

SILVER STREET DEVELOPMENT

Presentation to residents

Buckden Parish Council wants to inform residents about the proposed development off Silver Street.

The intended developer is Morris Homes. They are a substantial company. Their net assets in their April 2025 accounts are given as a bit over £139 million.

They have told us that they are still working on various aspects of their plans, so what we can tell you today is limited to the information and plans they have already given us. We will do our best to answer your questions, but it is very likely that we will be unable to answer some of them today as we simply do not have the information yet.

Morris Homes have said they are more than willing to come to a public meeting to explain their plans. Obviously there is no point in them doing so until their proposals are firmed up so we are waiting for them to suggest a date.

I want to place on record that neither I nor any other member of the Parish Council have any qualifications as a planner or any expertise in the subject. Therefore I cannot guarantee that all of the information I give about the planning process is correct. Nor can I guarantee that in preparing this presentation, I have read and understood the Outline Planning Permission correctly.

I also want it to be clear that I am not presenting any views of the Parish Council about Morris Homes' plans. I hope that everything I say is objective reporting.

It has been said that the Parish Council, through the Large Scale Planning Group, has had negotiations with Morris Homes about their plans. I want to also place on record that that is not true. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework guidelines, we have twice had discussions with them. We have listened to what they have said about their plans. We have made reasoned comments on them, in line with the Housing Needs Policies and Design Codes Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and

suggested improvements. Some of these they have adopted, some they have not. But at no time have there been any negotiations with them.

In order to explain how we have arrived at the present position, I need to give -

Some background:

HDC's Local Plan was confirmed (or "made" to use the technical term) in 2019. The Local Plan is a wide ranging document about many aspects of the future development of Huntingdonshire and contains Policies which are legally enforceable.

In it, the now built site at Long Hall Road, and Silver Street, were allocated for residential development. Allocation means that there is a presumption that it should be developed.

BPC objected strongly to the allocation of Silver Street and tried to get it removed from the draft plan. Despite this, HDC allocated it. This means HDC favour the use of the land for residential development.

The land is owned by the Church Commissioners. In 2018 they applied for planning permission to build on it. Although this pre-dates the Local Plan, the site had been allocated in the draft plan and so it was very likely the application would succeed.

In 2019, BPC started to prepare its Neighbourhood Plan. The NP sets out Policies intended to guide the future of the village. Like the Local Plan the Policies are legally enforceable. They take priority over the Local Plan Policies but are not allowed to conflict with them. It is legally binding in respect of any planning permission for more than 10 dwellings granted after the NP comes into effect.

So although the NP could not stop the development of Silver Street, it could, to a degree, control how the development happened, provided that it was "made" before planning permission for Silver Street was granted.

BPC fought the planning application from the start. We raised numerous objections and delayed the decision on the application until 2022. In the meantime we progressed the NP as fast as we could. It was "made" in 2021, that is before the planning decision on Silver Street was granted by the Development Management Committee of HDC so its Policies do apply to the development.

I should say, at this point, that the NP was written very quickly. Normally they take more than three years, some taking much longer. Ours was done and made in about two and a half years. Despite this it has been held up as an example of how to write a good NP.

During the preparation of the NP, we got a couple of reports which were paid for by a government grant. These were a Housing Needs Report and a Design Codes for Buckden report.

Our Housing Needs report, which was done in 2019, assessed the likely sizes of houses that the village would need over the following 10 years. It concluded that the village had enough 4 bed and bigger houses and only needed 3 bed or smaller dwellings. This was written into the NP as a Policy to restrict the sizes of houses in developments of more than 10 dwellings.

BUT there is a get out of jail card for developers, written into the Policy. The 3 bed limit does not apply if the developer can show larger houses are necessary to ensure the viability of the development or if there is a new Housing Needs Assessment.

There is no requirement that either of those documents must be prepared by or for BPC. In other words, if a developer produces them, they are evidence supporting a development with larger houses. How much credence BPC gives developers' reports is another matter.

The 2019 Housing Needs Report said that it was likely that we would need some bungalows as well, but this was not in the Policy.

The Buckden Design Codes are also written into the NP as Policies. These set out parameters for street widths, set backs for houses and similar ideas to create a more open and spacious feel to new large developments.

