

## Tiverton EUE – Response to Masterplanning Options Report



### 1. Balance between employment and housing

We consider the original proposal of 95000 to 130000m2 employment floor space as excessive. The proposal of 39000m2 with 1250 dwelling seems a reasonable balance. We consider this space should be targeted for units providing high employment per m2 with highly skilled/well paid jobs.

We consider the option to use J27 should be part of the overall plan with large industrial factories and warehousing located in that area. Better that some of the population of Tiverton travels (or buses) to J27 – 6 miles- than to Exeter/Taunton (16miles), or Barnstaple as many do at present. The scheduling of employment and housing for Tiverton is most important to avoid creating satellites for Taunton, Exeter and Barnstaple.

### 2. Comment on ‘Vision’

We feel insulted by it. It adds nothing to the debate on how best the proposed new development can be integrated into the existing.

However, that is not to say that a degree of ‘long term vision’ should not be brought into the planning process. When Westex was developed over one hundred years ago it was planned and built to a high standard and the properties in King and Queen Street remain popular today.

### 3 Masterplan and Environment

The emphasis of industrial to the North of the site should gradually give way to the rural setting of the South with no housing to the South of West Manley Lane and this area used for amenities compatible with the Tidcombe Fen, GWC and Railway Walk. Visual aspect of industrial units from Blundell’s Road should be considered as high priority because of the proximity to Blundell’s School and as one main entrance to Tiverton.

It is **essential** that independent surveys of the whole area are carried out (West Manley Lane Conservation Group have set the standard in this regard to the South of the site and their surveys are available publicly on their website). Cast iron protection should be set in place for areas regarded as sensitive/important **before the Masterplan is produced and well before any development begins.**

Our vision would be to retain hedgerows and trees and develop around these and ensure a rural environment as befits Tiverton and Mid Devon is planned.

The known local flooding areas, not to mention the risk to Bickleigh, Stoke Canon and Exeter, make it essential that the development does not create even greater run off. To the south the large area of surface water which will drain to the Ailsa Brook and hence the Tidcombe Fen will require careful control to ensure flow rates match the present pattern that sustains the Fen. The proposals in item 3.6 need to be closely adhered to. Fields to the South of West Manley Lane,

already subject to flooding, could be used to further enhance the SUDS. This could have the effect of improving the green corridor of the Railway footpath.

Developers must be bound to provide a link to the A361 at an early stage (this is more broadly covered in point 5)

#### **4. Energy Needs**

Too little information on the the position and type of Waste Disposal Unit has been given to date for anyone to make a judgement about it at this stage.

The pollution risk close to Blundell's School and a new population area suggest J27 would be a better option particularly with the suggestion that waste will be fed to it from N Devon and Somerset. Factories would have a year long demand for energy whereas housing only requires winter heating.

#### **5. Traffic**

The importance of providing a link to the A361 at an early stage is essential whether this is financed privately or from the public purse.

Those who suggest otherwise need to walk the footpath from Horsdon roundabout to Post Hill. Even with the present 'light traffic' racing past at the kerb side it is an unnerving experience. The thought of many twenty ton plus lorries rumbling past hundreds of school pupils at Blundells is a recipe for disaster. The risk to pupils, even with the suggested traffic calming, is unacceptable. The adverse effect that this might have on pupil intake could also impact on the viability of a long term major employer in the area.

The electricity poles at the path edge between Horsdon and Blundell's School illustrate the risk with two showing lorry damage and three recently replaced through excessive lorry damage.

Phasing items 3.3a and b should be mandatory whatever option is adopted.

#### **6. Type and location of housing**

Given that the largest predicted population increase is going to be in the 60+ age range (see Devon County predictions) the design and layout of residential areas needs to reflect this. Generally option 2 provides a reasonable balance particularly if the 'green links and spaces' are enhanced and integrated with existing features such as West Manley Lane and the Waggoner's track.

The area of housing development to the South of West Manley Lane encroaches on the flood plain area and will impact adversely on the Railway Walk and the views from the GWC (as would development on the skyline viewed from these amenities).

## **7. Employment Workspace**

This has been covered in our response to Qu 1. The area designated in Option 2 would seem to be the practical and logical area for industrial units. It is essential that the progress of employment creation keeps pace with the housing development to ensure the take up of local employment.

## **8.Green Space and Recreation**

The green links as illustrated in Option 2 would be beneficial provided they are enhanced with tree planting and use the existing protected hedgerows. In general this option gives greater protection to West Manley Lane. We would prefer to see no construction to the South of the lane with the designated area being used for recreational/park/woodland with extra tree planting and landscaping to give an accessible buffer to the Railway /footpath and GWC.

The use of SUDS arrangements along the North side of WMLane to the East would further enhance the protection to the flora and fauna of the lane.

The 'State of Nature' report should be considered before the Masterplan is produced. Quote " Can't take away a bit of the jigsaw without losing the whole picture". The intricate pattern of nature, built up over hundreds of years in this area deserves careful consideration and planning to best preserve it for future generations.

## **9.Hub**

A local centre with shopping facilities and a multi-purpose Community Hall with adjacent sporting facilities is vital. Again the potential age ranges using these facilities need to influence the overall design. A local surgery (or outreach) would be an asset for all ages.

## **10. Emerging Options**

Broadly speaking our preference is Option 2.

The area in the North East Corner could be more extensively used with suitable sound/tree screening to the A361. Similar screening of the residential areas bounding the proposed employment areas should be added. We favour the incorporation of WMLane into the Green Link Corridors and the use of SUDS protection areas to protect its boundaries.

We would prefer the omission of the residential area to the South of WMLane with tree/shrub planting to further enhance the green corridor of the Railway Footpath. This area would also provide suitable SUDS protection to Tidcombe Fen and a possible site for a sewage pumping station which is likely to be required for the southern area of the EUE .

The positioning, layout and tree planting of the Green Links and spaces will have a major impact on the view from the GWC and with careful planning could

greatly reduce the impact of the 'concrete jungle' which will become the Northern Aspect for some two miles of the Canal. This is the most Tourist sensitive section of the whole canal, particularly with the use of the Horse-drawn barge.

## **11. Scope and MP document**

The WMLCG and James Wyeth from the Civic Society have both brought into question the population figures used to predict the requirement of an Urban extension on this scale. We still think the EUE is too large for employment or residential use. The prospect of employment land at J27 and residential land in Willand reinforces this view. In this respect we think that the land to the South of West Manley Lane should not be used.

Given that Option 1 and 2 drawings are only 'indicative' (the word used by the planners at the exhibition – which is rather worrying when we are being asked to comment), it is difficult to come to a firm conclusion about the 'better' option. In that the EUE is going to happen Option 2 (in its present form) is generally more acceptable.

## **12 Comments**

We are being asked to comment on/support the essential Masterplan. It is important that once approved it is rigidly enforced and that attempts by Developers to evade the details of the plan are strongly resisted. Better facilities should be provided to view and assess the Masterplan at the next consultation. This should be staffed with people able to respond to the many questions it is likely to generate. Whilst layouts of individual residential areas may not be part of the masterplan it is important that roads, paths, hubs, green links and centres etc are all clearly and precisely defined.

Details of the criteria for dwellings density and percentage of affordable homes should be given for each area.

**Survey and study reports should be carried out and published before the next (& final) consultation.**

13 Member of the Public

14 We do live within the boundary of the designated site.

Mr & Mrs David Collier

Chapel Anthony

West Manley Lane

Tiverton EX16 4NH