

North West Cullompton Urban Extension

Masterplan SPD Stage 2 Consultation Summary

In total, there were 120 valid responses received during the consultation period which ran from the 20th August – 1st October 2015.

Responses were received via mail, email, a comments box at Cullompton Town Hall and through an online questionnaire. This document summarises the responses received.

- 1. The proposed masterplan document sets out a series of guiding principles which should be followed in drawing up detailed planning applications. These guiding principles are set out in pages 34-39 of the draft masterplan and relate to urban design, movement and transport, landscape, open space and recreation, socially equitable, economy and employment, energy and resource efficiency and character. Do you agree with the proposed guiding principles as set out?**

Of the 120 respondents, 19% supported the guiding principles set out in the masterplan. However, 3% were concerned about how the Council would ensure that these were delivered. Five percent of respondents were concerned about the number of parking spaces for each property within the development. Other comments referred to the construction of the link road, economic development and self-build homes.

Guiding Principles

“The partnership between local government and commercial developers will need to be balanced in favour of ensuring that the latter adhere to and deliver the principles.”

“The guiding principles have all of the correct buzz words and ideas but fail to say how the Council will make the developers keep to these principles.”

“I do not believe that these will be adhered to, and feel that the need to run another consultation is trying to wear down the opposition.”

“The principles in this masterplan will be fantastic for Cullompton; an alternative road network to get from North to South is many decades overdue. Additional infrastructure in the forms of employment and retail will be a huge bonus for Cullompton.”

“The plan claims in principle 3.3 (C1) to be shaped around existing character and features, but in fact contravenes this directly by removing one of the Cullompton Rugby Club pitches.”

“Should the world or indeed British economy suffer a recession as has been the case over the recent-past years or should the developers default on their payments, is there a contingency in place to complete the work?”

Parking

“Each home will have two cars, will there be adequate parking?”

“Each home should have at least two car parking spaces to minimise on street parking.”

“Despite what regulations say, if 3, 4 and even 5 bedroom houses are to be built; the number of parking spaces must be realistic for the number of occupants.”

“All houses should have parking for two cars.”

Transport

“The new link road used for the development should be the first construction to assist with the building.”

“The construction of the link road to service this development should not interfere with St George’s View.”

“A southern link to the motorway should be put into place first before any building – this will ease current congestion through the town.”

Other Comments

“The land set aside for youth, children and other community uses appears to be only 1ha. Given the increased numbers of homes, this should be increased.”

“There is bound to be extra run off of water with the proposed development, and I am obviously concerned that the extra will cause even more flooding.”

“Is there a strategy to ensure sustainable economic development so that Cullompton does not become a huge commuter town?”

“There is no provision made for self-build homes, my suggestion, following South Molton Council’s initiative that at least 24+ plots are made available for “Self-Build”.

- 2. The proposed masterplan envisages 1100 houses, 10,000sq metres of employment floor space, a primary school, community centre, local centre, at least 5 gypsy and travellers pitches and more than 28 hectares of green infrastructure including sports pitches, equipped play areas and allotments. Do you agree with the proposed uses? Do you agree with the location of the proposed uses as set out in the framework plan on page 43 of the draft document?**

Whilst many supported the proposed play areas, some respondents opposed as they believed that these are currently underused and are difficult or expensive to maintain. Six percent of respondents expressed concern about the lack of space allocated for sports facilities and in particular, highlighted the need for more space for Cullompton Rugby Club. Furthermore, 5% of respondents were concerned that there was insufficient provision for medical facilities to accommodate the increased population of Cullompton.

Play Areas

"I don't really understand why some play areas could be closed and yet the new developments are going to have some."

"Small play areas are expensive to maintain and are not at all imaginative for children."

"Would like to see accessible open spaces for picnics and leisure use- i.e. family play areas."

Sports Facilities

"I believe that policy should lead to more space for playing rugby and this on a site which is integrated with support structures such as a clubhouse and changing facilities and ability for a section to be owned by one sporting group."

"The amount and quality of playing fields should be provided on site for the community and legal mechanisms should be in place to protect the dual use of school playing fields"

"Locating a sports field on the top of a hill will make playing sports more difficult when it is wet and windy."

"Yes, but we need to make sure the Cullompton Rugby Club has enough pitches and space for facilities etc. There is arguably barely enough at the moment."

"There should be a town swimming pool provision as a therapy and leisure pool."

"Cullompton Rugby Club needs more pitches and facilities to enable them to cope with increasing numbers."

