

138/3749



Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension. Masterplanning : Options Report.

Dealing with the questions and specific points in the report I comment as follows: -

Question One.

This question can only be answered intelligently by those who are competent and knowledgeable enough to predict the socio/economic trends in Tiverton and regionally in the years to come. Some doubt has been cast on the data that was assessed at the time the Local Plans Part 1 and 2 were adopted. I urge a reassessment of the data.

1.2 b.

There is no subsequent indication of the scale or location of the pitches for gypsies and travellers.

1.2 g.

I do not understand the reference to "air quality improvements". Surely the air quality before the enactment of the EUE is unlikely to be "improved" by whatever is done or built on the urban extension. Please explain this.

1.2 h.

When is this "agreed strategy" going to be seen by the public?

Question Two.

How can one be confident that the comments made here will be achieved? For example : -

"This has been innovatively designed to be contemporary, comfortable and in keeping with local traditions, while minimising impact to the environment."

Reference is made to "Post Hill stores and post office".

Can one be assured that there *will* be a post office or is this a pipe dream?

What can one understand by the words "community orchards"?

2.1

"Landscape Visual Impact"

Any form of street lighting would seriously contribute to light pollution.

2.2

Ecological Appraisal.

I do not understand how "ecological enhancement" can be achieved from what is there at the moment.

Noise Assessment.

From direct experience the current noise level is unacceptable and assurance should be given that "noise impacts should be mitigated". This must read 'noise impacts (levels) **WILL** be mitigated' and details agreed in advance how this will be achieved.

Air quality.

In the long run the 'Energy from waste' proposal is of major significance and absolute guarantees must be given that any deterioration in air quality will lead to plant closure.

Transport Assessment.

This subject is my major concern.

In particular it is totally unacceptable that the north east area is developed relying on the two current access roads, that is Uplowman Road and the road past the entrance to the Golf Club. It is imperative that the access is created onto the A361 or via the 'gap' now occupied by the Post Hill 'Hospital'.

The possibility that 200 dwellings would be built in the north east area with no change to the present road access is horrendous in extreme.

Topography and landscape sensitivity.

The visual impact from the Barton Hill area is going to be substantial. A large and pleasant farmland area is going to be covered with industrial roofing or urban development. Night time light pollution is inevitable.

Site Topography.

A major feature for the houses on the north side of the Fairway is their view of the range of hills to the north. Absolute guarantees should be given that the development of that land should be height restricted in order to minimise that impact. This would also limit the "potential visibility --- for the locally elevated areas around Post Hill".

Cultural heritage and archaeology.

I do not understand the comment about the Long Barrow SAM.

Existing access and movement.

"Any development ---- should make the most of the existing movement and transport network"

If this means putting extra vehicular pressure on Uplowman Road then this is totally unacceptable. The road is narrow with many house exits directly into the line of traffic. Construction traffic should be banned from this road.

Summary of constraints and developable area.

Point 1.

"Consider the visual impact of development on higher ground" should include the north east land.

Developing Post Hill.

Emerging key issues.

It worries me greatly that the combination of the point made in 3.2 "This work is suggesting that the lower amount of both housing and employment space is likely to be provided -----"

This combined with 3.4 "This information suggests that more development can be accommodated before the highway improvements are provided----"

This is 'manna from Heaven' for the developers who will grasp this comment to maximise their profits with least infrastructure investment. In other words the worst of all worlds will be the outcome and the Council will fail to impose the environmental components of the whole scheme. The least that will be achieved will be many, many years of degradation of the environment and the life style of local residents.

Question Three.

It strikes me that beyond keeping all mature trees the proposals do nothing to keep existing environmental features which surely must be open agricultural land.

Question Four.

I approve the inclusion of an energy centre but if this means transporting domestic waste from far and wide then the need for direct connections in both directions – east and west- on the A361 becomes of paramount importance. Likewise protection of the environment from 'flotsam and jetsam' (Seagulls?) from delivery vehicles and any effluvia from the works will be a major concern.

Options for access.

The Purple junction looks very land wasteful in that the areas inside the 'B' would presumably be of no use. It also involves 2 T junctions. This means that heavy lorries will be braking, changing gears and accelerating within close proximity of the residential areas to the west of Uplowman Road. Additionally the Purple Junction involves a serious incursion into land north of the A361.

The discarded Green Junction has the merit that the major access to the whole site could have hugged the A361 in the area of non development (because of noise) and branched firstly into the north east development land and then into the centre of the whole development. The bridge replacement cost at the green junction is surely a good investment to achieve that. What evidence is before the public that the existing bridge is inadequate?

I strongly support total prevention of any increased traffic through Blundell's School area at any stage.

Question five.

Emphatically highway improvements including the link to the A361 should be included in the first phase of development.

