

From:
Sent: 30 May 2013 16:56
To: DPD
Subject: Response to Masterplan Option Report



I wish to respond to the Masterplan Options Report. It is extremely disappointing that consultees are expected to provide considered responses when so much important and relevant information is not readily available to them (i.e. various reports relating to landscape and visual impact, air quality, ground conditions and traffic surveys). It is to be hoped that these will be available publicly, and shortly, for consideration by those most affected by these proposals, although it doesn't take much imagination to know that everything covered by the above categories will be detrimentally affected by the proposal.

There are several extremely important issues which are apparent, however, even with the limited information provided:

Need

The proposed level of development, both housing and commercial, is grossly in excess of current requirements, given that so many impacting factors have changed since the inception of the plan in 2006/7. That such a large scale development is based on out of date information and proposed on greenfield land is ill-considered to say the least. The Council will already be aware of a response in relation to this specific proposal from the office of Mr Eric Pickles MP, from which the following is a direct quote and which clearly defines the responsibilities of local councils in this matter:

"It is plain common-sense to regularly review and revise, as necessary, your evidence for such a large new housing and commercial property development. It must be the County and local Councils' responsibility in their constituents' interest to very carefully re-consider the necessity for such a massive development on greenfield land given the very real economic, population and National policy changes that have occurred in recent years and will clearly continue for some years to come."

I would suggest that a complete review of the current needs of the town and the associated traffic issues and requirements is appropriate and should be undertaken urgently before the next consultation stage.

Access/traffic

The proposals for access to and from the development are deeply concerning, given the geographical limitations and financial constraints currently prevailing. Of particular concern is the suggestion that no access from the A361 need be built before any construction work on the development begins. This means that the

currently over-loaded and unsuitable roads, particularly Blundell's Road and Uplowman Road, will be required to take vastly increased amounts of traffic, both domestic and construction and, eventually, additional traffic from the new development. Realistically, traffic calming and space-sharing modifications which are suggested for Blundell's Road will only exacerbate an already extremely difficult traffic issue, particularly during the school run times. There is no room to accommodate a dedicated cycle lane all the way down Blundell's Road from the new development to the Horsdon Roundabout and negotiating that road even now on a cycle is extremely hazardous and is not an appropriate route for schoolchildren, or anyone else, to have to negotiate.

If construction traffic and, ultimately, increased domestic traffic from the new development, are required to use Uplowman Road, then serious accidents will inevitably result. The road is extremely narrow in parts, with blind bends. Property owners already experience difficulty egressing their driveways because of limited, or in some cases, no visibility, and a lot of farm contractors using very large tractors and hauling large farm machinery are amongst those who travel at inappropriate speeds along this road, making turning in and out of driveways even more hazardous. If this road is to become the main access to part of the proposed development, then traffic calming measures must be put in place to slow traffic down.

Employment land

The need for further employment premises is questioned. Since the plan was originally conceived, the downturn in the economic situation of this country has impacted heavily on all areas, and the Lowman Way Business Park is not fully utilised as it is. Heavy industrial-type businesses would be wholly inappropriate in the area not only because they would be surrounded by a large school and high quality housing but because of the significant environmental impact it would have both in terms of air quality and noise pollution.

Schooling

Can you confirm that the Education Authority been consulted and that funds will be available to upgrade the current state secondary facility in the town to accommodate all the new pupils who will require to use it? How does the Council or developer propose that children living on the development will get to their secondary school, which is on the opposite side of the town? All possible routes would involve a journey which will either be too far to walk, too dangerous to cycle, or require a parent to drive them to school, the latter option obviously having a significantly negative impact on the environmental credentials of the development.

Miscellaneous

The spurious 'Vision for Post Hill – 2035' should have no place in a factual document, is insulting to consultees' intelligence and gives, in any case, a 'rose-

tinted spectacle' view of a development that is completely unrealistic. The Council should stick to facts, not fiction.

It will be interesting to see what adjustments to the scheme will be made in the light of the initial consultation process. The Council should not underestimate the strength of local feeling about the scale of this ill-considered proposal, and the impact that it will have on the local residents and the local environment.

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