Capacity of medical facilities

"Are local medical facilities large enough to cope with the number of people who will live in this new area?"

"New medical facilities should be provisioned as the existing centre is already very busy."

"There is no proposed health centre; it takes up to 3 weeks now to get an appointment with your own doctor. Surely this should be a priority."

"The increase has to be addressed with increase medical facilities."

"Provision of a further surgery should be considered essential and space should be allocated within the plan."

"How will our already overstretched local health centre and dentists manage with the influx of people?"

"There should be a provision for a 1 acre community garden attached to the College Rd Surgery and Integrated Health Centre."

“There is going to be at least another 2000+ people in Cullompton with only 2 doctor’s surgeries in the town. It is difficult enough to get an appointment without the added 2000 people fighting to be seen.”

Location of School

“The position of the primary school adjacent to the main link road is unacceptable. Too dangerous for young children”

“The school is not in a central location to the town, only to the new development and is also located where species rich hedgerows currently are.”

Other Comments

“There is no provision for self-build properties. The whole scheme has been conceived by major land developers affording little opportunity for local builders and small scale local developers to become involved.”

“The location should be on the eastern side. Then all extra traffic could access the motorway without interfering with all the residents from Padbrook, Kingfisher Reach, Langlands and St George’s View.”

“I think the scale of the development is fundamentally too large... There is a risk of yet more large blocks of indifferent housing bolted in an unwieldy fashion onto the existing community.”

“The residential development immediately south of Rull Lane and north of the proposed allotments and school is inappropriate. This should be replaced with further community orchards and allotments.”

- 3. The Council must ensure that infrastructure is provided in a timely manner alongside the development, without making the development unviable. Of the infrastructure that the development is expected to provide, the masterplan looks to prioritise the delivery of a primary school site and the new road that will link Willand Road with Tiverton Road. Do you agree with the prioritisation of the primary school and the road?**

34 of the 120 representations (28%) supported the prioritisation of the road and the school. However, there were some concerns about the current position of the link road and how the primary school would be delivered.

“The priority of the road construction is the greatest.”

“How can the school priority be met if the link road is not in place first?”

“It is so important that all infrastructure is in place and funded before building is started. We have been let down too many times in Cullompton with promises which never materialise.”

“The road must be wide enough to discourage vehicles from parking on the pavements as demonstrated on the second phase of Swallow Way.”

“Surely the safer route for the link to West Cullompton would be from the roundabout at the Willand end of Millenium Way and skirting the proposed development.”

“The road should be wide enough for cars and buses to pass without restriction.”

“As the transformation of a B road into a link road is highly likely to have a negative impact on both house prices and saleability, what compensation will be offered to the residents living adjacent to the site?”

“In its current position the link road only serves to move bottle necks and cause rat runs, pollution and stress to those living alongside the affected roads.”

“It is critical that you prioritise the school, but I am not convinced that you will even achieve this given that we are now on another consultation.”

“Of everything mentioned a speedy completion of the road must be of paramount above all else.”

- 4. In order to reduce the time taken to build the road linking Willand Road with Tiverton Road it is proposed to construct it from both ends at the same time and then join these ends together. This will require the formation of a temporary vehicular access from St George’s View which would be closed to traffic when the road opens.**

There was significant objection (39% of the 120 respondents) to the use of St George’s View as a temporary access road. Some of the main factors identified from the responses are; the level of disruption, noise, dirt and dust, concerns that the road is not wide enough, the devaluation of property, traffic congestion, assurance that developers would adhere to the proposed timeframe and whether compensation would be given should this overrun. Of the 120 respondents 12% objected to the removal of a tree on St George’s View for the temporary access route. These objections referred to the presence of a tree preservation order, the age and health of the oak tree, the destruction of wildlife/habitats and the trees appearance within the setting of St George’s View.

Use of St George’s View as a temporary access route

“It will impact on all who live on this estate; our quality of life will be gone. I have lived here for over 50 years and it is a great place to live. This is going to be taken away.”

“I am totally against you using our road as is everyone else on the estate.”

“The road is too narrow, our houses will be devalued, wildlife will be seriously affected, lorries and construction vehicles would make life unbearable for residents, will have a serious impact on the health and well-being of some of the elderly residents. An alternative route should be sought.”

“Vehicular access could be for three years and feel that compensation should be paid to the home owners if this takes any longer.”

"There is a safety factor with the construction vehicles going up and down. Is the road strong enough to take the weight?"

