



## WILLITON PARISH COUNCIL

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16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

### FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL CONCERNING

#### THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN TO 2032.

From Williton Parish Council

In putting forward this representation we are referring to the proposed policies at MD1, MD2, WA1, WA2 and the recent document outlining the “**INSPECTOR’S MATTERS AND ISSUES**” Matter 6.

The Parish Council are concerned about the proposed development of both Minehead and Watchet due to the impact it will have on the **environment** and **infrastructure** of Williton, because of the increased volume of traffic and resources needed to build the proposed developments.

#### **MD1 and MD2**

You will be aware that the two main roads, A39/A358, are the only two main roads in and out of the town of Minehead, if they wish to travel to and from Bridgwater or Taunton. Williton being the centre and cross road of these two main and very busy roads. At the present moment there can be in excess of 8,000 - 10,000 vehicles a day pass through Williton. The Community Speed Watch (CSW) can record between 700/800 vehicles an hour, on Tower Hill (A358) or Long Street (A39), at the present time (please see Annexe A). In the summer it would be more. If the increase in the population of Minehead goes ahead at the present predicted figures the pressure on the road infrastructure would be enormous. The Highways Authority/Network can barely cope now. We live on a flood plain and frequently, in the winter, the road leading into Minehead floods and becomes impassable. Some of the small villages en-route, Washford, Bilbrook and Carhampton, have difficulty coping now, with the increase it will become even worse.

With the increase in the volume of traffic comes the increase in the threat to the environment with the increase in exhaust emissions. The population of the village and visitors have to use the roads that the vehicles travel along, due to the geographical lay out of the village. There is no by-pass for the vehicles to be diverted around. A by-pass was discussed, and requested on previous planning applications, but was rejected but was included as part of the proposed village master plan which was subject to consultation, reference to this can be found on West Somerset Council website.

As most of the large vehicles that would be used in any development would be diesel, the exhaust emissions (carbon dioxide) would increase. Therefore, a threat to the general health and wellbeing of the village. There would have to be proper consultations with all of the service providers with regard to the GP Practises, Hospitals, Schools and Emergency Services, because of the increase in population and their ability to cope with the increases and funding.

With the increase in the population also brings with it the requirement for employment. There is not enough employment in the area at the moment, how will the town and surrounding areas cope with the influx of new families? Transport becomes a problem again. When you look at the poor standard of bus services, at the moment, with no plans to improve it, there is difficulty getting in and out of Minehead, and servicing the villages and towns en route. Williton and Watchet being the main ones. The young cannot take up jobs, because the buses do not run at times to fit in with shift work, which has been evidenced by the problems experienced by present applicants through the Employment Hub.

### **WA1 and WA2**

Williton has just gone through a period of disruption during the building of the roundabout at Washford Cross. During the build the road infrastructure had to be re-routed to allow HGV to get on site. There is potential for this to happen again. Any vehicles travelling to WA1 will have to travel through Williton, to Washford Cross and then up to the site at "Parsonage Farm". You will then have the problem of traffic entering and leaving the site, which is a very busy road between the two villages and access to other routes, namely the A39. WA2, the Liddymore Development. This development, if it is allowed to go ahead, encroaches into Williton's boundary. Williton Parish Council has not been consulted on the recent proposed developments of the site. We would also like to highlight the fact that there are no pedestrian links from the proposed settlement within the Parish to the local schools and the village commercial centre. If it is allowed to go ahead we would raise the issue of where the road is being proposed to come out onto Doniford road. The road floods badly during heavy rain. The whole drainage infrastructure would have to be looked at. Building, at all, on the land would have to be considered carefully due to the fact that there are serious surface water issues. Also there is a natural spring under the ground, which overflows when the water levels rise.

Inspectors Matters and Issues, **Matter 6**. With regard to the Catwell development which is being potentially re-considered the Parish Council would rely on the findings on the recent studies in relation to the suitability of this site in particular the concerns of access onto the main A358. If the inspector was to consider this site, **W12**, for development, again, we would ask him to consider carefully the report already submitted in the Local Plan. This area forms part of the flood meadow should the Monksilver Stream over flow. Also there is the heritage site, Battlegore Barrow, (a Scheduled Ancient Monument). If a housing development was to be built next to it, a lot of protection would have to be put in place. The land is part of the Wyndham Estate and is a popular walking area. There are also other conservation issues to be considered. The Parish Council would ask to be represented if any application for its inclusion was made.

Robert McDonald  
Chairman, Williton Parish Council

\* Annexe A

The figures for Tower Hill are:

16,693 on 30 sessions = 556.4/hour; >10% of which we estimate are exceeding 35 mph

The figures for Long Street are:

13,927 on 28 sessions. Removing 1 mid-evening and 2 winter weekend sessions, we are left with

13,147 on 25 sessions = 525.9/hour; >5% of which we estimate are speeding  
(excluding "the ramp")

These figures exclude traffic entering/leaving Dovetons