

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

Summary of Comment	Response
Housing Issues	
Concerns regarding increase in housing numbers from 650 to 850 – is this really necessary?	The scale of development proposed in the masterplan has been shaped by both the numbers of homes that can be acceptably accommodated in the area as well as the numbers needed to fund the delivery of the relief road. The government have committed £10million through the Housing infrastructure Fund but around a further £7million is needed to deliver the relief road and this needs to be funded from development.
Axminster does not want the extra homes and resulting increase in population. Where is the justification for this given the homes already been built and under construction in the town at Dukes Way, Cloakham Lawns etc.	It is understood that the town has seen significant building in recent years. It is not intended to substantially increase the number of homes built each year but to deliver a supply of new homes to meet the needs of the town for the next 15 – 20 years.
The area for building will not support the number of homes indicated.	The masterplan has been developed using good design principles and typical housing densities that are appropriate for the site to ensure that the scale of development proposed can be accommodated in an attractive form of development appropriate to the location.
The rate of growth in housing in the town is too great and the town cannot cope. The number of jobs required is not matching housing supply and this will lead to joblessness and anti-social behaviour.	The principle of delivering a proportionate number of new jobs alongside housing is identified in the local plan and has informed the masterplan. The employment units to the northern part of the masterplan area combined with employment spaces within the neighbourhood centre should deliver in the region of 1 job per house.
The masterplan should include the provision of bungalows for the elderly and disabled.	Policies in the Local Plan seek to encourage a mix of housing types including accessible and adaptable homes and so there is an expectation that developers will incorporate an appropriate mix of housing as part of their proposals for the site.
Bovis cannot sell the homes they are building so why build even more.	There have been a number of specific issues with the Bovis site which have slowed sales on the site but this is not considered to be indicative of a lack of demand in the area.

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

<p>850 homes just about acceptable but concern that costs for the relief road will escalate and more homes will be needed.</p>	<p>There is no intention to increase the number of homes further and the costings for the relief road are robust based on the available information.</p>
<p>Highways and Transport Issues</p>	
<p>Have the plans for the road been fully modelled?</p>	<p>The impact of the relief road has been modelled by Devon County Council to understand its impact on the wider road network while the design of the road itself is at an advanced stage.</p>
<p>Little attention has been paid to existing public rights of way. These must be protected.</p>	<p>The masterplan proposals have been designed to incorporate existing footpath routes and link into adjacent routes wherever possible to ensure that the development has good accessibility and residents have easy access into the town and surrounding countryside.</p>
<p>The current footpath at Lyme Road upto the A35 needs to be extended.</p>	<p>This would be beyond the scope of the masterplan but the comment is noted and can be looked at as part of wider highway works.</p>
<p>The speed limit on Lyme Road should be reduced from 60mph to 30mph.</p>	<p>This would be beyond the scope of the masterplan but the comment is noted and can be looked at as part of wider highway works.</p>
<p>The junctions at either end of the relief road should be designed to direct the flow of traffic down the relief road and should be coupled with a weight restriction through the town.</p>	<p>The detailed design of the junctions at each end of the relief road is being looked at but avoiding the narrow streets, traffic and conflict with pedestrians and cyclists associated with the town centre is likely to be a good incentive to HGV drivers to use the relief road. A weight restriction through the town centre is beyond the scope of the masterplan but the comment is noted and can be looked at as part of wider highway works.</p>
<p>Traffic into Sector Lane needs to be managed so that this remains a residential street and does not become a cut through.</p>	<p>This would be beyond the scope of the masterplan but the comment is noted and can be looked at as part of wider highway works.</p>
<p>Concerns regarding the problems with Weycroft Bridge which will only get worse as the town expands.</p>	<p>The concerns regarding the Weycroft Bridge are understood and DCC are already looking into how this can be improved in the future. The issue is however being looked at as a secondary phase of highway improvements and does not affect the need for and proposed route for the relief road.</p>