3.12

This comment on Heathcoat Way does not make sense to me. Surely the roundabout by MacDonald's is the best point of distribution. Both Red routes involve T junctions which inevitably will be seriously less effective in combining the flow of traffic.

3.14

Who is going to provide the technical evidence mentioned and will it be open to public scrutiny?

Developing Post Hill. Option One.

This plan appears to show no westward access to the A361.

Of major concern is the access route to area 5 which connects this large area of new housing back via Uplowman Road on a very narrow and difficult bend. This is totally unacceptable. Access via the 'hospital gap' is the only alternative which also has problems and disadvantages. The solution to this problem has to be the Green Junction as mentioned above.

Option Two.

In general I find this a very confusing presentation which raises more questions than answers.

I do not approve the location of the Primary School nor the Local centre much preferring the layout of Option One.

Green infrastructure principles.

This appears to show a green link via the 'hospital gap' which I think would be good given that this is also a possible road access to the north east development area.

This option also appears to indicate the Pink Route for both a road and Greenway corridor. Is this correct?

I find this plan difficult to understand. What do the big green arrows on the right indicate?

Question Six.

Houses with character and with a variety of style appropriate to the location.

Question Seven.

Provision of facilities that will be taken up and not add to the list of unoccupied industrial developments in Devon. Is there any need at all?

Question Eight.

If land is not going to be farmed then there must be long term arrangements for maintenance so that it does not revert to weed infested scrubland.

Question Nine.

I am happy with the location shown in Option One. A Post Office has been mentioned which would be good.

Question Ten.

I prefer Option One but with the access to the North East development via the 'hospital gap' and to include the Pink route.

Question Eleven.

I challenge the basis on which this scheme has been passed in the first place.

How many unoccupied industrial facilities are there in the region?

How many unoccupied houses are there in Tiverton?

I do not believe the EUE should proceed at all.

However should it proceed I reluctantly approve of the plan but only with many serious requirements being met by the developers and in particular regarding the timing of the creation of the infrastructure and access to the A361. It is imperative that the relief road should be built to avoid any increase of traffic through Blundell's and Horsden roundabout.

Question Thirteen.

I am a member of the public.

Question Fourteen.

I live close to the EUE area and also own a house within the area which is currently let.

I find it very strange that the public have only been given until the end of May to respond while all of the relevant reports and documentation are not yet fully available. Surely this must make the exercise lack legality.



Tiverton East Urban Extension

Planning Policy Background

What is the rationale behind the Adopted Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1) by the Mid Devon District Council (MDDC)?

Over the plan period i.e. 2007 -2026, 145 dwellings and 6000m² of employment floor space per annum equates to 2,755 dwellings and 114,000m² of employment floor space in total. Even if building does not start until next year, the committed annual building would involve some 1885 dwellings and 78,000m² of employment floor space over the 13 years from 2014 to 2026. Over the last few years there has been a considerable number of houses on the market, including what is termed affordable housing and, although maintaining a supply of readily available homes is necessary, the number of new dwellings proposed seems excessive.

What information was employed to support the need for this large number of dwellings and employment land? Was it based on a genuine need to provide housing for the people in the area or was it planned for people from other counties? Or, was it to comply with central government dictate to revive the construction industry irrespective of real local needs?

It has been suggested that some of these dwellings may be sold to Councils of densely populated areas who will then move large numbers of people into the area. Whilst the movement of individual people/families into and out of any area is more likely to enhance the environment rather than mar it, moving large numbers of people from one area, solely on the basis that there are insufficient houses (or work) available in their chosen home towns, is likely to cause much resentment from both the indigenous and incoming people.

Since the Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (Local Plan Part 2) was adopted in 2010, has a review of the housing and employment needs of the people of Tiverton been implemented in the light of the economic changes during the last few years? Surely any proposed development should meet the needs of the people and be based on sound up to date evidence regarding that which is currently available and that which is required. It is understood that there are approximately 1035 uninhabited houses including 65 uninhabitable ones and that there are normally in the region of 270 uninhabited commercial properties in the area. We should be using these unused properties before building more particularly when it involves using good agricultural land.

Use of existing uninhabited dwelling houses and commercial buildings would substantially reduce the number of new-build properties required and, therefore, reduce the amount of agricultural land that would be removed from food production. It would also allow for less intensive building and houses of similar character to the existing properties in the area to be built as well as affordable housing. That, of course, assumes that the Adopted Core Strategy figures are correct. If a more

recent, up to date review of the housing and employment land requirements reveals a much reduced need then it is possible that no new-build would be necessary.

Employment/Housing Balance

An appropriate balance between employment and housing development can only be assessed if the number of people requiring employment and homes and the type of employment that will be available is known. An estimate could be made if, either there is a known population of people who will require houses and work or there is known existing employment available. Is the MDDC already aware of the former?