It also restricted the used of shared surface roads to serve no more than 4 houses. For those who don't know, shared surface roads are those where there is little or no distinction between the pavement and the road. Such pavements as there are, are usually less than a metre wide, as opposed to a full width pavement of 2 metres.

Enough Background.

When the planning application was made, the Church Commissioners also submitted a Master Plan.

[Show slide if possible]

40% of the new houses were to be Affordable homes and 60% market properties. The Master Plan was submitted with the Application, but it is important to note that this does not form part of the approved Outline Planning Permission. The Master Plan showed up to 11 houses on shared surface roads but that application did limit the sizes of Market dwellings to 3 bedroom units.

Surface water drainage was to be into a large attenuation pond on the south side of the houses, close to Taylors Brook. The plan was for water to drain naturally into the brook. The pond lies downstream, to the east of the Bishops Way houses.

Outline Planning Permission was granted on 16th August 2022.

I need to explain the terms “Outline Planning Permission” and “Detailed Planning Permission”.

An Outline Planning Permission is, in effect, a decision to allow a development, but with many of the details of the development still to be decided. A Detailed Planning Permission includes, as the name suggests, every detail defining and controlling the development.

It is usual for large scale developments to have an Outline Planning Permission as developers do not want to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on making a detailed application without the certainty that it will be granted. It is also often the case, as it was here, that the developer will submit a “Master Plan” with the application. But this planning permission does not say that the development must be in accordance with the Master Plan. Therefore the developer is free to submit different plans from the Master Plan.

So, an Outline Planning Permission will have Conditions attached to it. Some of these Conditions are of a technical nature. So for example, in the Outline Permission, Condition 16 states that a metalled surface shall be provided for a minimum distance of 20 metres along the access road from its junction with the public highway.

The reason for this Condition is to stop mud being deposited on the public highway during the construction phase of the development.

Other Conditions require details of specific aspects of the development to be submitted to HDC for approval before development starts. These are called “Reserved Matters”.

Condition 2 states;

“Applications for approval of the Reserved Matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of four years from the date of this permission.”

So the developer has until 16th August 2026 to make applications for approval of Reserved matters to HDC. If this is not done, the planning permission runs out and is no longer valid.

Condition 3 requires details of the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale of the development to be submitted and approved “for each reserved matters area” before development starts.

To confuse us, the Outline Permission provides that the development can be built in phases, each of which is an “area”. Reserved Matters applications can be made for different areas.

There a number of other Conditions which are Reserved Matters and just to further confuse us, other Conditions refer to details which are “part of” Reserved Matters.

What is really important is to note that this does not mean that the Reserved Matters have to be approved by HDC by the 16th August 2026. As long as the applications are made by that date, the planning permission has not terminated.

Once the applications are made, there is a process of consultation by HDC with other bodies, such as County Highways, National Highways, the Lead Local Flood Authority and others, including the Parish Council.

They all feed back with comments and then there is a process of negotiation until all the Reserved Matters are agreed and approved.

Planning is not a simple process. There are some Reserved Matters that can be “called in” for decision by the Development Management Committee of HDC. Others can’t be and are decided by Planning Officers. There are Conditions that have to approved by HDC but which are not

Reserved Matters. I think that all of those will be approved (or rejected) by Officers.

As I am sure we all know, one of the Conditions is that there must be work done to the roundabout to ensure there is sufficient capacity at the roundabout to accommodate the transport impacts of the development without detriment to the A1 trunk Road. That is Condition 21.

The Condition specifies that the works must be in accordance with a plan for traffic lights that Highways England approved as part of the Outline planning application process.

The detailed plans for the works must first be approved by HDC who will of course refer them to National Highways.

This is not a Reserved Matter. That means the plans do not have to be submitted to HDC by 16th August this year. On the other hand, no dwellings can be occupied until these roundabout works have been completed.

By contrast, Condition 36 says that as part of the Reserved Matters full details of the surface and groundwater drainage systems must be approved by HDC. They will refer the plans to the LLFA for approval.

Where does that leave us?

