

Mid Devon District Council Scrutiny Proposal Form

(This form should be completed by Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the District Council's remit.

Proposer's name and designation	Sue Robinson (Cullompton Padbrook)	Date of referral	30 th November 2024
Proposed topic title	Cullompton's chief concerns – The Relief Road – J28 – the Railway Station – Culm Garden Village – and the need to Scrutinise with great attention to detail at this particular time		
Link to national, regional and local priorities(Corporate Plan) and targets	<p>The previous Govt (Conservative) awarded the Railway station, and it was due begin service in Sept 2025. The current Govt (Labour) has now taken that agreement back. The platform is still in place, and it would not be a costly job to reinstate a station, with ticket machine. The whole principle of a Garden Village is to reduce private vehicle use, and to rely upon all available means of public transport instead. Without a railway station our Culm Garden Village will be lacking a vital transport hub.</p> <p>The town was recently awarded its long sought after Relief Road, after 20 years' of campaigning. Work is scheduled to begin in early Spring 2025, with a completion date towards the end of 2026, or just into early Spring 2027. Emergency vehicles and overspill traffic from J28 will then be able to avoid our historic town centre, with its very narrow pavements, and will clear much of the air pollution that currently affects the centre of our town. Building is progressing in our Culm Garden Village, which is situated across the M5 from the rest of Cullompton. Currently there is an absolute limit of 500 homes being completed, sold and inhabited, prior to work being completed to alter J28 so as to better suit the needs of residents in our Garden Village. J28 work has yet to be approved for funding, and this has already become Cullompton's most urgent pressure point. Both slip roads, leading to and coming from, Exeter, need to be removed, and then replaced elsewhere on the nearby access routes to and from the M5. We need as much Scrutiny of these requirements as is possible, especially since MDDC has no legal jurisdiction over Highways, but must always work in partnership with DCC.</p> <p>Only when J28 has been suitably remodelled can work on the Garden Village continue, to the estimated 5000 homes, or even beyond that limit. There are 3 developers currently bidding to build parts of the Village, planning consent has been given, local consultations have been held BUT we are no closer to knowing what will be decided about J28, nor, perhaps, about the railway station. This request for in depth scrutiny around these issues aims to try and provide more clarity, and a realistic timeline for the completion of the projects.</p>		

<p>Background to the issue</p>	<p>MDDCs current Local Plan contains all of the detail of each of these 4 projects. Planning consent has been granted for the Culm Garden Village. 3 developers are present and waiting for essential updates. The Town Centre Relief Road has recently gained approval, and funding. MDDC is working in partnership with DCC Highways, with the intent of a start date in early 2025, and a completion date of late 2026/early 2027. The railway station was granted approval, then that approval was more recently removed, by our current (Labour) Govt. Culm Garden Village plans are well advanced. J28 work is essential, and before any more than 500 homes have been built, sold and occupied (of a current plan for 5000, which could itself be increased). MDDC will need to work in partnership with DCC Highways on this project, whose approval is now slowing down work in and around the Garden Village, and with no sign of that decision being anywhere close to fruition.</p>
<p>List main points this report should cover (What do you want to achieve?)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town Centre Relief Road – start and completion dates made public, and then adhered to. 2. J28 decisions made – and made public- with appropriate timelines. 3. Cullompton Railway Station decision reversed from the current one – and to revert to Sept 2025 start of service consent granted. 4. Culm Garden Village building works ‘held to 500 homes completed, sold and occupied’ until such time as J28 work has been completed.
<p>Should this be referred to the appropriate PDG/ Committee?</p>	<p>No, it needs intense scrutiny as these projects are developed. J28 agreement to modify, as consulted on and approved, is the most critical factor to determining the speed of progress on the Village.</p>
<p>What degree of priority is this issue? 1 = Urgent 2= High 3=Medium 4=Low</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is extremely necessary at this time, particularly the J28 decision and funding, with timelines publically known.

Proposing an item for the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

