

10th April, 2018

Forward Planning,  
Mid Devon District Council,  
Phoenix House,  
Phoenix Lane,  
Tiverton.  
EX16 6PP

Dear Sir/Madam,

Local Plan Review: Incorporating proposed modifications – Sustainability Update Incorporating consultant LUC recommendations.

We are told that the council considers recommendations by LUC, the independent consultants, will benefit the Examination, aid the Inspector's decision making, and give additional assurance to all hearing participants and the public that a fair and thorough assessment has been undertaken. I think this is questionable. The request by Parish Councils to sight the legal advice was denied, stating it was 'privileged information.' Further requests for the form and information given to the independent consultants was withheld. Unusually, the press have been quiet during this six week consultation period, but no doubt this will change once the opportunity to give representation has ended.

'Massive development at Junction 27.' This was the front page of the Gazette on the 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2013. This was the first time residents learnt of it, how appalling.

After a public consultation in 2014, a decision was taken to develop at J28 not J27. A draft local plan, excluding J27 was produced and went to the full council, where it was unanimously approved, with one abstention. As the plan was sound, it was then going to the Inspector, but was delayed by the Environment Agency wanting more information on the flooding and infrastructure at J28. It is now 2018 and that report is not finished.

Flooding frequently occurs at J27, with water covering the C107 and fields to both sides of the road.

In February 2014 we learnt the proposed development was to be called Westwood and was backed by Axa/Friends Life. Later this huge development was changed to Eden Westwood, with the hope that it would look more acceptable. Eden Westwood have not engaged with residents, unless they require their land. There are landowners who still refuse to sell their land.

After much publicity, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 the amendment to include J27 in the local plan was taken by the full council. Opposition to the development here of this proposed out of town shopping centre has come from Exeter, Taunton, Wellington, Atlantic Village and Clark's Village. Development here would devastate the financial income to the towns of Tiverton, Cullompton and Wellington, where support for both new and established business is needed. Land was offered by Lowman Engineering, Tiverton to MDDC for development, but this was refused. We have not received information from MDDC on any alternative sites to J27. They appear not to consider any other developers to Eden Westwood, only their requirements have been shown to the public.

In the SA report on J27 policy, it is for the delivery of a major leisure destination providing mixed use development comprising of travel hub, agronomy visitor centre, outdoor adventure zone and outlet shopping village – even more changes. It states the retail outlet is necessary to the overall proposal. Jobs here would be seasonal and low paid. Brexit shows that labour cannot be taken for granted, as Europeans are already leaving the U.K. We read more and more of the increase in online shopping. Customers can have their goods delivered from most shops to their home or use click and collect at supermarkets.

LUC try to compare Rushden shopping centre to J27, but this is not a true comparison. The shopping centre was added to the existing Nene Wetlands Visitor Centre. It is within walking distance of Rushden, which has a population of 28,272. Junction 27 is a green field site at the entrance to Devon. It is not hidden in a disused quarry or on a brown field site.

The SA report and MDDC's evidence does not show the problems with existing traffic at J28. The proposed development at J27 would increase the heavy traffic here, along the A38 and the B3181. The motorway is frequently closed and when this happens this traffic has to use these roads and through the village of Willand.

I am strongly opposed to any development at J27. There is still strong opposition to include J27 in the local plan. Development at J27 is unsound and unsustainable.

At the recent Devon county council chairman's civic service, a hymn was sung that begins with the following lines:-

Celebrate Devon  
Embracing heaven,  
Green fields and pastures  
Seaside and moor.  
All that the Lord gives  
Throughout the ages,  
Is ours to treasure  
From shore to shore.

That is why tourists come to Devon and people retire here. They will continue to do so for these reasons, not to see a designer shopping outlet with it's own air, noise and light pollution having a detrimental impact on the landscape.

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful environment that is Mid Devon. Let us keep it that way, not only for ourselves, but for future generations.

Yours faithfully,

L. J. Grantham (Mrs)