It is confusing. I think the key points are:

1. There are conditions that are not Reserved Matters. These are not subject to the 16th August deadline and can be submitted to HDC after that date without it affecting the validity of the planning permission.
2. There are other Conditions which are Reserved Matters and which the developer must submit its proposals for, by 16th August.
3. It is not a requirement that the Reserved Matters are approved by HDC by the deadline.
4. Reserved Matters will, most likely, be dealt with by Planning Officers unless they are Called in to be examined by the DMC. In that case the Planning Officers will give their opinion on the Matter in question and make a recommendation.
5. If a Reserved Matter proposal is refused by HDC, the developer will open a discussion with the Officers to try to get agreement on what is acceptable to both the developer and the Officers and DMC if

necessary. But only minor tweaking is allowed, not a new submission of an entirely new proposal.

6. If no agreement can be reached, the developer can appeal.

Once all the Reserved Matters have been approved, the developer must start work within 2 years of the date that the final approval of the last Reserved Matter is given.

All of this means that there is no way of even guessing at a probable, or even a possible, start date for the development. It could be this year, it could be next year, it could be in 5 years' time, or even longer.

There is one other very important Condition. It is Condition 25. It dictates that 40% of the dwellings are to be Affordable and 60% are Market dwellings – that is they can be sold on the open market at market price. Of the Market dwellings, 11% are to be 1 bed; 36% are to be 2 bed and 53% are to be 3 bed.

So the maximum size of Market dwelling permitted by the Outline Planning Permission is 3 bed. This is not a Reserved Matter. If Morris Homes want to build Market houses that are larger than 3 bed, they will have to apply for a variation of Condition 25.

Note that there is no size restriction or percentage provision in respect of Affordable Dwellings. The consequence of this omission is that the developer is free to build Affordable homes that have more than 3 bedrooms. In theory, the developer could build 116, 4 bed houses.

So, HDC has granted a planning consent that sets a precedent for houses larger than 3 beds and it does not restrict the number of houses served by shared surface roads.

If Morris Homes want to build Market homes that are more than 3 bed, they have to make what is called a Section 73 application to vary the Outline Planning Permission.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy HN 3 on Housing (which Condition 25 enforces) reads:

“Proposals for residential development will be supported where a mix of size, type and tenure of housing to meet local needs identified in the Housing Needs Assessment and any subsequent

Housing Needs Survey is provided.

Proposals for residential development of more than 10 dwellings shall not include dwellings with four or more bedrooms unless there is demonstrable evidence that the inclusion of such dwellings is necessary to achieve viability of the development.”

The Parish Council will be consulted if there is such an application. The Parish Council cannot just say “there is a size restriction on houses so we recommend rejection of this application”. It must consider a new Housing Needs Survey and a Viability Report that Morris Homes have commissioned and produced to us recently before it makes a recommendation on a Sec 73 application. That is not to say the Parish Council will accept those reports as justifying an increase in house sizes, only that it has to take account of those reports in making its recommendation.

The viability qualification in the NP is not limited to financial viability. Morris Homes Viability report is an analysis of the Savills HNA and argues that the larger homes are necessary to achieve a socially successful development.

I emphasise that BPC has not examined those reports in detail yet nor has it reached any conclusion about them.

The critical planning issue:

The key questions as to whether the planning permission will remain valid after 16th August 2026 are:

1. can the developer submit the Reserved Matters applications before the deadline? and
2. will HDC (either officers or DMC) approve those applications?

I can only pass on what Morris Homes have told us: that they will make the applications by the deadline. There was no uncertainty in this statement. We can’t even guess the answer to the second question.

I emphasise that the approvals do not have to be given by 16th August.

Morris Homes plans for the site:

Three members of the Large Scale Planning Group met with representatives of Morris Homes in 2023 for them to show us their proposals and ask our opinion of them. It is fair to say that we rubbished many of their ideas and said we could not recommend BPC to do anything other than strongly object to the proposals.

Last November four of us met their representatives again for them to show us their latest plans and again to ask for our opinions of them.

I want it to be absolutely clear that we are not messengers for Morris Homes, because messengers deliver the message uncritically. We are certainly not advocates for their plans. BPC's position of opposition to the development has not changed and we have made that clear to Morris Homes.