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

<p>The junction between Lyme Road and the A35 needs to be addressed to prevent accidents and accommodating the additional traffic.</p>	<p>Concerns regarding this junction are noted and will be looked at with Highways England who are responsible for the A35 to ensure that the junction can accommodate any increase in traffic.</p>
<p>The relief road takes a winding and in places steep route through residential areas when a straight and more direct route would be better. This is not the right road to solve Axminster's problems.</p>	<p>The route of the relief road has been dictated by the need to follow the contours of the site to minimise its visual impact and cost. As a result it is proposed to wind down and back up the sides of the valley. It is accepted that a flatter and straighter route would be better but this is not feasible.</p>
<p>HGV's will never use the relief road because of the gradients and it running through residential areas which will probably lead to a 30mph speed limit.</p>	<p>The speed limit for the relief road has not been determined but it is accepted that its relationship with the residential areas will need to be carefully designed and managed to avoid conflict.</p>
<p>Remove the parking and market from the town square thereby freeing up space for buses to stop which is what causes traffic problems in the town centre.</p>	<p>This would be beyond the scope of the masterplan but the comment is noted and can be looked at as part of wider highway works.</p>
<p>The by-pass should run parallel to the railway line to the west of the town as this is a more direct, flatter and more attractive route for HGV's to use.</p>	<p>An alternative route for the relief road to the west of the town has previously been considered. While this initially looks like it would deliver a flatter and more direct route the land it would be located on is largely flood zone with a section adjacent to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The route would be much longer than the proposed relief road and much more expensive with no scope to put development alongside it in order to contribute to the cost due to the flooding constraints. It was therefore concluded that such a route would be unviable and undeliverable. It should also be noted that the majority of HGV's are heading to destinations to the east of the town whereas such a route would take them in the opposite direction.</p>
<p>The masterplan will make traffic issues worse not better as it does not solve the junctions at each end and at Lyme Road, increase in traffic throughout the town, the need to transport children to the existing schools due to a lack of a new school.</p>	<p>Concerns regarding Weycroft Bridge and the junction at Lyme Road are understood and are/will be looked at, however do not affect the need for and design of the proposed relief road.</p>

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

	Proposals to increase capacity at the existing primary schools rather than provide a new school on the site will be likely to lead to increased journeys to the existing schools, however the schools are within walking distance and routes through the site will help to enable and encourage easy and safe walking to and from the schools.
Support the relief road accepting its limitations as all other options are unaffordable.	Noted
Concerns about increased traffic on existing roads adjacent to the relief road as residents of the development try to access facilities in the existing town.	The design and layout of the masterplan area seeks to encourage walking and cycling wherever possible while the provision of jobs on the site and basic facilities at the neighbourhood centre should further help to minimise vehicle movements to and from the existing town centre such that these do not cause significant problems.
Concerns regarding parking issues on Sector Lane and access arrangements into the lane from the relief road.	The final design of the access arrangements between the relief road and Sector Lane have not been decided but concerns regarding rat running through this area are noted and it is agreed that measures should be put in place to avoid this.
Parking at the railway station and traffic on the A35 need to be considered with such significant expansion of the town.	The impacts of traffic on the A35 are all being considered by Highways England who are responsible for the trunk road network, however we would certainly encourage residents to use public transport wherever possible and accept the need to look at ways of making this more attractive such as improving parking facilities at the railway station.
Infrastructure Issues	
Suggested uses for the neighbourhood centre – relocated hospital, nursery, shop, small business centre.	These are all helpful suggestions which can be considered as the proposals are firmed up through detailed planning applications for the neighbourhood centre and tested through the market as spaces become available in the future.

