



# ILCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL

*The Ancient Roman Town of Lindiniæ*

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SSDC Planning Office

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## **15/00024/OUT LAND NORTH OF TROUBRIDGE PARK – DEVELOPMENT ILCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for sight of the outline planning permission proposal for the subject development which was lodged with you on 24 Dec 14 and forwarded to us at the earliest opportunity for comment. We are surprised that this is the first formal notification that the Parish has received of the development despite you having been in discussion with the developers since Jun 14 and there being a limited public consultation on 12 Nov 14, subsequent to which we arranged a limited briefing to the Parish Council in Dec14. The tight timelines have given us little time for detailed comment and Public consultation but we have done some.

These comments represent the collective views of Ilchester Parish Council, Ilchester Town Trust, Ilchester Schools and some tenants of the Defence Estate in Ilchester. It is noted that the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and the landlords of the Defence Estate at Troubridge Park have made separate comment.

### **Preservation of the Rural Centre**

**Planning Proposal Comment.** It is important to sustain and enhance Ilchester's role as a Rural Centre, with a level of development that is commensurate with the size, accessibility, character and environmental constraints of the town. The Local Plan will therefore support the development of around 141 dwellings over the plan period, up to 2028, which is considered to be deliverable through the Development Management process.

**IPC Comment.** This is strongly supported by the Parish. There are 4 critical areas of the Rural Centre infrastructure that require enhancement prior to the development taking place and we seek your assistance in working with the Parish to start moving this forward now.

- Ilchester Surgery. We have been advised that the Surgery, who have confirmed with NHS England, cannot cater for additional numbers as it is at capacity both in numbers and particularly space. We plan to work with the Surgery to examine the feasibility of its re-location and building a new surgery and dispensary on the currently empty site of the Somerset Carriage Company in the centre of the village, which will be available for purchase over the next 2 years. We would seek your support to moving forward with this plan now as without it medical support will not be available for the new development, and even starting now, facilities will not be available before 2017 which is our estimate of the earliest that construction on the site could occur.
- Community Facilities. The additional 150 homes will be a 20% increase in the number of civilian homes in the Parish and the current community facilities available in the Town Hall are antiquated and outdated. Concurrent with the development, these require upgrading to cater for the increase in the population, and we welcome your plan to provide funds under Section 106 to update these facilities. It is noted that the Defence Infrastructure provides a social and welfare facility at the Tall Trees Community Centre co-located within the Defence Estate in the Parish. Whilst this is now available to all in the Parish through a Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant, it is not core infrastructure supported by the Parish.
- Ilchester Schools. There is currently limited capacity and the school would require additional permanent classroom accommodation in order to provide for the number of children projected to be living within the 150 proposed houses. This should be coupled with an opportunity to redevelop the whole facility, possibly on a single site which would aid access and control. This must occur before development starts to allow the facilities required to be available once occupancy of the new estate starts.
- Car Parking. There remains a dearth of parking in the Rural Centre and to meet the needs of the enhanced population, faced with over a half mile walk to facilities, additional parking will need to be provided. A site is available and its acquisition should be considered in the Local Plan.

Because of the unusual geography of Ilchester, there is a real risk that the development will have a deleterious effect on the sustainability of the Rural Centre, unless precautions are taken. In the future, perhaps even beyond 2026, there could be a drift of facilities, businesses and retail infrastructure towards the northern end as the housing continues to grow. We cannot overemphasize the need to maintain a stimulus to the economy of the core village to prevent its dying.

## **Environmental Protection**

**Planning Proposal Comment.** The emerging Local Plan provides a settlement hierarchy, which confirms that the bulk of growth outside Yeovil should be in Market Towns and Rural Centres. Policy SS1 confirms that Ilchester is a Rural Centre, which has a local service role where provision for development will be made that meets local housing need, extends local services and supports economic activity appropriate to the scale of the settlement.