The information I will now give is, I believe, an objective report of what they told us then and have subsequently told us.

On the screen is the latest plan that we have been given by Morris Homes showing their plans for the development. *[We received this on They have told us that they will be changing these plans to some extent and that new plans will be sent to us. However the main outlines are, we think, fixed.]*

The plan is for 290 houses.

The most obvious change is that they no longer propose to have a single large attenuation pond on the south side of the site, draining naturally into Taylors Brook. You can see on the plan that there are now two smaller attenuation ponds which are located further into the site.

Morris Homes told us that surface and ground water drainage will be stored in underground tanks and oversized pipes as well as in these two attenuation ponds. It will then be pumped up to Silver Street and discharged into the road storm drain on the north side of Silver Street. From there it will flow into Taylors Brook at the culvert that runs under

Silver Street. I have had a look at that culvert. As far as I can see there is no pipe on the east side of it discharging storm water into Taylors Brook. It seems likely that the storm drain crosses under the road to discharge into the west side of the brook – that is the St Hughs Road side.

Our concern is that this system may, during and after very heavy rain events, cause flooding either to the east or the west of the culvert. If the brook to the east is not kept clear, it could flood the thatched cottage on Silver Street and possibly houses on Bishops Way. To the west, the houses on St Hughs Road are potential vulnerable because the culvert pipe restricts the flow of water, which could cause it to back up.

The Parish Council has now (24.02.2026) been informed that a professional engineer instructed by Morris Homes has walked into Taylors Brook to the east of the culvert. It is reported that his only comment was that the brook might need widening and deepening. It is also reported that he said Morris Homes know that the farmer wants payment to let the storm water pass over his land from the southern end of the site and he will not let them on to the land at present to conduct a survey. Hence the proposal to pump water into the Brook at the Silver Street end of the culvert. Please note that this information is at least third hand as we don't have a record of what Morris Homes said to the drainage engineering company, not what the company said to the engineer who was on site. So it may not be wholly accurate.

Morris Homes have said that their system is designed to restrict the flow of water into the brook to slow it down and ensure that even severe rain storms will not result in any greater than the average flow.

Our District Councillor has spoken to the LLFA and has reported that this is their least favourite option for dealing with surface water. I assume that the implication of that statement is that it is nevertheless a viable option.

If and when Morris Homes make a presentation, I imagine that this will be one of the aspects of their plans that they will be most closely questioned on.

The LLFA are the experts on drainage systems. HDC will consult with them and their decision will dictate whether Morris Homes can use this

system. It is not a matter on which BPC has any expertise which would enable it to comment meaningfully on the proposal.

We questioned why Morris Homes could not stick to the original drainage plan. They gave us two reasons.

One is that it would require that the ground level of the entire site is raised by 2 metres at the southern edge, tapering down as the ground rises away from it.

The other is that there is a strip of land between the boundary of the site and the top of the bank of the brook which is not in the Church Commissioners ownership. To allow water to flow from the large attenuation pond into the brook would require the consent of the owner of that strip of land. So if they use that method, the owner could wait until they have done the necessary work in raising the height of the site and digging the pond and then demand a ransom for consent to discharge into the brook. That could be a massive sum of money.

One can criticise the Church Commissioners for proposing a scheme but not checking that it can be used in practice. The application documents included a "Parameter Plan" which claims to show the boundaries within which the development will take place. The boundaries are shown by thick red lines which make it impossible to see where the actual legal boundary is. In fact the line obscures the brook as well. One can criticise the planning officers for not asking questions about that thick red line and about whether the scheme could be used in practice, but the fact remains that if it can't be done this way, Morris Homes have to find another way. Whether their way is viable is a matter for the LLFA as I have said and we will have to wait on their conclusions.

Sewage will also be pumped up from the site to Silver Street to join the main sewer there. The original plan also used this method. Anglian Water agreed to it at the time. As far as BPC knows, they cannot now withdraw that agreement.

Moving on, there is the issue of the roundabout. As I have said, works must be done to the roundabout before any dwellings can be occupied.

