

From: Elizabeth Snell [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 December 2022 21:16
To: Planning Policy
Subject: New draft local plan

Categories: Reg.18 consultation

Dear Sir,

I attended the public consultation on the new draft local plan held at the Beehive, Honiton, on 7th December 2022, where I spoke to several councillors and a member of EDDC staff, though I was sorry that no senior EDDC staff were present.

I live on the Heathfield Estate and am principally interested in the area marked LP_Honi_01, which has been designated as an area of second choice for building 79 houses. However, as there are very few areas marked as 'preferred' it is clear that any area of second choice might very well be considered for development in the relatively near future. I notice that there is also a large area west of Hayne Lane which is designated in the same way, and some of that is already being built on. The western end of Honiton could therefore become a lot more populated than it is at present.

My main concern is the difficulty of providing adequate access to the area designated. I was told at the meeting that 'more information is required', but a common sense look at the surroundings shows clearly that there are only a few possibilities, none of which is suitable.

- a) Access via Hayne Lane which is narrow and would involve building a new road at the back of the existing estate. Motorists would also have to drive via the Heathfield Industrial Estate unless the current agreement by which Old Elm Road remains closed to prevent it becoming a through road were not honoured, and I was told that this would have legal implications, and require DCC's permission;
- b) Via Sidmouth Road; this would involve building a road across a field to join the Sidmouth Road at a point where the road has several bends which would make visibility difficult and render the junction dangerous;
- c) Via Honeysuckle Drive or one of the other residential roads leading off Old Elm Road. These roads were not designed to carry a lot of traffic; indeed Old Elm Road itself is not wide. If 79 houses were built this could involve 100+ extra cars and at least 200 daily traffic movements, creating extra pollution, noise and danger.

Most of the designated area falls within an AONB, as does the field between it and the Sidmouth Road which could have an access road built over it. I was dismayed to find that this did not automatically rule it out for development. What good is it having 'protected' areas if planners can ride roughshod over them?

79 houses on a small area would mean a lot more hard surfaces, which by definition involves a higher risk of flooding in an area which slopes towards the existing estate.

The facilities in the town such as schools and the one GP surgery are under considerable pressure and more housing would increase this strain. I was told that schools would use portacabins in the short term, but these are not adequate replacements for properly designed classrooms, and who knows how long it would take to provide solidly built classrooms? The GP surgery has little room to expand and would have to recruit more staff, which is not easy given the current shortage of medical staff.

I find it difficult to fathom how this area could have been designated as suitable for development when no adequate solutions have been found for the above problems, especially access. One major consideration is that the Prime Minister has very recently removed the statutory duty on local authorities to meet specific

targets and these have now become advisory. Given this, and the upcoming local elections, I hope that you will reconsider the designation and reject it, as I see has happened in other cases.

Yours faithfully,
Elizabeth Snell

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