**IPC Comment.** We are concerned that the proposal only meets the needs of local housing, it adds nothing to extending local services nor supporting additional economic activity and this needs to be addressed. Without considering these points all that will be provided are 150 commuter homes which will add to congestion across the Parish which has already been highlighted in our SCC endorsed Transport Strategy. This Strategy remains unfunded and we would wish to see it funded and delivered prior to construction, and before the increase in commuter traffic from the projected over 400 additional cars start to transit the Parish.

## **Sustainable Location**

**Planning Proposal Comment.** The Spatial Portrait for Ilchester provided in the Local Plan confirms that due to the presence of RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester is a strong location for employment. The settlement also provides a retail and community service role, with a few convenience stores, a post office, infant and junior schools and a doctor's surgery. There are both regular and demand responsive bus services to Yeovil, Taunton and Street. Ilchester is considered by SSDC's own assessment to be a sustainable location capable of accommodating at least 140 dwellings.

**IPC Comment.** We remain concerned that there is an over-emphasis on the employment opportunities available at RNAS Yeovilton, especially after the reduction of the RN Personnel and their civilian support and a large increase in Army personnel who have less civilian support but will have an increased level of Army support from other units temporarily detached to this area to provide this support. The employment forecast in the Local Plan is that jobs in Ilchester will grow by over 400 before 2028, Current MoD operations indicate that the opposite may be more correct. It is our view that the planned housing will be largely taken up by Somerton and Yeovil commuters.

Similarly, the size of the school and its viability and ability to cope with the increased numbers needs to be addressed by SCC, and this must occur before development starts to allow the facilities required to be available once occupancy of the new estate starts.

## **The Transport Statement**

**Planning Proposal Comment.** The statements made are:

- The proposed layout of the development will ensure a good level of accessibility for the site and between the site and local facilities and amenities for non-car modes of transport.
- The proposed site access arrangements are appropriate to serve 150 residential dwellings and are expected to operate efficiently.
- The forecast traffic associated with the proposed development will not have a material impact on the operation or safety of the existing local highway network.
- The internal layout of the site will provide priority towards pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with national Manual for Streets guidance and will also provide direct pedestrian and cycle links onto the old Roman Road to the east

of the site. The site has been demonstrated to comply with local and national planning guidance and satisfies the transportation requirements, which are set out as part of these policies.

- It is finally concluded that there are no valid highway or transport reasons, which should prevent the proposed development of the land. The site is suitable for the proposed new residential development.

**IPC Comments.** Notwithstanding the comments made in the proposal and their adherence to national guidelines, we have major reservations and wish to see changes to the transport strategy.

- Broadsword Park is a quiet Married Officers Quarter Area where children play in the quiet cul-de-sacs and play parks are adjacent to the highway with no safety area or separation zones. We consider that it is inappropriate to have the traffic from the new homes transiting this area and would wish to see a safer exit from the new estate through the old Fosse Way, or through a new construction to the North of the site. The former would require a revised road junction at its junction with the B3151 (Called Roman Road in the plan) and would set the scene for future developments in the area and the already agreed development of Hainbury Farm, in Yeovilton Parish. This new entrance point would have to take account of the residents of Fosseway Court, farm traffic and dog walkers that use the Old Fosse Way.
- Should this not happen we would insist on severe traffic calming across the transit road through Broadsword Park to limit the maximum speed of vehicles. Additionally, the increase in numbers attending the school will give a major increase in crossing by minors of the B3151 and we would expect the current uncontrolled crossing to be upgraded to controlled. This will also act as traffic calming, conforming to the Parish Transport Strategy.
- The school has no objection to the building of houses on the land however they have significant concerns over the access to the new houses as this would mean a substantial increase in traffic and subsequent danger to their existing and new children as they made their way to and from school and in crossing the road via the two crossings.
- Broadsword Park is unsuitable for heavy vehicles and a separate entrance will be needed from the Old Fosse Way to the proposed development to allow free access to the site. This will then form the basis for a separate entrance to the estate as above.
- It should be noted that the residents of the 14 properties of Fosse Way Court do not support this line and would not wish to see the additional traffic flow.

*Yours faithfully*

*N/Kinder*