It is though possibly the most difficult issue for MH to deal with and the one that is of most concern to our residents. What happens there will

affect how difficult it is to access the roundabout from Perry Road and High Street. The roundabout is already at over capacity. Getting on to the roundabout from Perry Road is usually difficult and from the High Street is difficult at peak traffic times.

But we have to accept that the reason why the developer has to do something about the roundabout is not to make the access easier. It is to mitigate to effects of additional traffic generated by the development on the flow of traffic on the A1. It is for County Highways to comment on the effect on Perry Road and High Street of whatever solution is proposed.

Gerry Sansom will bring you up to date with the latest information we have on this in a few minutes.

Another aspect which is of concern is the fact that there is only one entrance/exit onto Silver Street from the development. In the longer term, once the development is complete, there will be numerous traffic movements in and out of the estate onto Silver Street, which is narrowed by a chicane just east of the access. This will lead to difficulties for other residents on Silver Street getting in and out. But, in their wisdom HDC approved these access arrangements and there is nothing now we can do about it.

It has been suggested that a second access should be built from the north side of the site, across the farmer's field, down to the B1514 (the Brampton Road). Of course this depends on the farmer being willing to sell and the Church Commissioners being willing to pay his price. As there has been no indication of this happening, BPC assumes that even if there have been any talks, they have not reached agreement. Let me be clear – this is speculation and we do not know any hard facts.

Morris Homes told the LSPG that they proposed a second access through the existing field entrance onto the B1514. They told the LSPG that National Highways absolutely refused to even consider the idea. They do not want more traffic joining the A1 at that point.

Morris Homes have said that they think National Highways might allow construction traffic to access (but not exit) the site through the field gate, but even this is not certain.

The developer has to submit a Construction Traffic Management Plan that must minimise any harmful effects of traffic entering the village Conservation Area (NP Transport Policy 3). We expect that that means construction traffic will have to go north from the roundabout and either use the crossing on the A1 into Silver Street or turn left off the A1 towards Brampton and then come up the B1514 and into Silver Street that way.

To leave the village, lorries will have to come out of the site onto Silver Street, turn left, go past the chicane and turn up St Hughs Road. Since the south end of High Street often has vehicles parked on both sides, we think it is likely that construction traffic will have to turn right onto High Street and onto the A1 at the north end of High Street. That way it will avoid the conservation area entirely.

In the long term the traffic consultants used by the CC said that the majority of drivers will go along Silver Street to Church Street, turn right and then turn left onto High Street to access the A1 at the roundabout. We pointed out to County Highways that any sensible driver would turn up St Hughs Road and then left or right onto High Street. But they refused to accept this and when we pressed the point they refused even to respond to us.

So, we are stuck with it. I won't express my opinion of it, which is shared I believe by other Councillors, as I can only find impolite words to do so.

I think though we should note that this is not a problem of Morris Homes' making. They have inherited it and can't do anything about it.

The Morris Homes layout

I need to make a preliminary point. I have said that BPC has not moved from opposition to the development.

BUT outline planning permission has been granted and it is the view of the LSPG that it is very probable that Morris Homes will meet the deadline for the Reserved Matters applications and thereby preserve the planning permission. Whether they can overcome the roundabout and drainage problems is another matter. But BPC had a decision to make:

to ignore the whole thing, or even be as obstructive as we can, in the hope that Morris Homes can't deal with the problems and the development never happens;

Or: assume that they will and that the development will happen.

The consequence of the first option is that we would not engage with Morris Homes and they would simply draw up whatever plans they want. They would submit them to HDC, who would ask BPC for comment. If we then wanted lots of changes, we would be at the mercy of HDC as to whether they ignored our comments or went back to Morris Homes and tried to get the changes we wanted. In the long run, if they overcome the problems and succeed with their Sec 75 application, this would simply delay the inevitable and we would just have to hope that Morris Homes would be amenable to making changes even though we had refused to engage with them.

The consequence of the second option is that we engage with them to see if we can get them to design a scheme that makes the best of a bad job as far as BPC is concerned.

Back in 2023, BPC decided that engagement would be better than refusing to have anything to do with Morris Homes. That decision still stands. At the very least, we could explain to them those issues of greatest concern to residents – which we have done.

