

---

**From:** Anthony Richards  
**Sent:** 10 September 2015 11:18  
**To:** DPD  
**Cc:** ; Mary Richards  
**Subject:** Cullompton masterplan consultation.

Dear Sirs/ Madams,

I would like to give my general support for the developments contained in the masterplan.

I have one specific concern however wish I feel needs addressing in detail, concerning sports facilities and rugby in particular.

My son attends Cullompton Rugby club and over the last 6 years I have been tremendously impressed by how significant an asset this is to the community. In addition to the positive and nurturing attitude of the many volunteers who efficiently run the club, and the growing number of participants, the physical facilities have been good.

There have been until this season a number of training grounds for youths and adults to enjoy simultaneously. Use of one of these playing areas has been stopped this season so that the land can be prepared for residential development. This is a backwards move in the provision of recreational facilities in Cullompton which I hope is temporary.

The other significant asset is a clubhouse and ancillary changing and grandstand spaces which are open and inclusive and yet owned by one user organisation. This ownership and management structure allows for the care, development and upkeep to be led by the users. Social and recreational activities run hand in hand with users feeling a sense of ownership and belonging and this leads to there being very little abuse of any facilities at the current rugby club site. This method of managing sports recreational space is well proven as it allows for the one sport to be championed by users who can feel a sense of belonging and allegiance to their sport. This feeling of ownership is a major factor in the success of a recreational activity.

I am concerned then to understand more about how this plan will cater for the recreational and social needs of a significantly larger population in a similar way. I believe that policy should lead to more space for playing rugby and this on a site which is integrated with support structures such as a clubhouse and changing facilities and ability for a section to be owned by one sporting group. I would wish the same for other sports who request this.

Recent developments in Cullompton have led to the loss of a rugby playing space. The recent housing developments around the rugby club are not shown on your plans on page 85.

The current proposals suggest another sports pitch being created, for non-specific sports use at a distant location from the existing facilities, with shared changing facilities.

So whilst the plan may be good for Cullompton development overall, I am concerned that the prospects for Rugby in the town will be regressive and not developmental. I hope this can be addressed.

sincerely

Anthony Richards