



OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL RESPONSE TO EDDC LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION JANUARY 2012

Ottery St Mary Town Council carried out four consultation meetings during October and November 2010, designed to get feedback from people within the Ottery parish about the draft Local Development Framework core strategy.

Two of the meetings in particular – at West Hill and Tipton St John were very well attended. The remainder of the events were held at Alfington (for the North Ward) and Ottery St Mary Town. Altogether, the meetings attracted well over 200 people.

In addition EDDC organised a meeting at The Kings School on 13 October 2010. The students were asked their view of building 250 houses in Ottery. 59 students were in favour, 107 were opposed. The students articulated what facilities they would wish to see provided in Ottery for young people.

A response from these meetings to the LDF was subsequently submitted to EDDC by Ottery Town Council at the end of the consultation.

Now the process is being looked at again. Nine councillors met on 18 August 2011 to debate a clear way forward in preparation for the LDF Panel meeting on 6 September. Regrettably the LDF Panel Chairman curtailed the presentation to the LDF Panel by Ottery's Mayor.

The EDDC officers based their Local Plan excessive housing allocation for Ottery on two false premises. 1) that Ottery would benefit from a High Quality Public Transport link from Cranbrook to Exeter. DCC officers informed EDDC officers that the High Quality Public Transport link would not be going ahead. 2) Ottery's proximity to the Principal Urban Area (PUA)/West End of East Devon. Planning Appeal Decisions relating to West Hill (November 2011) and Tipton St John (January 2012) both make clear that West Hill and Tipton St John are not part of the Principal Urban Area (PUA)/West End of East Devon. Ottery is further distant from the PUA/West End than West Hill.

The following issues were raised and agreed.

Great weight was placed on the feedback from the public consultation events

General

Firstly, it is vital that the figures take into account existing commitments – that is planning permissions given since 2006, as per EDDC`s press release of Thursday 4 August.

A further meeting was held at The Kings School on 11 October 2011. A similar proportion of the students to that on 13 October 2010 opposed the proposed housing numbers.

A meeting was held at The Old Boys School in Ottery on 9 January 2012 attended by 100 members of the public. A large majority of the public voted for no more than 100 houses in Ottery.

Infrastructure to service developments should be major determinants of whether planning permission should be granted.

It is also essential that vital infrastructure to service large-scale developments is provided at the time of building.

It was deemed imperative that South West Water should upgrade their sewage facility at Fluxton and Ottery St Mary as soon as possible, because its lack of capacity is a barrier to development in the parish. Also the poor water quality in Ottery St Mary should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Ottery St Mary Town

A new site for The Kings School needs to be identified NOW as it is currently over capacity.

The following constraints are emphasized as being vital to address before any further development:

- Fluxton and Ottery Sewage Works are at capacity. Fluxton and Ottery serve Ottery St Mary Town and the surrounding villages
- The King's School is over capacity NOW
- Road improvements are needed in the vicinity of The King's School. A new roundabout is needed at the junction of Barrack Road and Cadhay Lane, and the proposed road from Barrack Road to Higher Thorne Farm should be constructed
- Building on high quality/food growing land is discouraged (there is believed to be some grade two land in Ottery St Mary)
- Coleridge Medical Centre (serves the entire parish) is believed to be at capacity

- Parts of Ottery are designated as Flood Zone

It was noted that the Science Park, Skypark and the retail distribution centre were in progress and it was agreed that Ottery Parish residents would consider the ten minute commute along the A30 very convenient.

It is considered that a section of land between Finnimore Industrial Estate and Ottery St Mary Hospital, in particular is appropriate for housing, as it is between two areas that have already been developed. Generally the west side of the town is viewed as a preferable area to develop, as the road network and access to the A30 is better.

It was agreed that one-off larger developments are preferable to many smaller developments (totalling the same number of houses), to ensure the correct infrastructure is provided.

It was agreed that existing planning commitments in the system, that 300 dwellings (maximum) should be built in Ottery St Mary Town for the period from 2006 – 2026. This could include 90 dwellings at the factory site and surrounding area.

The figure of 300 should be a maximum, which should include all windfall development over the Plan period. It should also include the provision of lifetime homes and extra care homes as specified in Local Plan policy 30 page 128.

It was agreed that 40 per cent affordable housing should be provided with any development. It is requested that a housing needs survey should take place to evidence the need for low-cost housing. The option for self-build should be included in the low-cost housing options.

It is requested that Ottery St Mary Hospital provides additional services and regains its 24 hour Minor Injuries Unit.

