

1 Chiddenbrook cotts,
Crediton
EX173PD



22 March 2014

Dear Planning consultation Officer

I am writing to quickly express my opinions about the housing development plans for Devon, and Crediton in particular, that I viewed at Crediton Town Hall in February.

I would like to express the view that Crediton generally would not be the best place to build extensive new developments, given its current levels of congestion and its topography which lends itself to high pollution levels. A single large new development at Wellparks, for example, would seem to me a better solution as it would bypass many of the problems involved with building in an already congested town.

If developments were to occur in Crediton, however, I feel they would much better located on the Eastern edge of the town, rather than the Western end, where some of the proposed sites lie. The Eastern edge would not require Exeter commuters to pass all the way through Crediton each day (worsening the traffic problems), and would be much closer to large amenities such as Tesco (which again would require new residents to pass all the way through town to reach if new developments were built in the west.). The pollution and flooding issues of building at the eastern end rather than the western would also be less (as less traffic would be passing through the high street daily and as the rivers and streams in the east flow away from the town, rather than through parts of it).

In particular, I would like to suggest that the 'Westwood Farm' development not be considered for development for several reasons. Firstly, it is located adjacent to an already highly congested traffic bottleneck due to the narrow roads and heavy volume of cars due to the presence of Landscore school. Secondly, I believe developments here would pose a significant flood risk to the downstream development at Westernlea. This is one of the only suggested new developments where the urbanisation of a stream is suggested right above an existing urban settlement. Flood risk at Westernlea has already increased since the development of the Queen Elizabeth Drive estate – the recent storms of the 2013/2014 winter saw many gardens here flooded and properties threatened. Further urbanisation of this catchment could therefore prove a tipping point for the flood potential in Westernlea. Thirdly, the area at the bottom of the 'Westwood' estate is a well-developed area of mature wetland. It is likely protected plant species occur here (although it would require an ecological survey to determine this). Finally, the planning procedure for the 'Westwood' development has thus far not been followed in a way that is clear to local residents. The name 'Westwood' refers to a farmhouse quite far away from the area of proposed development – an area which is in fact *downstream* from Westernlea, not upstream as the current plans propose. The development notice sign attached to the gate outside the proposed development zone was also entirely destroyed in the February storms and not replaced. Further, I overheard staff at the display

at the Town Hall tell Westernlea residents that the fields next to their properties were *not* proposed for new developments, despite the maps showing that they clearly are. As such, I do not believe that sufficient clarity has been provided to make local residents aware of the planned 'Westwood' development – indeed many Westernlea residents remain entirely in the dark about the plans.

I hope you will be able to take these point on board with regards to future planning decisions in the Crediton Area.

Thankyou very much for your time

Dr Tom Martin,

Crediton