



Cullompton Traders Association

Secretary: Michael Speirs, 4 Church Street Cullompton EX15 1JU

CULLOMPTON TRADERS ASSOCIATION (CTA) RESPONSE TO MDDC LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION (MARCH 2014)

The CTA has some 57 members representing all aspects of business and commerce in Cullompton and the surrounding area.

1. Preamble

The Local Plan consultation is very wide in scope and has extensive and far reaching implications for Cullompton. In the various briefings that have been given, there is much that is incomplete and even conflicting. The time available between issue of the consultation document and the deadline for response is also very short for organisations which meet monthly. In the circumstances, it is hard to give a definitive response. We are grateful for Peter Williams attendance at our March meeting but our next meeting is not until 1st April, beyond the response deadline. So, the following is a qualified response pending further clarification in a number of areas.

2. Policy CU11 – Option 2B

East Cullompton Urban Extension

OPTION

A site of 200 hectares to the east of Cullompton, across the M5 from the main town, could be allocated for mixed use development including 3,000 houses

The CTA is broadly in favour of this option, if the settlement is properly integrated as an extension of Cullompton Town with good physical links to the town's amenities, services and shops. Without such links, the settlement is likely to be a dormitory development for Exeter and Taunton commuters without significant benefit to the town. In a briefing from MDDC, it was advised that this settlement would only proceed if there was a new Motorway junction (28A) and that there would be a pedestrian/cycle link to the town. In a separate briefing DCC and Highways advised that there was no prospect of such links as the cost (£100m) would not be justified. At yet another briefing, a developer advised that the cost of £100m was exaggerated and a junction could be funded from such a development.

If the development at CU11 is not to be integrated, then the CTA would be in favour of

Option 1, further development of the existing conurbations in Mid Devon, with Cullompton expanded to the west of the M5, where we understand a further 1,500 houses could be developed in addition to the existing allocation in the Local Plan currently in place.

In either scenario, we believe that the restrictions associated with M5 Junction 28 and the junction of Tiverton Road and Fore Street would have to be resolved to improve traffic flows in and around the town.

2. CU14 – Eastern Relief Road

In the allocation, CU14 is designated as allocated for the Eastern Relief Road. The CTA is in favour of the creation of an eastern relief road. However, the designation of the whole of the CCA Fields ignores the importance of this area as an important part of the green infrastructure and leisure amenities of the town, which was purchased by public subscription for these purposes. It is felt that the allocation should clearly state that the relief road should take as little land as possible by being routed close to the railway. All of this still awaits a flood assessment report on the area.

3. Adjacent CU14 – Railway Station

The CTA strongly supports the reinstatement of Cullompton as a train stopping point to link the town to the rail network.

4. Policy J27

Land at M5 Junction 27 and adjoining Willand

OPTION

A site of approximately 200 hectares between M5 Junction 27 and Willand could be allocated for mixed commercial and residential development as follows:

- a) 3,000 dwellings with 35% affordable housing, to commence a□ er 1st April 2026 or the completion of 5,460 dwellings elsewhere, whichever is the sooner.**
- b) 96 hectares for mixed commercial floorspace subject to an impact assessment which demonstrates no adverse impact on town centre vitality and viability. Development might comprise:**

Item a) The CTA is generally against the development of a settlement of 3,000 houses at this site. The site has no infrastructure or amenities and it is felt would be detrimental to the surrounding villages and towns through putting pressure on their amenities and attracting resources which would be better spent on the development of existing settlements

Item b) The CTA is in favour of commercial development at Junction 27 and would particularly welcome the creation of a hotel, concert venue and new leisure facilities – such as a water based attraction and/or a transport museum. Retail development raises some concerns and we would need to view the as yet unpublished retail impact report. A specialist retailing complex associated with outdoor activities may well have little impact on businesses in Cullompton. However, food retailing would need to be sensitive to the viability of local Farmer's, Pannier and Street Markets, which attract footfall into vulnerable high streets of nearby towns.