"Surely complete the junction now for when the link road is complete and then there would be no need to open up at the end of St George's View. Developers could get access from Tiverton Road."

"Surely if the link road between Willand road and Tiverton Road is created as dwellings are built from each end, access for all vehicles involved in the construction will be easier."

"I strongly protest at the use of this road for this purpose as it would be dangerous and impossible on such a narrow residential road."

"A sale of a property has just fallen through when the prospective purchaser learned of this plan."

"We can already envisage devaluation of property. Indeed No 4 recently on the market, proposed buyer has withdrawn when learning of your proposals."

"There are many retired residents living here and they would be subjected to this noise/dust/dirt all day long, they would not have the 'escape' of going to work."

"Looking forward we can see muddy roads, congested traffic with lorries entering and leaving noise and dust. We are also concerned about the safety of all residents being an open planned estate."

"St George's View was built in 1963/64 and is so narrow that construction traffic would have difficulty passing each other."

"We are being told that this access road will be open for between 2-3 years, we see this as a minimum figure and are not convinced that cul-de-sac status will be returned after this period."

"I have already suffered long delays waiting behind bin lorries, service vehicles etc when attempting to get to the surgery."

"The use of this road for all construction traffic to the site would be massively detrimental to the quality of life for all existing residents and would alter the 'feel' of the road."

"These people are now faced with the instant devaluation of their property, now that these plans have been released, and three years of noise and traffic chaos, with no offer of compensation."

"The amount of building traffic would be unsuitable for St George's View and once a temporary access has been obtained, the time of its closure is not guaranteed."

"Surely it is possible to get a loan in order to build the road (and that is on the plans) and then repay it when the houses are built?"

"Prior to the use of St George's View, a full capacity assessment of the junction should be carried out to assess its ability to accommodate both construction and operational traffic. In addition a review of the alternatives which have been considered should be undertaken."

"The proposed location of the junction with Willand Road will greatly increase traffic going past the existing houses. Joining the link road at the lower roundabout would alleviate this."

"I would seek assurance that such timescales are legally binding and agreed compensation available when these are not met."

"This is having an effect on our houses already as my neighbours buyer has pulled out of the sale as they have young children and feel the road would be unsafe."

"The proposed link road was to be started simultaneously from Tiverton Road and Willand Road, and access via St George's View was required to achieve that. Why, when St George's View is a long way from either end of the link road when access is easier from both ends."

"The cul-de-sac will become such a mess that residents will feel we are living on the building site ourselves."

"A totally new road needs to be built around Cullompton with the new Primary School site off that road possibly in the area where the houses are planned. The new ring road should link into the motorway at Little Copse or possibly Verbeer Manor area and perhaps at Fagin's Antique Centre."

Removal of the Tree on St George's View

"There is a tree that is 60 years old and has a preservation order on it – appears this doesn't mean anything, pay the fine and chop it down."

"The removal of the Oak tree is permanent and is not acceptable to most of the residents of St George's View."

"There is a beautiful oak tree with a preservation order which blocks the entrance to the building site. Surely this must be acknowledged and preserved."

"You state 'Development should protect and enhance existing important fauna and flora across the site.' How can you justify cutting down this oak tree just to make the project easier to access? (It even has a preservation order on it which I believe you can ignore if it suits you)."

"Sacrilege to remove existing ancient oak trees in St George's View for 'temporary' access."

"We understand that there is a preservation order on the large oak tree at the end of the road, surely that must be preserved."

"The impact of the trees being felled and all the building works is upsetting – bearing in mind that the field in question is home to badgers and bats among other animals."

"We feel that the Council is being hypocritical towards the felling of the oak trees. It seems if money is to be made, the Council shows double standards!"

"The tree has a preservation order on it – what's the point of it if you are going to ignore it? What makes it worse is that it's all in vain – just for temporary access."

“These trees are beautiful, they herald the countryside that we love and have been here a lot longer than any of us have – St George’s View was built without disturbing these, surely you can offer the same level of courtesy and do the same this time around.”

5. The proposed masterplan sets out on page 71 trigger points for when infrastructure is expected to be delivered. Do you agree with the trigger points suggested in the draft masterplan for the following key areas?

- **Access and Transport, Education, Community Building, Employment, Local Centre, Green Infrastructure, Gypsy and Traveller pitches.**

Of the 120 respondents, 13% expressed concern about traffic congestion throughout Cullompton. Several comments referred to the increased pressure on Junction 28 of the M5 as well as increased traffic congestion within Cullompton High Street. Additionally, a number of respondents questioned the need for another community building, it was suggested that this was unnecessary when other community buildings were struggling. Twenty eight percent of respondents expressed support for the proposed education infrastructure within the masterplan. There was some support for the allocation of gypsy and traveller pitches (13%) however some questioned the need and location of them.

