

Dear Sir / Madam,



TIVERTON MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above proposal.

While I do not reside in Tiverton, having looked at the broad over view, as a resident of Willand I feel bound to comment. Is the current MDDC Planning Department sufficiently skilled to deal with what is a significant far reaching planning proposal. I ask the question in the vain hope that the appalling planning mistakes of earlier Planning Consultations all of which resulted in the approval of some 1200 new private homes being built in Willand between 1984 and 2001, are not repeated should this important Tiverton proposal be approved. Also mindful of recent Planning Committee meetings and I cite the list of Appeal Decisions that have been upheld of late, is the current Planning Committee adequately trained to fully comprehend and understand this massive undertaking, all very necessary if the outcome is a secured balance?.

My deep seated concerns are that as in the case of Willand, where there was absolutely no enhanced provision for much needed day to day increased infrastructure provision. No mention of, or any attempt to upgrade the then small Primary School, likewise no thoughts as to the then as now, totally inadequate medical facilities / services. No Community funding to bring about better provisions for the youth of the Village as well as unbelievable as it may sound today, absolutely no provision at all for Affordable / RSL Housing.

That the village has through its own efforts achieved three separate extensions to the school, that the village has managed to fund a new Pre School Building for the increased toddlers while at the same time it raised funds to extend the Youth Club, including the opportunity to improve the equipment to meet the changing demands of our young people. All of these enhancements were achieved long after the various developers had done what they do best, avoid there wider responsibilities.

More by luck than judgement, as a Village we did with the aid of the then MDDC Planning Manager albeit at the eleventh hour, managed to get agreement to amend the very ancient "Outline" application so that it included 11 Affordable homes. Eleven out of twelve hundred houses, hardly your 40%. To make matters worse some time into the early 2000s it was agreed to sell off a redundant MDDC depot in Park Street Willand, the sale price would be at a reduced rate, on condition via a legally binding S 106 agreement that the build would be of Affordable / RSL properties. The build when complete was then the subject of behind closed doors discussions between the developer and MDDC, not via the MD Planning Committee, the outcome of which resulted in a done deal that allowed the sales to be of Private homes, again no Affordable provision.

You as Officers may well be asking what is this guy on about, the point is that approved development plans can and are constantly revised and amended especially where larger developments are involved. That often results in serious untold damage to what was a full and well designed set of Plans, by the watered down as well as tweaked to suit the contractor. As we know from experience this is all too often to the detriment of the originally agreed development plan. My desire is to ensure that these clever and decisive moves by would be developers are so designed so as not allowed to the original concept to be wrecked or under mined, so safe guarding agreed master plan.

Given that background history, I am aware of the need to look to the future, to take on board the future generation and its needs, whose task it will be make provisions that will safe guard and protect Devon's unique heritage. In this instance the lessons learnt from Willand must be at the forefront of this all important consultation process..

So does the Market town of Tiverton actually require this massive expansion of new houses? and equally do Mid Devon require yet more Industrial Estates, especially when such site as exist across the MDDC do in the main stand half empty?

What type of Housing Development is envisaged, and what are the perceived percentages in terms of Affordable / RSL, also how is it envisaged that these specialist homes be integrated into the overall housing

development programmes ?

Having read the local press I do have misgivings about what is at this moment in time rumoured when it comes to the provision for improved education facilities, the concerns equally relate to future medical /doctor surgeries. Improved road networks, better public transport provision, these are just the tip of the Infrastructure enhancement programme and as such they must feature high on any new planning agenda.

Given the massive demands involved , I have to ask, do we need to turn Glorious Devon into a concrete jungle in order to attract the masses, which then begs the question, just where are the new peoples going to come from. Does rural Tiverton really need to be converted to a massive New Town, is there a real as well as proven need, if so where is the evidence. Or I ask myself is this so called Master Plan just a political ploy by the existing District Council to comply with the mess in Westminster that calls itself Central Government? The possible development needs to be open ended and subject to careful consideration, the implications require serious in depth scrutiny and deep seated investigation so as to secure the overall fabric of the area. Planning despite what the developers may propose, is not just about bricks and mortar, Planning is very much more, its about people and community.

If I can cite Willand again, at the moment we have an application for 42 new homes, the Education contribution is split, £15K to Willand Primary School, which incidentally is already over subscribed pupil wise. While £110K is to go th Cullompton education facilities to off set the various developers short fall on the numerous building programmes in progress. The education short fall it appears is due to the said developers having to fund improvements to a Motorway junction? Such abuse of the Planning System is wholly unacceptable.

Will this consultation take into account the massive impact that the construction work will have on existing residents and the surrounding area? Does it include provision to deal with and manage the significant traffic issues, especially visiting public from adjacent villages who rely of the towns services? There is also the impact of construction traffic and the parking provision for the work force within the various developments, couple with that conditions surrounding, among others the hours of work, along with restrictions on weekend and Bank Holidays working and Road Cleansing?

With such a massive development it needs to be carefully balanced in order to meet with, and satisfy, not just the developers needs but as pointed out above, the important human rights and its associated safeguards to protect the existing Tiverton towns folk

If we are to have such a development, it is absolutely vital that the LPA avoid the errors that dogged Willand. tTo achieve that it must include the correct level of essential services, Education upgrades, Improved Medical / Doctors facilities Increased Community enhancements and Public Transport needs, all of which are just a the tip of the very big ice berg.

While Planning applications are not subject to Scrutiny, I am reminded that the basic elements which make up the overall Planning Guidance, Policies and Regulations can be investigated. With that in mind I trust that every aspect of the plan will only be agreed once it has been totally explored and its impact considered.

Yours faithfully .

E.D.Dennis