

Mid Devon Green Infrastructure Strategy – Initial Consultation

Response from Cullompton Community Association (CCA)

20th March 2011

Dear Liz

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on priorities for green infrastructure in Cullompton.

On behalf of the CCA I should like to make the following points:

The CCA owns and holds in trust for the people of Cullompton 32 acres of open land located in the centre of town. The land can be accessed by pedestrians directly off the high street and there is also access by road to a small car park which serves the fields.

The land is a mixture of open fields, woodland and wild flower meadows, has a pond and a leat running along one boundary. It is already home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including otters and rare species of trees, and is actively managed by the CCA to encourage as much biodiversity as possible. See our website www.cullompton-cca.org for our Biodiversity Action Plan and the nature surveys carried out by one of our members.

The site is home to the local Football Club and the Cricket and Bowls Clubs. There is also a recently completed and very popular children's play area.

This land is very well used by both townspeople and visitors alike. It is popular for a wide variety of activities – cycling, running, walking the dog, playing sports, or just sitting and admiring a view. As the land is flat and access is easy, it is suitable for wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs.

The land is therefore a valuable asset for the town for the following reasons:

- As a recreational, traffic-free open space contributing to public health and wellbeing
- As an existing habitat for flora and fauna
- As a site where more diverse habitat could be created
- As a flood plain for the town
- As “green lungs” for the town.

As such, it meets 3 of the 4 strategic objectives for the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Unfortunately, this valuable asset is already under threat as it is earmarked as the route for the Eastern Relief Road. 400 people in Cullompton signed letters objecting

to the CCA fields being chosen as the site for the road. The CCA also strongly objected and believes it would be a short-sighted and retrograde step for the town, which runs counter to your own long-term environmental strategies. Money seemed to be the determining factor in making the planning decision, as other possible routes were dismissed as being too expensive.

We hope that you will recognise the importance of this land for the green infrastructure of Cullompton and make its protection a priority of your strategy.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl van der Salm
On behalf of the Cullompton Community Association