Youth feedback

Room should be made available for a youth facility, such as a cinema at the Ottermill Switchgear factory site, when it is developed, in line with what King's School students said in their consultation; the students produced a wish list of facilities for young people in Ottery at the meeting on 13 October 2010.

If an alternative venue for Recycling in Ottery (RiO) can be found, a youth facility could be provided here. But only if somewhere suitable can be found for RiO.

Creation of a cycleway on the disused railway line between Feniton, Ottery, Tipton and Sidmouth would provide an important amenity for local people, as well as a draw for tourists which would provide a considerable boost to the local economy. We urge EDDC to include reference to the cycleway in the Local Plan.

West Hill

A strong message from the consultation with people was that no employment (commercial/industrial) land is needed here. It should be noted that there are several empty units in the village – above the shop and by the garage.

Residents want the Built Up Area Boundaries to be respected and not breached, except for policy reasons, such as the existing departure housing policy. Flexible boundaries are strongly opposed.

West Hill is a unique village, built in woodland. Its distinctiveness and unique character must be respected, and planning applications should be in line with the Village Design Statement.

West Hill Primary School is at capacity, with all of its latest intake believed to be in catchment. It should be noted that the catchment area includes children from Aylesbeare.

Many people work from home in West Hill and an improved broadband service is very important for people here and in other villages surrounding Ottery.

Residents in West Hill often lament the lack of a `heart` to the village, and some have expressed a desire for a pub, coffee shop or restaurant.

In line with the five percent growth recommended by the LDF Panel on 2 August 2011 (page 89) 36 houses are thought to be acceptable until 2026. Ottery St Mary Town Council requests this to be a maximum figure. Any housing must be planned in keeping with the low density of the village, and trees must be protected as much as possible.

West Hill`s shop is valued and regularly used. It is regarded as a lifeline by some of the older residents.

Tipton St John

Identified problems with water run-off/flooding, particularly from East Hill and the River Otter. There is a lack of sewage capacity in the village (Fluxton Sewage Works).

Residents oppose the concept of flexible boundaries; they want their Built Up Area Boundaries to be respected.

Tipton St John`s distinctiveness and character relate to its size. The village has its own Village Design Statement, which should be referred to when preparing planning applications.

It is a relatively small village of some 200 houses, and residents want it to remain a small village with only limited development. In line with the five per cent growth recommended by the LDF Panel on 2 August 2011 (page 89), 12 houses were believed to be appropriate until 2026. Ottery St Mary Town Council requests that this is a maximum figure.

There is a desire for more road safety features throughout the village – including the introduction of a 20mph zone.

It was agreed that the current site for the school was not appropriate as it was in the Flood Zone, and had been flooded in the past. Also the site was split by the road. It was agreed that a new site should be considered that was outside the Flood Zone.

Development proposed for the village should be based around the result of a housing needs survey.

There is strong support for self-build projects, and any development should contain 40% affordable housing, in line with residents' wishes for low cost homes to be provided

Ottery St Mary Town Council is keen to support the small shop at Tipton St John, which lost its Post office two years ago. It is regarded as a lifeline to many people in the village, particularly older people.

The other communities in the Tipton St John Ward of the Ottery St Mary Parish do not appear to have Built Up Area Boundaries and are, therefore, classified as open countryside in local planning policy.

Alfington and the North Ward of Ottery St Mary Parish

Alfington is a small village of around 65 houses, based in the North Ward of the Ottery St Mary Parish.

There is a desire for play facilities in the village. The sewage system is believed to have capacity. There is concern from residents about the volume and speed of traffic through the village.

Ottery St Mary Town Council objects to the removal of the Built Up Area Boundary around Alfington, as set out in the East Devon Local Plan which would mean no further development in the village up to 2026.

The view of Ottery St Mary Town Council is that there could be a small amount of development in the North Ward, and Alfington would be the most appropriate place.

This would help enable provision of play equipment. Any development should be of a size and scale suitable to the existing village. It is believed that the five per cent guideline as set out in the LDF Panel papers of 2 August 2011 would be appropriate as a maximum number of houses.

The other communities in the North Ward of Ottery St Mary Parish do not have Built Up Area Boundaries and so are classified as open countryside in local planning policy.

Ottery St Mary Town Council is keen to support the small shop at Alfington, as this is regarded as a lifeline to many people in the village, particularly older people.

Ottery St Mary Town Council asks that the scoring for Alfington is looked at, on the basis that there is a bus service 6 days a week with a minimum of 6 journeys in either direction.

31st January 2012