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

<p>Community centre better placed at bottom of field used by Millwey Rise FC in order to serve the wider community as well.</p>	<p>This is beyond the scope of the masterplan but noted for further consideration when looking at delivery of community facilities at the site.</p>
<p>The town centre needs improving with a wider range of businesses.</p>	<p>This is beyond the scope of the masterplan but noted for future consideration.</p>
<p>There is already significant stress on the existing doctor and dentist surgeries how will they cope with the additional homes.</p>	<p>The NHS and CCG will be consulted and will need to highlight any capacity issues and bid for funds from the Community Infrastructure Levy to undertake any upgrades alongside using their own funding.</p>
<p>Infrastructure needs to be delivered ahead of the housing not after.</p>	<p>Agree in principle that this should always be the goal, however in reality the funding for infrastructure often comes from development and for viability reasons has to be delivered ahead of the required infrastructure. The Council has already committed in-principle to loan funding the upfront delivery of the relief road which is a key piece of infrastructure for this site.</p>
<p>There is no sixth form in the town.</p>	<p>It is unfortunate that there is no longer a sixth form college in the town. It may be that expansion of the town will help to drive up student numbers such that a sixth form college becomes viable again but in the meantime there are excellent public transport services to further education facilities outside of the town accepting that these are unfortunately some distance away.</p>
<p>There is a lack of facilities for young people in the town which needs to be addressed</p>	<p>This is a wider issue than the masterplan however the provision of open space and other facilities within the masterplan area presents opportunities to address this issue subject to funding.</p>
<p>Environmental Issues</p>	
<p>Concerns about impacts on the stream at Weycroft.</p>	<p>Surface water from the development will have to be dealt with on-site through sustainable drainage systems and should not increase runoff into watercourses beyond existing levels. The impacts on wildlife and ecology will be better understood through the detailed planning applications and</p>

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

	Environmental Impact Assessments that will be undertaken at that time and then subject to consultation with the Environment Agency.
Concerns that noise and air pollution from the relief road will affect the residential development around just as badly as it does the town centre.	The master planning of a new development area such as this presents an opportunity to design the relief road and the nearby development to enable a better relationship between the road and residential development than can be achieved within the historic town centre much of which was developed without the car or HGV's in mind. Measures can be incorporated to minimise the impact of noise and air pollution on residents that cannot be retro-fitted to the existing town centre.
Concerns about the impact on wildlife that currently use the fields to be built on including, wild birds, badgers, pheasants and bats.	Work on the masterplan has been informed by survey work of habitats on the site. The habitats of protected species are protected by legislation and would have to be appropriately retained or relocated. Other measures will be expected to be incorporated into the development including the retention of existing hedgerows and other habitats as well as the creation of new spaces through the inclusion of bird and bat boxes etc.
Concerns about the flooding implications of new housing on existing houses in the town.	It is not proposed to build on any parts of the site that are designated flood zone 2 or 3 and the developments will be expected to deal with its own surface water run off and not increase flows into watercourses.
Other Issues	
Concerns about the impact on the listed Weycroft Bridge and the nearby listed buildings.	The impact on the setting of the listed bridge and nearby listed buildings has been considered in the production of the masterplan however it is only through the detailed design of the northern parts of the site that the impact can be fully understood and assessed which will happen through the planning application process.
The masterplan should not be advanced as it does not comply with the local plan. How can the local plan be swept aside?	The masterplan addresses both the area of land allocated in the Local Plan and an additional area of land to the east. This additional development came about through the masterplan work and viability testing which

Item 06 Appendix 3 Summary and response to comments on Axminster Masterplan

	<p>demonstrated that it was necessary to expand the site in order to deliver a viable development and the relief road.</p> <p>It is not intended to sweep the local plan aside but it is clear that the aspirations of the local plan for Axminster cannot be achieved without a greater scale of development.</p>
<p>Development needs to respect the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties.</p>	<p>This principle is well established in the policies of the Local Plan and proposals that do not adequately respect the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties will not be granted.</p>
<p>The masterplan will split the town in 2 by creating a new centre around the industrial site. Will new retail space in the development divert trade from the town centre?</p>	<p>It is not intended to create a new town centre within the site and divert trade from it. The proposed neighbourhood centre would provide a much smaller facility to meet the immediate needs of residents and would not be of a scale or provide the level of facilities that would compete with the town centre.</p>
<p>There is a need to consider the regeneration of the town centre alongside the masterplan</p>	<p>While beyond the scope of the masterplan comments about the wider issues in the town are being noted for future work.</p>