

Mid Devon Local Plan- Options Review.



We wish to object very strongly to Policy J27 (J27/M5-Willand) that is currently being put forward as an option in the local plan. The main reasons for our objection are that we live within the proposed development area and I have done so all my life and my wife since our marriage in 1995. I lived in my parents' house some 200 yards away, within the development area, before my marriage and they have lived in their current property since 1974 and a previous property in the area that was demolished to make way for the M5 motorway.

I have had some contact with a potential developer but no offer has made for my dwelling or acre of land. Even if one was made I would not want to sell. My father has already contacted MDDC stating that he is not willing to sell his 20 acres.

We have not been contacted by the district council over the proposals; do we assume that the council consider us an insignificant nuisance in the way of development?

The developers have stated that they will "build around" those land owners who are unwilling to sell. Is that a course of action the council would condone? Our property value would undoubtedly plummet and we would have no chance of selling it if the area was developed, and this is the same for others within or on the edge of the proposed development area.

We enjoy living in the countryside, that is why we have stayed here all of our life. What right have greedy developers to destroy our way of life, and that of others?

In addition to the fact that we are residents on the land there are numerous other reasons that can be advanced against development of J27.

1. It is the 'gateway to Devon' that needs to remain a countryside location and not one covered in warehouses, outlets, shops and houses. Keep its rural character, rolling countryside, which is what visitors visit Devon for.
2. It is a Greenfield site, and should not be considered for development when alternatives exist in the towns, on brownfield sites, and already allocated sites.
3. Most visitors to the J27 site (local or from afar) would have to access by motor vehicle. This would have an unacceptable impact on the local road network and would cause absolute gridlock. How could the already overcrowded roads cope? How could the approach roads be upgraded? Only with much difficulty and massive costs. What about the B3181 and A38, and how would the residents of Willand and Uffculme ever leave their communities?
4. The developers make much of the creation of 3500-4000 jobs. Where does this come from? Reallocated jobs? New jobs? The unemployment figures for the area are well

below average, and there doesn't seem to be the need for job creation on that scale. Ample opportunities exist at J29 Exeter, J28 Cullompton, Willand Business Park and many small local sites. There is no need to develop J27.

5. Similarly with housing. Anyone local who wants to buy a house in the area can do so if they have the money; there is a plentiful supply to meet local open market demand. What is really needed is "affordable" housing, and the plan agrees with this, but it seems that we have to suffer to open market houses for every affordable home. This policy does not add up, and will only attract vast inward migration forcing house prices even higher.
6. Development of J27 will inevitably hit local businesses and town centres. There are local garden centres, nurseries and farm shops which I believe will be badly affected. It will also affect the town centres of Tiverton, Cullompton, Wellington and to some extent probably Exeter and Taunton. The facilities to be provided are already in existence at other local sites and are not required. As for warehouses- No thanks- we see enough of that on other motorway junctions in the country.
7. What will be the benefits to the local population? None that we can see. The local communities will be dwarfed by such a development. A suitable and available alternative exists on J28 Cullompton with employment land readily available and extension to the east of J28 for housing being totally logical. Cullompton town council wants the development; if it is deemed necessary then why not give it to them as a preferable alternative to a Greenfield site at J27.

Finally we reiterate again- No development at J27. We urge you to delete this option from the local plan without delay. If MDDC decides a new community is necessary then it should be located east of J28 in accord with the wishes of the town council at Cullompton.

We live here and we want to stay here and enjoy the beauty of Devon.

Michael & Alison, Emily & Benjamin Bass

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