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3.6.13



TIVERTON URBAN EXTENSION – a consultation

Comments on behalf of Mr.RC and Mrs ED Greensmith, 13 Pomeroy Road.

General Comments

1. We note from the MDDC web site that this is an “initial” consultation: any proposals must therefore be genuinely open to review – even substantial review if there is sufficient demand from those affected. There needs to be considerable flexibility if “localism” is to have any meaning.
2. The public consultation via exhibitions was much less effective than it should have been. Many of those attending found that neither Council officers nor representatives of the owners/developers were able to respond to very fundamental questions.
3. The exhibitions were also seriously flawed because the copy maps distributed to the public, and purporting to illustrate “Option 1” and “Option 2” were unsuitable to allow a proper comparison to be made. For example-: they were entirely different in all characteristics – scale, colouring, notation etc. The map used to illustrate “Option 1” failed to show the existing development off Tidcombe Lane, and the relationship of the development to that. The “Option 2” map should have been presented in similar format to the “Option 1” map.
4. We support the comments made elsewhere that the proposals are presented in such a broad, general way that – in many respects, without supporting detail, it is difficult to give specific responses. So we make (below) a number of mainly general comments, but reserve the right to comment more widely and in detail when further (hopefully more specific) proposals are brought forward.

Infrastructure

1. We share the widespread view that essential infrastructure must precede any development (except perhaps individual plots in suitable locations). We have in mind especially – highways; water supply; energy; telephone and broadband; sewerage and land drainage. To contemplate the possible development of as many as 200 new dwellings before work is even started on essential infrastructures would be sheer madness in these locations, and wholly unacceptable to residents. We know that we speak for many in saying this; and we comment below on specific issues relating to Uplowman Road.
2. We see from the published documents that issues relating to Blundell's Road are being considered. Our experience from frequent use of Blundell's Road leads us to emphasise the crucial importance of avoiding the imposition of any additional traffic on that road between Hartnoll farm and the Horsden Roundabout. The section through Blundell's School is dangerous, and nothing should be allowed which would prejudice the school's ability to offer a safe environment for its' pupils. This is not just a simple matter of impact upon a single property ownership. The school's importance to the economy of the town and area can too easily be underestimated, and we endorse the comments made by the Civic Society on this issue. In making this comment we emphasise that neither of us has any personal interest – direct or indirect - in Blundell's School.
3. In the provision of essential infrastructure, why should the established residents in this area, who have chosen to select a location of this character, be treated less well than the residents of Cranbrook New Town (who almost seem to be being “bribed” to go there!)?

Character of the Development

1. With others we welcome the recent relaxation of requirements relating to density, and feel that we now have a right to expect that new development should be sympathetic to the type of dwellings already in existence with respect to house type, garden size and outlook.
2. As is pointed out in the submission made by Dr. Christopher Bell, properties in this area have long been bought and sold with premiums paid for location, and new developments should not be destructive of that practice. High density development on (e.g.) the Moorhayes Estate attracts much criticism, and the mistakes of that should not be repeated here. We endorse the comment made by the Civic Society – *“The vision is facile and an insult to present residents”*

Uplowman Road

1. We referred above to the need to provide proper highway access before any significant development takes place served by Uplowman Road. This is not merely “desirable”, but “essential”. The road is already dangerous and incapable of safely absorbing traffic generated by additional homes. Public transport on Blundell’s Road (only accessed by walking, without the safety of any pavements at all, to the end of Uplowman Road) is limited – so calculations for resident-generated traffic must be based on at least two cars per household. Preceding that, new development would generate a more or less continuous stream of contractors’ and other vehicles going to and from the site.
2. Whether making an essential journey to the end of the road to reach the bus stop, or to post a letter, or to walk a dog; or a less essential journey to walk for exercise or pleasure (some “pleasure”), those who do walk along Uplowman Road find that the succession of bends make it difficult to chose positions which give at least a limited view in each direction. Even so, when there is traffic approaching in both directions, the poor pedestrian often has to pull right over, almost into the hedge or onto a roadside bank.
3. Increased traffic on Uplowman Road would militate against walking which public authorities are anxious to promote. This would be particularly hard for some who need to walk safely for health reasons.
4. For vehicles emerging from Pomeroy Road, the exit to Uplowman is **already hazardous**. If vehicles on Uplowman Road are passing or preparing to pass they necessarily have to drive close (very close) to their left hand sides. We have to “nose” our car out very slowly until we can get an adequate view to the right. Frequently there are vehicles approaching at speed (in some cases clearly in excess of 30mph) from our right. In those cases, if we were to put our car immediately into an adequate viewing position, there would – inevitably – be an accident.
5. Any advice suggesting that additional traffic can safely be accommodated on Uplowman Road must be wrong. We wonder if those giving such advice have ever walked the road (or tried to turn out of Pomeroy Road) at a time when traffic levels are “median” or “high”. Has such advice been given after actual experience over time, or after interviews with those who know – or has it emerged from a theoretical “desk exercise” based on maps, measurements, and traffic counts (taken at a conveniently “quiet” time)?

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