

Northwest Cullompton Urban Extension Stage 1 Consultation

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Q1: The masterplan will need to take account of and enhance natural/environmental features of the site and its surroundings. Are there existing environmental features you would particularly like to be protected or enhanced?

Cullompton sits in a valley, with hills forming a backdrop to the St Andrews estate development which can be seen from Hembury Hill a distance in excess of 6 miles. The new proposed development will increase the buildings visible on skyline from this direction, which will urbanise an otherwise rural area. Building should therefore be restricted to areas not, Rull Hill and the new areas in purple proposed on the plan which is behind the existing area of Rull which massively impact on the rural nature and be clearly visible when approaching from Willand or along the Tiverton road area.

Although an assessment has been completed of the existing habitat the only note in the current documents suggest using amenity planting, whereas the habitat assessment suggests saving existing hedgerows and trees. Devon is a rural county typified by its Devon banks with standard trees, these features should be protected and enhanced since to remove them will destroy the character of the area and will mean a loss of habitat for the bat species that currently use them as hunting corridors.

It is a fallacy that you can just recreate habitat, by putting in some other plants, many species have very specific requirements, i.e. the meadow pipits and butterflies, neither of which maybe rare, but are fast disappearing.

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Q2: Planning policy allocates the site for 1100 dwellings and employment. Due to site constraints, this cannot be achieved. Only 700 houses are likely to be provided on the allocated site. It is unlikely that this will be enough to pay for the infrastructure that would be required including the new road, primary school and other community facilities. Should the boundaries between the green infrastructure and housing land be amended in order to increase the amount of housing to compensate for this and pay for these facilities?

No.

Since the site has no existing infrastructure in place and the current plan for additional suggests a new road which is likely to be a "White Elephant" since it seems to assume that people will go hugely out of their way to reach the motorway by connecting to Millennium Way, suggesting that people from the South of Cullompton will not use the most direct route (the High Street). If people choose to use the new road "rat runs" will inevitably develop down Head Weir Rd and Saxon Rd as short cuts allowing people to especially if connecting at Head Weir Rd, to avoid long queues down Millennium Way.

The other infrastructure improvement suggested is traffic lights at the motorway junction, this will exacerbate the queues which already occur and at peak times will result in gridlock if another 1000-1200 cars are trying to use the roads. This will pose a danger by creating queues back onto the motorway, a significant increase in traffic through Willand and an increase in traffic on the Tiverton Road which is already inadequate since it is partially single carriage way.

I contend that the money that will be raised from the development will be insufficient to create the infrastructure improvements required to the road network, it needs to be remembered that currently, one car is sufficient to bring the traffic in the High St to a standstill and that only if an adequate bypass is identified, the previous one having been incorporated into the M5 or another motorway junction to the South, which would mean that some of the heavy traffic no longer needed to use the High Street, would congestion be minimised.

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Q3: The development will increase traffic. How should this be dealt with and where should the proposed road connect into Tiverton Road and Willand Road?

The obvious area will be on the roundabout just past the entrance to Rull Lane, this will however affect the property at the end of Rull Lane and take up some flat land which would be an obvious place for the school to be positioned.

One questions where the people using this road will be coming from, since the infrastructure at the Tiverton Road end is not sufficient to support an increase in traffic unless you are planning to do something about this as well.

One would also question whether the road through Willand is able to support the proposed additional 1000-1500 cars which the new housing would inevitably come with.

Q4: The residential element will provide a range of housing types and affordability. What types of housing would you like to see?

Mixed housing including affordable which should not be situated in the most undesirable location, i.e. on the edges of the development.

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Q5: The urban extension proposes employment floorspace. What types of employment should this include and where should it be located?

The placing of the industrial estate in an area that floods, that will suffer from congestion and is not connected to any other industrial areas is pointless. There are suitable units already available in Cullompton and Willand with the appropriate infrastructure in place. The road that you want to put the units on has a weight limit over the bridge which would push additional traffic to the Cullompton junction of the M5 increase pressure on the already inadequate road network, since there is a weight restriction on the bridge on the Willand Road.

Q6: Where should the new primary school be located?

I would suggest either next to the Integrated Centre for Health or off the roundabout just after Rull Lane since this would give adequate room for playing surfaces and would be easily accessible from the existing housing. Given that there is a possibility of substantial building on the other side of the motorway, what consideration is being given to this or are we talking about 3 primary schools for Cullompton? No decision should be made on this site until other areas have been considered since other building may well provide additional funding for infrastructure, also dependent on the level of development should the school be on this side of the motorway.

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Q7: The masterplan will provide major areas of green and recreational space. What should this include? Where should new sports pitches be located?

This should include existing hedgerows and the development of wildlife corridors as detailed in the habitat assessment, these should be linked in with the existing grazing areas and sensitive hedge management by the council's contractors, not the current Slash and Burn approach, like the cutting of the verges before the orchids have set seed.

Q8: The policy proposes a new community centre and youth facilities. What new community facilities are needed? Where should they be located?

None. We already have a great library. What we need is free parking there.

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Q9: Please comment on the two emerging development options. Of the two options put forward, do you have a preference?

I do not believe that either of the options should be proceeded with.

Q10: Overall, do you agree with the proposed scope and content of the proposed masterplan document?

No, I think that the development is being proposed by vested interests and that it would not best serve the community to put houses on any of the land other than the 2 fields that already front onto the Willand Road, with additional development being on the land on the opposite side of the motorway and that this should include the new primary school and community facilities.

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Q11: Do you have any other comments to make on the proposed masterplan document?

Motorway access MUST be improved.

Q12: Are you

c) A member of the public

Q13: Members of the public only – do you live

a) Within or close to the boundary of the allocated site at NW Cullompton

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Q14: NOTE: RESPONSES CANNOT BE REGISTERED WITHOUT A NAME AND ADDRESS

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Q15: Please provide your postal address

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