There is another aspect: it is possible that the development will go ahead. That possibility raises this question: should the Parish Council do what it can to get an improved development for our new residents (and in fact the existing residents), or should it just let the developer do as it pleases, probably at minimum cost. The Parish Council believes it has an obligation to do what it reasonably can to benefit residents, existing and new.

It was for these reasons that the LSPG met with their representatives in November and have continued the engagement by email since then.

On the screen is that plan we were shown in November 2025. This has already changed but we do not have an up to date layout.

They propose to build 290 dwellings.

81 will be rented Affordable homes. Of these they propose 16 will be 1 bed maisonettes, 11 will be 2 bed bungalows, 32 will be 2 bed houses, 18 will be 3 bed houses and 4 will be 4 bed houses. They propose to build 35 shared ownership properties of which 13 will be 2 bed houses, 18 will be 3 bed houses and 4 will be 4 bed houses. That is a total of 116 Affordable homes, or 40% of the total number of homes.

The rest, 174 dwellings, will be Market houses. They propose 14 will be 2 bed bungalows, 21 will be 2 bed houses, 84 will be 3 bed houses, 41 will be 4 bed houses and 14 will be 5 bed houses.

This of course is in breach of the NP, as there are no 1 bed market homes, insufficient 2 bed homes and 55 houses of more than 3 bedrooms. The number of houses served by shared surface roads is also a breach. As you would expect this has caused the LSPG and BPC as a whole, concern. But we have to recognise that the NP allows for bigger houses if the village's housing needs have changed and/or if there is a viability justification. We also have to recognise that HDC has itself failed to impose the size restriction in relation to Affordable homes.

The LSPG has also asked itself the question: are Buckden residents really concerned if there are some larger houses? We haven't conducted any polling to test opinion, but it may be that not many existing residents will be overly concerned.

As you will see from the screen, they have proposed that the 1 bed cluster houses should have "garden areas" which are remote from the houses themselves. We have taken a strong line on this because we can see the gardens becoming dumping grounds for rubbish and gathering places in which undesirable behaviour will be possible.

Morris Homes have taken this on board and have said they will replan these.

The plan shows a toddlers play area with a pedestrian and cycle path going round part of it to get into the estate from Silver Street. We objected to this because cyclists will ride straight across the playground, cutting up the grass and risking injury to toddlers.

Again Morris Homes have taken the point and are replanning this to re-route the path in a more direct line and move the playground to the south so that it is out of the way of cyclists and pedestrians.

A consequence of this redesign is that it frees up an area of land to the right of the estate entrance. Morris Homes are now suggesting putting the pumping stations here, together with additional parking for allotment holders' cars, relocating the sheds currently on the entrance land and using some of the land for additional allotments or a community orchard.

So, we think that our policy of engagement with Morris Homes has achieved some improvements to their plans that the village will benefit from.

Section 106 Agreement:

In addition to the Conditions set out in the Outline Planning permission, the Church Commissioners entered into what is called a Sec 106 Agreement with HDC. This Agreement will bind the developer to comply with a lot of additional obligations.

I am not going to go through this in detail. It runs to 14 pages and has 3 appendices and a Schedule. It deals with things a number of financial contributions that the developer has to make. These range from a Bus stop contribution, through an Education contribution (payable to the County Council) to a Health Facilities contribution. That is not the full list.

It contains a lot of terms relating to Affordable Housing, to ensure that Affordable Housing is delivered. It also makes provision for Green Spaces, Play equipment and footpaths and accessways. It restricts sales of Market houses so that not more than 80% of them can be occupied before the Green Space land has been laid out and made available for use.

It sets out when the various contributions are to be paid over and how.

In a nutshell, it supplements the Planning Permission with a significant number of obligations which cannot, for legal reasons, be set out as Conditions in the Planning Permission.

The question has been asked as to whether these obligations are at risk if the developer claims they make the development financially unviable. It is possible for the developer to seek a reduction in the amounts to be paid, if the Agreement is onerous and makes the development financially unviable. Usually that would be by negotiation, but if the Agreement is more than 5 years old, the developer can formally apply to HDC to modify the Agreement. The developer must provide a detailed viability assessment to support its application or an informal request to renegotiate the Agreement. In the case of a renegotiation, the developer must obtain the consent of both HDC and CCC. If it is a formal application, I don't know what the position on agreement is.

