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**Tiverton Civic Society Response to the Second Consultation on the  
Masterplan for the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension**

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Tiverton Civic Society note that the masterplanning for the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension has proceeded on the basis of fundamental changes to the highway connections to the west of the proposed EUE. This has meant that the assurances of the Planners in Mid Devon District Council to Blundells School and to residents along Blundells Road west of the school who currently suffer from high traffic noise levels and air pollution approaching the maximum permitted levels, that after the occupation of 200 new dwellings, public access through Blundells School to Horsdon roundabout would be closed and replaced by a western arterial road to the north, have been withdrawn (p.44). The Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document, which included the EUE development, was premised and accepted on the basis of these assurances to the school and to residents.

The Society feel that the new phasing to the altered traffic management and highways provision is untenable and make the following comments on the Masterplan:

### **1. Infrastructure Provision**

1.1 The Society do not agree with the continued public use of Blundells Road through Blundells School to Horsdon Roundabout as the primary road for the EUE.

The Society are deeply concerned about the replacement of the proposed north-westerly primary road with traffic calming measures and 'shared road' usage along Blundells Road through Blundells School. The School takes children from as young as 3 years to the age of eighteen years. Shared road usage with immature children who are still learning about how to cross roads but are unaccompanied by their parents while in school, reflects shamefully on Devon County Council's Highways Department. Shared use of roads is dependent on such children knowing how and when to cross roads, and if imposed before that learning takes place, is likely to lead to a fatality on a road that is already busy and unsuitably sited within a school campus. Yet Devon Highways expect traffic flow to take an increase by 13% at a conservative estimate, based on one car ownership per household. It is likely to be considerably higher than that as many households run two cars.

The concerns of prospective parents over the busy road running through the centre of the school (boarding and dining facilities on one side of the road and classrooms on the other, and with playing fields across yet another road likely to increase in traffic flow, Tidcombe Lane) will almost certainly affect the future viability of the school. These concerns have already been expressed by parents in recent years, and have been a reason why prospective parents have not chosen to send their children to Blundells School. The school is one of Tiverton's major employers and their concerns over the Highway decisions taken in the masterplanning exercise should be taken seriously and acted upon with an alternative, better highways plan for the EUE that enables the school to function safely on the full school site and the new residents to access Tiverton town centre and return home without going through the school.

The Society are strongly of the opinion that the road through *the school should be closed to public traffic and a new primary arterial road created from a position on Blundells Road west of Uplowman road, north to the proposed Junction on the A361.*

The Society are also firmly of the opinion that the *full junction onto the A361 should be completed and open for public use before any house in the EUE is occupied* so that residents on the EUE and east of Blundells School on Blundells Road can access Tiverton town centre *and return to their homes* via the

A361. The opening of the full junction should coincide with the closure of the road through Blundells School, and should serve all employment land and housing development in the EUE.

The Society also feel that Tidcombe Lane between the southern boundary of Old House, Blundells School, and Blundells Road should be closed to traffic, and local traffic rerouted along an upgraded Tidcombe Lane running south to Canal Hill.

1.2 The Society are deeply concerned about the inadequate provision and maintenance of mains sewers in Tiverton, which are already struggling to cope with existing development. The state of the sewers has led to recent incidents of sewage flowing down residential roads and the use of lorries to take waste to the Sewage Farm down Collipriest Lane which is not adequate for the heavy vehicles using it.

The Society feels that ***before any development takes place, the sewage system needs upgrading to take the increased capacity it will inevitably have to bear when development occurs.***

1.3 The Society support the provision of nursery and primary school provision, the neighbourhood shops and community infrastructure.

1.4 The Society support the provision of open space, recreational areas and green infrastructure including community orchards, but are concerned that housing land has been allocated in the south west corner of the EUE on land that drains directly into Tidcombe Fen. Development at this site would effectively destroy the SSSI.

## **2. Spatial Provision**

2.1 The Society agrees with the allocation of employment land in the north west of the EUE adjacent to the A361 and with junction access to the A361.

2.2 The Society cannot support the construction of a Waste to Energy plant on the employment land until further information is available about the impact this would have on local residents. However, the Society are of the view that should full assurances be given that such a plant would not negatively impact on local residents, it should be positioned in the north-west corner of the EUE on the employment land allocation, close to the junction with the EUE and as far away as possible from domestic housing.

2.3 The Society feel that the nursery, primary school, retail and community facilities are sited appropriately for the development.

2.4 The Society feel that proposals for highway access for housing to the north of Blundells Road has not been well thought through, and would like to see access south to Blundells Road through Post Hill Hospital site ***and*** access north to the A361 junction for the Waddeston Park land south and east of Uplowman Road to avoid unnecessary traffic (particularly construction traffic) travelling south along the proposed arterial road from Blundells Road west of Uplowman Road to the A361, then east along Blundells Road and then north again through Post Hill hospital to access the development land. The use of Uplowman Road, Fairway and Putnam Lane for traffic from the new development should be minimised.

2.5 The Society is unhappy with the illustrative designs shown for domestic housing.

2.6 The Society is unhappy with the density of housing proposed in the EUE, and with the 35% proportion of affordable housing + shared equity housing proposed, which is likely to make the development unviable,

and which in these proportions is most unlikely to contribute adequately to the infrastructure costs for the EUE.

2.7 The Society is against development of land adjacent to Tidcombe Fen for housing and feels that the provision of recreation land - community orchards - is appropriate in this location, thus preserving the existing pattern of water runoff into Tidcombe Fen and thereby preserving the flora and fauna of the SSSI.

2.8 The Society are against the provision at least five gypsy and traveller sites on the EUE which is likely to cause social tension and is inappropriate siting for travellers who prefer more rural locations.

2.9 The Society are unhappy with the illustrative design for the neighbourhood centre, and believe significant improvements could be made to this.

2.10 The Society agree with varied densities for housing, with higher density (to include sheltered accommodation) adjacent to the neighbourhood centre.

### **3. Phasing**

3.1 The Society do not agree with the proposed trigger points for access and transport. In particular, the Society feel that completion of a full junction onto the A361 (*contra* p.96) and closure of the road through Blundells School should occur before any new housing is occupied.

3.2 The Society agrees with the phasing for the nursery and primary provision, the retail and the community infrastructure.

3.3 The Society agree with the green infrastructure phasing but urge that the SUDS scheme is planned in advance of development, in conjunction with the upgrading of the sewerage system by South West Water.

