

I would like to comment on the proposed sites for housing development in and around Silverton.

Silverton is a village which has grown steadily over many years. It currently has barely adequate services to support the current population. The bus service is infrequent and the primary school is full. The local secondary school is over subscribed and is very close to the new large scale development at Cranbrook. Mains Gas (the most efficient energy source for domestic use) is not available to all of the current village and the telecommunications network is poor. There would be at risk of failing to provide these essential services if large scale development happened over a short period of time. There is no benefit to the existing population or new residents to large scale developments around the edge of the village which would make the village infrastructure unsustainable.

There are currently a number of new houses, which have been developed under the banner of 'low cost' housing, for sale in the village but which remain unsold. Therefore there is no need to build more houses here immediately. There is also a significant building plot in the centre of the village which has been for sale for many years and remains unused.

Houses built in Silverton would not be low cost or affordable and the location would not be helpful for those on lower incomes. There is no significant opportunity for local employment and new residents are very likely to have jobs in Exeter, Tiverton or further afield. Public transport links are poor and the local roads are not suitable for large numbers of vehicles.

There are other sites (Cullompton) which are supported by their local communities and which have greater access to essential services and infrastructure, where large scale development would be more affordable, more accessible and less disruptive to existing residents.

A number of the proposed sites are unsuitable for change to residential use.

The Glebe site is situated within the existing conservation area for good reason as it is right next to an historical church. It has no viable means of access and is mainly low lying and liable to flooding.

The Garage site is also situated within the conservation area and has been declined planning permission on a number of occasions over many years for this and other reasons.

The old Butterleigh Road site is situated above the village on steep land which is already liable to rapid run off of water during periods of heavy rain. This can sometimes lead to flooding of houses further down High Bullen and Fore Street, This would risk would be significantly increased if residential development took place there. There is no reasonable route of access to this parcel of land. Access would also require increased traffic flow down Fore Street which is a single lane road for most of its length due to parked cars.

The Livingshayes Road site has even worse access to reach the site and would also push runoff water rapidly into the small river in its lower part risking existing properties lower down the water course.

In summary I oppose the granting of permission for large scale development (more than 5 properties) around the village of Silverton, as the village does not have the infrastructure to support this. I would support the continued used of small developments to increase the size of the village gradually allowing the infrastructure to keep up with this. Some of the proposed sites are not suitable even for small scale developments. There is currently unused permitted development land within the village and unsold 'low cost' housing lying empty.

It would therefore be our proposition to not to grant new permissions at present but to encourage the use of the existing potential sites and housing stock. If large numbers of houses have to be built they should be closer to existing facilities and these would be cheaper to support with required infrastructure and transport developments.

John Renninson

27 Fore Street, Silverton, EX5 4HZ