What the result of such a request would be, we can't predict. It is probably safe to say that if the obligations are changed, they will be reduced, not removed completely.

BPC is not a party to the Agreement and does not, itself, receive any money from it.

Allotments:

I have mentioned the allotments. The future of the allotments is of great concern to the PC. The land is owned by the Church Commissioners. We have been in contact with Savills who are the Church Commissioners agents. In March last year, Savills served a Notice to Quit on the Parish Council requiring us to vacate the allotments on 6th April this year. They had to do this to satisfy contractual commitments they had entered into with Morris Homes.

The Parish Council immediately contacted Savills and asked them if the Church Commissioners would agree to secure the future of the allotments in the long term, either by a long lease or sale of the freehold. On 27th April Savills informed the Parrish Council that the Church Commissioners offered to sell the allotment land to the Parish Council.

An agreement in principle has been reached for the Parish Council to buy the allotment land at a price of £16,000.00. However, no real progress has been made since that agreement in principle. Savills have been very slow in responding to our progress chasing. The latest we have heard from them (in March) is that the Church Commissioners have no present intention of demanding that the Parish Council vacate

the allotment land. That is not a binding commitment. They will require the Parish Council to give up the entrance area, currently used for parking by allotment holders and with sheds on it. There are also sheds further back which will have to go.

As far as we can understand it, it appears the Church Commissioners are having discussions with Morris Homes about when and how this is going to happen, what temporary parking arrangements can be put in place, if any, and the continued use of the water supply.

Savills have said they will prepare and let us have, a Heads of Terms, which is an informal document setting out the principal terms of a deal. It is not legally binding.

[Insert update on this, if any]

Which is very unsatisfactory, but the decision making is not in the PC's hands. At the moment we have no reason to believe that the CC want to do anything other than sell to the PC.

Summary

If Morris Homes can't resolve the roundabout problem to the satisfaction of National Highways, the development won't happen because the outline permission prevents any houses from being occupied until the scheme is agreed and the works done.

Similarly, if no acceptable drainage scheme can be arrived at, the developer cannot even start work.

If the Reserved Matters applications aren't made by 16th August, then the planning permission dies. The Church Commissioners could of course make a new planning application. The land is still allocated, so there would be a presumption in favour of granting permission again. However, it is not a foregone conclusion. A new planning permission is not necessarily going to be the same as this one. We assume that the Church Commissioners would still face the problem of the roundabout and/or the drainage.

If one or more of the Reserved Matters applications is refused by HDC, after 16th August, then the developer can, as I have said, appeal against that refusal. They have 6 months from the date of refusal to do so.

If the appeal is unsuccessful, we believe the permission dies. But, as I have said, we are not planning experts, so that is not a guarantee. If it is successful, the developer still has to deal with the roundabout problem.

They can also appeal against a refusal of a Sec 73 application to change the Market house sizes by HDC.

These events are outside BPC's control.

It can comment on the Reserved Matters applications and a Sec 73 application and it can ask our District Councillor to call in a Sec 73 application and some Reserved Matters applications. If the Parish Council objects to a Sec 73 application, or some of the Reserved Matters applications, those applications will most probably also be referred to the DMC. If the decision is called in, it is a matter for HDC's Development Management Committee to decide on that application. If not, it will probably be dealt with at Officer level. The Section 106 Agreement cannot now be changed unless both HDC and the Church Commissioners (or Morris Homes if they go ahead) agree.

That will happen in the next few months. For the moment there is no action BPC can take. BPC has taken the view that it would be wrong to guess at the contents of or pre-judge the applications and that it should decide its course of action when it is consulted. In the meantime it should continue to engage with Morris Homes, via the LSPG, which will report any discussions publicly to the full Council. As always, any written report and the Minutes of any verbal report will be available on the Parish Council web site, to ensure full transparency, as has always been the case in the past. It will also encourage Morris Homes/*Morris Homes have agreed* to make a public presentation of their plans *at [] on [June]*, so that residents have the opportunity of asking questions and making their views known to the developer.

