to work with Lochailort. The scheme would be built as agreed.

- They aim to start infrastructure works on site by the end of September
- The offsite highways works (both those required by Somerset at the site entrance and also the renewal of the High Street traffic calming which was the subject of a separate unilateral agreement) will be built at the outset
- Building on site will start in January/February 2012. The shop, affordable housing and market square will be built in 12 months
- Speed of construction would to some extent depend on the market, but quality should sell the scheme.

He (JL) and Hugo Haig (HH) invited questions, which included:

**Q** Which four affordable units will be allocated for local people, as per planning permission?

**HH** Probably units 1 - 4, certainly four of units 1 – 6

**Q** There are local people already on the housing register. The parish council would have to identify people for the affordable houses.

**HH** Lochailort has already had enquiries and will work with the parish council.

**Q** What about the eight car parking spaces proposed for High Street residents on the new site, which were a community benefit?

**HH** Mendip had not supported the spaces being used for residents who lived offsite. There was plenty of car parking for the development on site and there would be no overflow. For offsite residents Lochailort was prepared to fund the construction of parking spaces on the grassed area in front of the Town End bungalows opposite the site if Mendip, the landowner, wished it to do so.

**Q** What about the car ports offered for existing local residents?

**HH** These represented six of the eight spaces referred to above. They would be for residents of the affordable houses, as enshrined in the Section 106 Agreement.

**Q** Can we see drawings which show clearly what highway works are proposed in the unilateral undertaking?

**Q** The drawings in the undertaking differ from the original drawings.

**Chairman** We need access to larger-scale drawings. It is no good going over what has been signed and sealed, other than lobbying for a revision.

**Q** Will you deliver the finishes prescribed by the architect, Robert Adam?

**JL** Yes (citing the market building and shop). Robert Adam will have a monitoring role to ensure the development is built as per planning permission. Alternative finishes will be sought for a couple of units in the middle of the development. A commercial alternative to lime render, which takes a long time to 'go off', will be proposed.

**Q** Returning to the eight parking spaces, what has been agreed can be challenged.

**HH** There may be some spaces left on the site. Spaces opposite, in Town End, will be provided if Mendip agrees.

**Q** How will the impact of heavy construction traffic on the High Street be dealt with?

**JL** Everything will be directed to approach from the Woolverton end.

**Q** What about starting and finishing times?

**JL** Agreed times would be put on suppliers' trade conditions. Residents are asked to help monitor this and to support Bloor Homes in erecting temporary signs to direct construction traffic.

**Q** The original plan had been for a five-year construction period. What was proposed now?

**JL** Two and a half years for the whole scheme, building 12-20 units per year.

**Q** When would there be consultation about the suggested parking spaces in Town End?

**HH** As soon as possible.

The chairman referred to a letter received from a resident proposing a bus shelter at the edge of the development, and coffee shop, and suggesting The Knoll or Hardington Rise as names for the site

**Q** Members of the High Street Chapel currently park in the entrance to the chicken factory site when visiting. Where could they park in future?

**HH** It may be possible to have an informal arrangement with the shop operator to use some of the 12 shop spaces in the evening and when the shop is not busy.

**Q** Will residents in the Town End area who currently park on the highway (B3110) still be able to do so?

**HH** Yes

**Q** In 1638 there was a Fortescue Lane on the site. What names are being considered?

**HH** We would be interested hear suggestions.

**JL** The marketing name for the site will be down to Bloor Homes. The Post Office will have the final say on a permanent name. The developers would like to work with the village to find one name for all purposes. Bloor and Lochailort intend to meet in September to discuss the matter, so there is a window of opportunity for suggestions, which should be search-engine-friendly.

**Q** What about calling the site 'Monmouth Heights'? Will the allotments be built?

**HH** Lochailort are happy to do the allotments but will wait and see demand. Who will look after them has to be decided.

**Q** Allotments would safeguard the land.

**HH** They are 80% likely to be built.

**Q** Are all due processes being adhered to in clear-cutting the site?

**A** All as laid down in the impact statement and planning permission.

**Q** What about contamination on the site?

**JL** Drilling has revealed the site to be clean except in two areas, one under proposed hard standing. The other will require 2.5 cubic metres to be dug and dumped.

**Q** Residents are concerned that parking by casual shoppers will cause Town End to burst at the seams. There will be pressure on the parish council to lobby for yellow lines.

**Q** In view of the parking concerns, will Lochailort look again at the proposal for parking on the site, behind the High Street and overlooking the Mead?

**HH** This was opposed by the parish council. It can be looked at again if this is wanted.

**Q** When parking overlooking Church Mead was discussed there were concerns about security and lighting

**HH** Who would pay for the lighting? It would be a private site.

**Q** When High Street garaging was discussed, people were willing to pay for secure parking

**HH** We will come back on this matter.

**Q** Parking has been discussed many times without a solution being reached. Construction workers vehicles will require parking. Why not build a temporary car park for 20-30 cars on the 'Laverton Triangle'?

There were no further questions. The Chairman thanked all for coming, saying that the attendance of the developers boded well for the future. He closed the meeting at 8.52pm.