

## **Bere Ferrers Parish Council**

At a meeting of the Plans & Highways Committee meeting held in the Council Chambers on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.

### **Present**

Cllr. R. Maycock	Chair of the Committee
Cllr. P. Archer	Cllr. B. Lamb
Cllr. R. Leithall	Cllr. J. Maciejowska
Cllr. M. Patterson	

### **In Attendance:**

Cllr. E. Wager

### **573. Apologies**

Cllr. P. Crozier sent his apology. Accepted by the Committee.

### **574. Declaration of Matters of Interest**

Cllr. Lamb in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **575. Notifications of items for information at the discretion of the Chair. No action can be taken on these items at this meeting**

Cllr. Maciejowska reported that she had been informed that the Calstock Ferry service has now finished operating. The ferryman is currently trying to arrange a meeting with relevant parties to discuss what can be done for the future of the service. It is hoped that this will include Tamar Valley National Landscape and Calstock Parish Council. It is being asked whether this Parish Council would be interested in being involved in this meeting? Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr. Maciejowska would act as the Parish Council's representative. It was also agreed that Cllr. Graham Reed, Tavistock North Borough Councillor, and Cllr. Fife Cook, Devon County Councillor, should be informed as they may also wish to be involved too.

### **576. Matters arising from the minutes at the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

The minutes were approved and adopted at the Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

### **Matters Arising**

#### **Min 519**

Cllr. Lamb has prepared responses on the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The draft document has been sent to Cllrs. Crozier, Maycock, and Leithall for their review and comments. Following discussion, all agreed that the document should now be submitted.

### **577. To deal with Planning applications for comment. Interested parties are invited to comment on applications they have an interest in before a decision is made, at the discretion of the Chair.**

0118/26/VAR Mr & Mrs Steve & Sally Jackson, Elwell Gardens, Bere Alston, PL20 7HL  
Application for variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning consent 2213/24/HHO

After discussions, all were in favour in supporting the application.

Comment: The Council support the application.

3551/25/FUL Bere Ferrers Parish Council, Sports Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Bere Alston  
Demolition of existing changing block and replacement building

Cllr. Maycock thanked Cllr. Lamb for all his hard work in preparing the application and ensuring it was submitted and validated.

After discussion, it was agreed to fully support the application. This new Pavilion would be a valuable asset to all local sporting groups and the community.

**578. Take note of any Planning Applications noted after consideration by the Borough**

West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) have advised that planning application 0335/25/FUL, Harling Farm, Bere Alston will be considered by the Development Management & Licensing Committee on 17 March 2026 and a site visit has been arranged for 12 March 2026. Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr. Lamb will attend both meetings to speak on behalf of the Parish Council.

**579. Enforcement cases to be taken into Part Two**

Cllr. Maycock proposed going into Part 2, seconded by Cllr. Archer

Cllr. Maycock proposed coming out of Part 2, seconded by Cllr. Archer.

The cases were discussed under Part 2 and the Clerk to follow up on the actions.

**580. To receive a presentation from Westcountry Land regarding potential development on land north of B3257, Bere Alston. This item is for information and discussion only. The Committee will not debate the merits of any potential proposal, nor make any decision, recommendation, or indication of support or opposition**

Two representatives from Westcountry Land in attendance, wished to have an informal discussion and obtain feedback from the Parish Council following the refusal of the Co-op planning application and subsequent appeal. During the original application process, they had undertaken community consultation and engaged with the Parish Council, which had voted to support the proposal. They acknowledged that while there had been community support, there had also been objections.

They are now considering their next step: whether to submit a second application for a Co-op store on the same site or consider alternative uses for the land, such as housing or other development. They have been involved in three Co-op developments in Cornwall and had initially considered the Bere Alston site to be relatively straightforward from a planning perspective. The Co-op remained supportive of relocating the existing Fore Street store.

They noted that one reason for refusal cited by the Planning Inspectorate, was that the proposal conflicted with the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan (NP), as there was no provision for new retail development in the village. They asked whether the Council would support revisiting the NP to include retail development. They noted that a review of the NP was scheduled to be discussed later in the meeting.

Cllr. Maycock clarified that the NP supports the extension of retail within the existing settlement boundary. When the plan was first written, there were already three retail sites within the village, and retail development outside the settlement boundary had therefore not been considered.