A Vision for Post Hill Illustrative Year - 2035

Has an up to date evaluation of the current housing and employment needs taken place?

Is the need for such a large number of dwelling houses and employment space either in the near or distant future truly known or is this proposed Vision for Post Hill-2035 alone creating this need? If the latter do the people of the areas involved have the same or similar vision? Have they been involved in developing this vision? Have they been consulted regarding the type of housing, density of housing, road access, etc; or was the MDDC Adopted Core Strategy and the Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document adopted with minimal notification and discussion with the local people?

Careful consideration of all aspects stated under this heading should take place with residents and other people affected by this proposed development prior to its approval and commencement. There is much concern that this will not occur and a 'fait accompli' attitude will be presented to the people.

Type and density of housing should be considered not only to minimise the visual impact but also to minimise any undesirable impact on the quality of life of the existing residents.

Options for Access and Phasing of Development

Great consideration should be given to the provision of access for this new development not only for the safety of the pedestrian public and free movement of the traffic but also to minimise the impact on the environment generally, including noise and motor exhaust pollution. It appears quite obvious that the existing roads providing access to Tiverton, Halberton and Uplowman are unsuitable as access for this new development for public health and safety reasons. This is due to the increased traffic through residential areas that the development will incur and the nature of these roads in terms of size and configuration. The lack of footpaths, increased pedestrian need and the proximity of houses leading directly on to Uplowman Road and Halberton will exacerbate an already dangerous situation. Free movement of traffic would be compromised resulting in more vehicles leaving the area via Halberton.

These roads should not be used for construction vehicles due to the aforementioned reasons plus the increased noise and danger that such traffic would present. In view of this it is of paramount importance that no development takes place until new access roads have been constructed. The need for the avoidance of large vehicles moving through residential areas has been identified on

page 19 Section 3.15 3 of the EUE Options report which makes the comment that “ --- locations that are directly accessible from the A361 ---” to “ --- to avoid lorries needing to gain access through residential areas. “

Development should not take place at all costs as the cost one day may prove fatal. Should a member of the general public compromise the health and safety and quality of life of the people in the way that “Phasing of Development” 3.3 a. and b. indicates they would probably be taken to court.

Also, the ‘phased development’ proposed indicates that, if following the initial dwelling house building no further development takes place, the access roads including the A361 link will not be built thus permanently leaving the existing roads with much increased traffic.

The proposed junction on the A361 is likely to cause considerable noise not from fast moving traffic but from slow vehicles changing gear, both up and down, and air brakes. This may only be appreciated by those who have tried to sleep in hotels near traffic lights. Every effort should be made to minimise this noise.

Enhancement of Blundell’s Road

What is meant by the ‘environmental enhancement of Blundell’s Road? Does it need enhancing? Any increased traffic along that road is very unlikely to enhance it!

Type of Housing

Where the proposed development is in the same vicinity as existing houses the house type and size of gardens, etc, should be similar in character to the existing ones. New dwellings which would compromise the views of existing ones should be in the form of single story homes, e.g. bungalows to lessen the undesirable impact. Both strategies will help to preserve the environment that the residents in those areas required when they purchased their properties and have lived in since. Likewise, both may be considered an attempt to lessen the effects on the quality of life to which they have been accustomed and which surely they have a right to maintain. It has been suggested that there will be a considerable reduction in the price of existing houses in the area. Therefore, any attempt to minimise this effect will be of great importance to the residents concerned.

Affordable homes which, by definition, are likely to be smaller and have smaller gardens could be built in areas not immediately adjacent to existing ones. However, high density housing should be avoided as this will be detrimental and out of keeping with the existing environment.

Quite rightly pitches should be made available for gypsies and travellers as they have every right to their way of living as those in more conventional homes. However, as they seem to prefer to live in less built up areas they may prefer a site which is not so near to a housing development. Perhaps their views on this should be sought before any decisions are made regarding the site for the pitches.

Type and Location of Employment

The nature of employment will depend largely on the businesses prepared to provide employment in the area. However, noise and traffic levels should be strongly considered and only office type or similar business activity should be in the region of residential areas.

Option Preference

Some of the illustrations presented by the two options are difficult to understand particularly with regard to the greenways, corridors and road lay outs and directions. This combined with the stated fact that further work is needed, for instance, where only partial investigations have been completed prevents any preference at this stage.

Finally, the Master Planning: Options Report will have involved an extensive amount of investigation, and planning, etc. and, consequently, will have taken a considerable time to compile. In view of this why did the MDDC allow so little time for members of the public to read, assimilate, investigate and discuss the report and write a response? Many people who work do not have the time to do this in such a short time. After all, apparently it has been on the cards for a number of years. Was this a deliberate ploy so that fewer people would be able to consider and respond properly to the report in the time given?

A Member of the Public

Live elsewhere in Tiverton but own a property within the Tiverton EUE