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Masterplanning Consultation Forward Planning Mid Devon District Council Phoenix House Tiverton EX16 6PP



Mr J.A. Morrison 29, Spencer Drive Tiverton Devon EX16 4QB

28 May 2013

Dear Sir / Madam,

64/3712

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the Tiverton Urban Extension, essentially as a member of the public living in Tiverton.

Having attended the public exhibition at the Pannier Market on 14 May and since then consulted the Masterplan Options Report online, I am astounded at the sheer scale of the planned development. It is clear that both options tendered represent an unmitigated transformation of the rural landscape into what is essentially a small town.

For the past 12 years I have enjoyed the area (around Post Hill, Manley and Warnicombe Lanes, the canal and the old railway line) on a recreational basis, most regularly in terms of running for fitness and pleasure. I receive huge satisfaction from running through what is fundamentally a rural setting.

I have never been involved in any national or local campaign to save the countryside, but I am a member of the RSPB and the Devon Birdwatching and Preservation Society, and I enjoy birdwatching in the Manley Lane area. This does prejudice me in favour of wildlife conservation, especially in light of the recent *State of Nature* report, which highlights the decline of so many species of flora and fauna in Devon, with farmland species at particular risk.

However, I also recognise that there must be a balance between the demands of human activity and habitation, and the demands of wildlife. Unfortunately, I cannot see anything in the Tiverton Urban Extension that comes anywhere near establishing the correct balance.

There are so many components that make this such a special place - its beauty, its tranquillity, its importance as a wildlife habitat, its worth as a resource for recreation, its tangible historic significance. These are all elements that contribute to a sense of 'quality of life' which is so enhanced by living in a rural location, so close to open countryside. This quality of life will be severely eroded by the Tiverton Urban Extension. Under this scheme, the character of the locality will no longer be of working farmland and country lanes flanked by rich hedgerows. Instead it will be of sprawling transport networks, housing estates and urban units. The rural qualities, the unique pleasures of this landscape will be lost for ever - for everyone. I urge you not to deny us this, and I urge you not to deny it to future generations.

I do not suggest that there should be no new housing, but any development should be minimal and thoroughly measured. The scale of the Tiverton Urban Extension is unacceptable. It is arguable as to whether Tiverton needs further

expansion residentially, industrially or commercially, let alone a new town on its doorstep, and there is a debate to be had over what kind of community Post Hill would become; this is not the place for such a discussion. However, I find it hard to understand why local politicians and councillors appear to support the proposals; in fact, it seems a gross betrayal of those who voted for them to look after our interests.

In Section 1.4 of the Tiverton Urban Extension Option Report it describes a 'Vision of Post Hill in 2035'. Its tone is regrettable and extremely misleading. It ignores the interests of the people who already live here, in favour of people who do not. It discusses the 'outstanding natural assets' and 'genuinely rural identity' whereas these are exactly the elements that the Tiverton Urban Extension would destroy.

In conclusion, any proposed development must, at the very least, make every effort to maintain the rural integrity of the area, preserve the unique quality of life for current residents and future generations, and to encourage the appropriate habitats that allow wildlife to prosper.

I urge you to rethink your whole policy on the Tiverton Urban Extension and to reject both proposed options in favour a much reduced plan for development.

It is in the interest of Mid Devon and the people who live here for emphasis to be placed on limiting unnecessary expansion into our precious countryside, not encouraging it.

Your sincerely,

James Morrison