

Hennock Parish Council meeting 14th March 2017 – agenda item 8.5: Devon Air Ambulance night landing sites

- Cllr Ivan Bridle and Helen Reynolds (Clerk to the Parish Council) met Toby Russell, Community Helipads Development Officer at Devon Air Ambulance, on Wednesday 1st March 2017 with a view to identifying possible night landing sites in the Parish.
- The Air Ambulance requires a flat site 50m x 50m (half the size of a football pitch) for a night landing site.
- Toby believes that the grazing of sheep in the field/potential night landing site will not be a problem but he will have a definitive answer on this point from the Devon Air Ambulance in the next few weeks.
- The grazing of cows and/or horses in the field/potential night landing site would not be acceptable as the cows might react adversely to the helicopter and horses are very unpredictable.
- The location of horses in a nearby field may be an issue and Toby will have a definitive answer on how close horses can be in the next few weeks.
- Some suggestions for sites had been provided by members of the Council ahead of the meeting and some were identified on the day. Below is a list of the sites considered:

Kate Dobson's field in Hennock

- 50m x 50m would take up the flat piece of the camping field and this will encroach on the availability of the land for camping.
- If the site is available, it is possible to make the site "out of bounds" for the height of the holiday season although the availability of a site for the entire year is obviously preferable.
- There is also an issue of overhead wires in part of this field.

Field above the Chapel (top of Chapel Lane), Hennock – Andrew Novak's field

- This field is opposite Kate Dobson's field.
- The field is flat and is of a sufficient size.
- The possible issue with this field is that horses are located nearby.
- Ivan agreed to speak to Andrew Novak about this possibility.

Field at the top of Bell Lane, Hennock – Michael Harvey's field

- This field is used for growing crops.
- It is not suitable because of the overhead wires.

Hennock allotments (unused area) – owned by Hennock Parish Council

- Although the area could be flattened, it is not sufficient in size.

"Rocky field" at Five Lanes, Hennock – Richard Harvey's field

- There is a flat area of 50m x 50m behind Paul Wastell's wall.
- The issue with this field is that it has a number of rocks – it might be possible to remove the rocks within the 50m x 50m although often such rocks are "the tip of the iceberg" and may be much larger than they look. Alternatively, it may be possible to cover the rocks within the 50m x 50m with top soil.
- Helen spoke to Linda Harvey about this possibility on the 1st March and she has agreed to discuss it with Richard.

Football pitch, Teign Village (contact: Paul Edwards, Teign Village Social Club Chairman)

- This is an ideal site which has the required space and is flat.

- The lights for the football pitch may be sufficient which means that only a switching unit would be required, reducing the cost of the equipment to the order of £500.
- A combination lock would be required on the gate so that Devon Air Ambulance can access it.
- There are some power lines on the far side of the football pitch which may be an issue but, if so, these could be buried underground as they are a short stretch between two poles.
- Toby agreed to arrange to revisit this site with his safety manager the following week.
- Ivan has been in touch with Paul Edwards and he has confirmed that he is happy to assist in any way he can and has agreed for his details to be passed on to anyone that is involved with the project (his contact details have been given to Toby Russell).

Fields at Bellamarsh Farm, Chudleigh Knighton

- These fields are unsuitable because of the access.

Pipehouse Lane field, Chudleigh Knighton

- Not suitable because of the overhead cables.

School Field, Chudleigh Knighton

- This is an ideal site which has the required space and is flat.
- A power supply could be taken from the Pre-School building with the Pre-School's consent/agreement.
- There are picnic tables on the edge of the field and there would need to be an agreement from the School that these would not be moved.
- Agreement/consent will be required from the landowner (Fred Willis) the School and Pre-School.
- Toby agreed to revisit this site with his safety manager the following week.

Costs/funding

- The lights, switching unit and column cost in the region of £2700/2900 which needs to be funded by the Parish.
- The cost is likely to be less for the Teign Village site because lighting is already in place and may be sufficient; the cost of the switching unit is approx £500.
- There will also be planning costs which will be the responsibility of the Parish.
- Toby will provide details of grant funders –the funding vehicle will need to be considered as some grant providers will not provide grants to Parish Councils.
- Toby advised that S106 monies have been used to fund the lights & column - £3800 of S106 Apple Tree Close monies is yet to be allocated and the Council could consider using these monies to fund the Chudleigh Knighton site.
- District Councillor Jerry Brook could be asked for his support to fund the Hennock site from his 2017/18 Locality budget. Alternatively, the Council could consider applying for Tesco Bags of Life funding.
- Sibelco UK could be asked for its support to fund the switching unit for the Teign Village site.
- The electricity costs will be minimal as the lights are only turned on in the event that the air ambulance is going to land (Devon Air Ambulance activate the lights by a mobile 'phone SIM card).
- A separate meter (for which there will be a standing charge from the electricity company) can be installed to fund the electricity costs but often a local household/business is happy to pay for the electricity costs as they will be nominal.
- Devon Air Ambulance will pay for the installation costs – the mechanism for this is that the Parish will be provided with a quote and Devon Air Ambulance provides a matching grant offer.

Way forward

- Toby Russell will report back to the Parish Council following a review by his safety manager of Teign Village football pitch and the School Field, Chudleigh Knighton.
- Ivan and Helen will report back to the Council following discussions with landowners of the fields in Hennock.
- In the light of the above, the Clerk, will speak to the landowners, etc, and if they are in agreement, pursue funding options.

Helen Reynolds

Clerk

7th March 2017