Cllr. Patterson asked what would happen to the existing Co-op store if a new store was not developed, noting that it had previously been suggested the store might close if planning permission for a new store was not granted. Westcountry Land stated that this was the information they had received, as the Co-op had expressed concerns regarding the current premises, including disabled access and storage and delivery arrangements. Cllr. Patterson reported that the CEO of the Co-op had informed her via email that there were no current plans to close the existing store. Westcountry Land confirmed that they had not seen this communication. It was noted that the store is one of the most successful Co-op stores in the South West relative to its size.

Westcountry Land stated that they were not seeking a detailed discussion at this stage but wished to understand whether the Parish Council would be open to another application.

Cllr. Leithall noted that at the public meeting held approximately three years ago, views had been expressed both for and against the proposal, although many attendees had appeared to support it. The Council had therefore considered the application on its merits at that time. He acknowledged that the NP does not support retail development outside the settlement boundary but noted that the plan had not anticipated a retailer investing at this scale in the village. He added that the Parish Council is currently focused on maintaining the validity of the NP rather than undertaking a full review, due to uncertainty arising from the Government's proposed increase in housing targets for West Devon. He also noted that although the NP had been a factor in the refusal, the Planning Inspector had raised additional concerns regarding the site's location within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its position outside the settlement boundary.

Cllr. Wager expressed concern that relocating the Co-op outside the village centre could harm the village and noted that the development would be visible on the skyline. Cllr. Maycock added that previous development proposals along Broad Park Road had been refused for similar reasons. Cllr. Patterson commented that the proposed site could be inconvenient for residents living at the lower end of the village or those unable to walk there.

Cllr. Maycock explained that amending the NP to allow retail development outside the settlement boundary would require a policy change, including public consultation and a further referendum. The current review had focused on textual updates rather than policy changes.

Cllr. Lamb advised that the Parish Council could not formally express a view without a planning application being submitted.

Cllr. Leithall reiterated that the current Neighbourhood Plan does not support development on the site and that broader policy questions may only be reconsidered during a future full review, which is unlikely to take place before 2028. The Parish is currently awaiting confirmation from West Devon regarding housing numbers for the parish, which is expected at that time.

Westcountry Land stated that they wished only to gauge the Parish Council's views and would now consider their options before deciding whether to submit a further application.

A member of the public raised several points regarding the proposal and possible alternative sites. Cllr. Maycock emphasised that the meeting was not considering the matter as a planning application and that such issues would be addressed formally should an application be submitted.

Another member of the public requested it be noted that the Planning Inspector's report had identified additional reasons for refusal beyond the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr. Maycock thanked the representatives from Westcountry Land for attending. The representatives, along with two members of the public present for the discussion, then left the meeting.

### **581. Update on the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Maycock proposed going into Part 2, seconded by Cllr. Archer

Cllr. Maycock proposed coming out of Part 2, seconded by Cllr. Archer.

Discussions took place on the plan.

### **582. Correspondence**

1. Email from WDBC:

We have arranged for an all-Town and Parish Council Briefing to be held (remotely via MS Teams) on Thursday, 12 March from 4:00pm to 5:00pm on the following subject matter: 'The National Planning Policy Framework and its Relationship with Neighbourhood Plans'. Colleagues have provided some background information (as set out below and attached) and, if you (or any of your respective Councillor(s)) wish to attend this Briefing, please let me know and we'll forward the invitation accordingly.

The Clerk to request the link and forward onto all members.

2. Email from WDBC regarding the updates on installing electric charging points in Pilgrims Drive:

Unfortunately I have been in contact with WENEA and the works are behind schedule and have been delayed. The revised programme (estimates and subject to change) is as follows:

27th March civils works

2nd June ICP/DNO connection works

22nd June EV charger installed

July EV charger commissioned

3. Invoice from Contractor who installed the new benches at Bere Ferrers. Total cost of labour: £90.

All agreed to pay invoice.

### **583. Items for the next agenda**

Aside from the usual items, no other items were requested.

**584. Questions from any members of the public**

The members of the public had already left the meeting. The Chair thanked the Committee members for attending the meeting and closed the meeting at 8.15 pm.

Signed by the Chair of the Committee

Signed this date 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026