



20 Lower Millhayes
HEMYOCK
Devon
EX15 3SL

14 March 2014

Local Plan Review Consultation
Forward Planning
Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House
TIVERTON
Devon
EX16 6PP

Dear Sirs

MDDC LOCAL PLAN REVIEW – HEMYOCK PARISH

I would like to make my objections to the three suggested sites within the parish of Hemyock for potential building.

The site to the north of Culmbridge Farm was put forward for building some years ago and the plan rejected, should this plan ever be resurrected again in its same format the 'relief road' from the north of the site exits on to the flood plain! This site, on the eastern boundary of the village, is on high ground and slopes away to the east. If one looks at the contour lines on the Ordnance Survey map it actually forms the western mouth of the Madford/Bolham valley and is therefore not part of the valley in which Hemyock is built. Any building on the entire site would therefore impinge on that valley and be a complete visual eye-sore and not in keeping with the AONB. It is also the furthest point in the village from the Primary School and as such would entail the children having to cross the major roads in the village or even worse having to walk through the centre of the village to reach the school.

The site at Culmbridge Farm, also on the eastern boundary of the village, is a huge area of high ground sloping down towards the valley bottom and could be classed as part of the Madford/Bolham valley as well. Any building here would be totally inappropriate for the village. It would, again, because of the topography, be another visual eye-sore out of keeping with the AONB. The same problems would arise with the children walking to school, or cause yet more traffic chaos with the parents driving their children to the school.

The third site to the south-west of Conigar Close, while being much smaller and perhaps more appropriate, is just spreading the limits of the village even further. If more affordable housing for local people should be needed at any time in the future then this would be the logical place to build it.

Any of these sites, if developed, would completely overwhelm the infrastructure that is stretched to its limits now because:

1. It would create yet more traffic for our already over-crowded and unsuitable roads since all the working population would be commuting to work every day. Hemyock now has very little employment for the local people, most businesses have either moved away or closed over the years. What was once a 'hive of industry' is now a dormitory village.
2. The Surgery is struggling to cope with the current number of patients. The point should be made that the Blackdown Practice not only covers the Hemyock/Culmstock area but has Surgeries at Dunkeswell and Churchinford as well, so any future building in those areas will affect the patient numbers registered with the Practice making the situation even worse.
3. The Primary School could, at present, take a few more children, but only if all the class were 30 pupils in size, but they are struggling with space for certain aspects now with the current number of pupils.
4. The sewage system overflows now in Longmead, and the situation is even worse in heavy rain with overflows in other places as well. The smell from the sewage works is often very unpleasant. It barely copes with the present amount of sewage, how would it cope with even more from new developments?

Option 2 – a new settlement at Junction 27.

This is, in my opinion, the best solution for the large increase in housing needed within the Mid Devon area. A new settlement there would relieve the pressure on the rural villages and to some extent the towns. The transport links are already in place with the M5, North Devon link road and Tiverton Parkway on the doorstep. Since the aim is to reduce the need to travel by car the railway provides easy access to Exeter, Taunton and all places further east as the residents of the new settlement will need to commute to work. As land at Junction 27 has already been ear-marked for industrial development a residential community in the immediate vicinity could mean, that for many, there would be minimal travel to work.

Over the recent years Hemyock has been a designated 'local centre' and as such has had a great many new houses built. As a result the infrastructure is now stretched to the limits. The sheer volume of traffic means that frequently Station Road is blocked by two large vehicles trying to pass one another. Pencross Hill is another place where the same problem occurs. It is also often impossible for large vehicles to pass the cars parked in Station road by the Spar Shop because some of the neighbouring houses do not have any off road parking. Any further development would only succeed in exacerbating these traffic problems.

In my opinion the village has now reached a sustainable critical mass to maintain the primary school, doctor's surgery, public house and the shops. Currently there are no plans in place to have any further building in Hemyock before 2026 and this should not change. **It should be remembered that Hemyock is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.** Any further development will affect the rural setting of the village and the AONB.

Yours faithfully

P J Jenkins (Mrs)