



**THORVERTON COMMUNITY LAND TRUST
(Financial Conduct Authority registration no 9301)**

Draft Notes from the Public Open Meeting held on Weds 26 November 2025

1	Welcome and outline of proceedings
1.1	Andrew Foster welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the order of events.
2	Attendance
2.1	There were just over 40 people present, together with John Hammond (JH), a senior member of the Planning Department of MDDC.
3	Project update and questions
3.1	<p>Andrew Foster, Andrew Saunders and Andrew Wiles gave presentations to provide an update on progress made since the last meeting, the current position in relation to all stakeholders and the latest site proposals – see attached.</p> <p>The meeting was then thrown open to questions from the floor, and it should be noted that several questioners prefaced their questions/comments with congratulations to the Board for the substantial progress which had been made since the last meeting.</p>
3.2	<p>Q: How long is it likely to take to finalise the deal with the Church Commissioners?</p> <p>A: As all four interested parties (TCLT, MDDC, the Church Commissioners’ agents and Hastoe Housing Association) are now meeting regularly (via Teams/Zoom), it is hoped that the negotiations for the North Site will be concluded within the first six months of 2026 – there is a time limit on the grant from MDDC, but JH is working to achieve an appropriate extension if necessary. The future of the South Site is less certain.</p>
3.3	<p>Q: Why has the Board of TCLT not listened to the wishes of the village in relation to the potential development of the South Site?</p> <p>A: It was noted that those present at the last meeting in July, which the questioner acknowledged he had not attended, had given overwhelming support to the proposal for fewer, smaller houses on the South Site together with extensive amenity/wildlife space for the village and walkway/bridge to the Millenium Green, and agreed that TCLT should continue to explore the possibility of achieving this, as it would protect the South Site from a more extensive commercial development.</p>

	<p>It was also noted that the suggestion made at that meeting of providing some starter homes, possibly to be made available through discounted marked sales, had been taken on board and was now included in the Board's thinking.</p>
3.4	<p>Q: What is the probability of the Church Commissioners getting permission to build across the whole of the South Site?</p> <p>A (JH): The short answer is that there is no answer to that question at the moment. In December last year, the rules in terms of housing changed, for which MDDC was somewhat unprepared because the Local Plan had not yet been updated – this now means that the development industry is avidly looking at all possibilities and MDDC would have to consider an application for extensive building on the South Site alongside all other applications.</p>
3.5	<p>Q: There are potentially three or four sites proposed for large developments in the village – how will MDDC weigh up these proposals against both each other and others in Mid Devon?</p> <p>A (JH): There is no formula for this, and no perfect answer based on percentage increases in population or availability of local infrastructure. Housing is seen as its own crisis, alongside both health and education, and prospective developments will be expected to contribute to capital projects to improve local provision.</p>
3.6	<p>Q: If any or all of the potential large developments were to be approved, would they have to provide affordable housing as well, possibly resulting in an excess of supply over local, village demand?</p> <p>A (JH): Yes, they would, but the difference is that it would only be the TCLT/Hastoe provision which would give priority to local applicants as, if there is no s106 agreement in place regarding local connections, the Devon Home Choice criteria are based solely on need.</p> <p>A (AW): It is possible that Hastoe may prefer to build slightly fewer houses than the maximum of 19 suggestion – perhaps 12-15, with fewer shared ownership – which would reduce the overall supply in the event that other affordable housing is built as part of bigger schemes.</p>
3.7	<p>Q: Are people in the village aware that it would be very helpful to provide feedback to the Diocese regarding the potential sale of the Glebeland for development?</p> <p>A: Some people have already provided feedback, but everyone in the village is encouraged to make their feelings known.</p>
3.8	<p>Q: Are the North and South Sites as inextricably linked as we first thought?</p>

	<p>A: The South Site is still essential to the North Site to provide the necessary drainage and biodiversity net gain (BNG) – although, if fewer houses are built on the North Site, it may be possible to cater for the BNG within a revised scheme.</p> <p>The original view that open market sales on the South Site would be required to fund the ‘abnormal’ infrastructure costs on the North Site has been shown to be over-cautious. Hastoe have indicated that they are prepared to take on the North Site only, without the potential confusion of open market sales and notwithstanding the infrastructure costs.</p> <p>The pragmatic choice was therefore made to separate the two sites slightly in order to achieve the aim of providing affordable housing, whilst recognising the importance of securing the South Site, much of which is undevelopable anyway, for the village and therefore mitigating the risk of significant development there.</p>
3.09	<p>Q: What would be the criteria for allocating the affordable homes? Would local priority exist in perpetuity?</p> <p>A (JH): That is the main difference between the TCLT/exception site approach and that of a developer – the legally binding s106 agreement will give the appropriate local priority. It may be that, if there are no local applicants at a time when a house becomes available, it is allocated to someone else, in a geographical cascade, but the s106 rules will be reapplied every time a house becomes available.</p> <p>A (AW): It was confirmed that TCLT will work with Hastoe to develop the criteria and, later, to provide help and advice, especially on the validity of a claimed local connection, but it is Hastoe who would decide the allocations rather than any members of the CLT.</p>
3.10	<p>Q: How would the finances/grant be affected if TCLT was only able to buy the North Site? Are there any plans for a further phase of development over and above the six shown?</p> <p>A: TCLT has no plans for any more than six houses on the South Site.</p>
3.11	<p>Q: What are Hastoe’s sustainability credentials?</p> <p>A: They have a track record of incorporating solar panels in their new houses, including those in Newton St Cyres.</p>
3.12	<p>Q: Does the village have a say in the design of the houses?</p> <p>A: Absolutely! People were encouraged to have a look at Hastoe’s website to get a sense of their design approach.</p>
4	Any other business
4.1	Thanks were extended to all those in attendance and, in particular, to

	John Hammond from MDDC.
4.2	It was noted that the next meeting is likely to be next Spring and people were encouraged to use the website to keep up to date with progress in the meantime.
4.3	<p>Finally, in order to gauge the mood of the meeting, AF asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Should TCLT press ahead with the agreement with Hastoe for a maximum of 19 affordable houses on the North Site? b) Should TCLT try to maintain control for the village over the South Site through the provision of up to six starter/downsizing homes? <p>There was a resounding 'Yes' in response to both questions.</p>