Access and Transport

“There will be many more houses. The Willand/Tiverton relief road will deal with traffic to and from these directions but there will be far more vehicles wanting to access the M5 at Cullompton. There is no provision for this.”

“If you are building more houses you need to put in a new railway station.”

“The masterplan states ‘The transport assessment will need to demonstrate the impacts on Tiverton Road are acceptable’. This is very worrying that it still needs confirmation. What if it is not acceptable? Is there a plan B?

“No further development should be started until a town centre relief road is in place.”

“The road provision addresses access for the new houses and facilities but not the unsatisfactory traffic situation in Cullompton.”

“There are current issues at the M5 Jct 28 involving traffic backing up down the slip roads at busy times which should be addressed and resolved prior to commencement of any further developments in Cullompton.”

“I think it is absurd not to address the issue of the High Street and the centre of Cullompton traffic issues properly before starting this development the proposed road changes look wholly inadequate at present.”

“There is so much concentrated on the north end of Cullompton when all traffic has to use the same route to connect to motorway.”

“The footpath to the north of Rull Hamlet is not a public right of way. We are unaware that any permission has been obtained from the owner of this private lane prior to its inclusion in the masterplan...If no such permission is present then it should be removed from the masterplan.”

“Cullompton needs a railway station.”

“It would be far safer and environmentally better for the new road to link directly to the existing roundabout at Willand Road/Millennium Way as shown in option 1. Millennium Way has no frontage access and therefore would be the much safer and more appropriate route for the increased traffic that the new development will generate.”

Education

“The County Council would expect the freehold of the land to be transferred prior to the commencement of development to ensure that the school can be delivered at an early stage.”

Community Building

“Often in the local paper there is a plea for support – both financially and for volunteers to keep the community venues open and running. It begs the question why there is an intention to put yet more facilities in the area instead of promoting the facilities that already exist within Cullompton?”

“If interpretation of government policies is for community buildings to be depleted across the country, I can’t understand why we are proposing a new building.”

“There are a good number of existing community buildings in Cullompton and additional ones are not considered a priority.”

Employment

No specific comments made in response to this question.

Local Centre

No specific comments made in response to this question.

Green Infrastructure

“The proposals provide very little GI between the school and the current town centre. Surely this should be the area where the GI of the allocated land is sited?”

“Don’t fully understand the vastness needed for Green Infrastructure, as all of the adjoining areas to the development are green.”

Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

“The area chosen would appear to be the best location for a Gypsy and Traveller site. However, there are concerns that it should not just become a dumping ground for people and it should be well designed for the purpose intended.”

“The County Council supports the provision of gypsy and traveller pitches within the masterplan area.”

“We believe it would be sensible for the traveller pitches to be places in an area not habituated by permanent residents.”

Other General Comments

“Timescale appears to be vague in most of these matters.”

“The trigger points are vague as they refer to stage progress and not timescales.”

“What penalties are provisioned for, if say the closure of St George’s View extends beyond the suggested 2.5 years?”

“Why build more parks if the parks around Cullompton are at risk of closure...waste of money.”

“The allotments, Community Orchard and the Community Composting Scheme should all be on one site rather than being fragmented.”

6. The proposed masterplan at pages 64-67 identifies that the development is expected to come forward in 2 phases. Do you agree with the proposed phasing?

Of the 120 respondents, 18% supported the proposed phasing strategy. However, there were some objections including the financial and legal implications of the phasing strategy and the proposed use of St George’s View as a temporary access route.

“Phase 1 is very inconvenient to the residents of St George’s View.”

“I support the planned phasing apart from the use of St George’s View.”

“All of the land required for the link road should have completed contracts before it even starts. Ideally the land should be purchased to avoid any one plot not becoming available.”

“Is it possible that Phase 2 might commence before Phase 1 is completed?”

“Yes, once the need has been firmly established and that agreement is reached that any agreed phasing must be legally binding as so often we see requirements palmed off by developers.”

“I believe the infrastructure including roads should be in place prior to anything else, and that includes the provision of health services which are already over-stretched.”

“Obviously there is a financial implication to completing the road and I can only imagine issues linked to the numbers in the phasing, but earlier completion of the road is essential for the town and long overdue.”

“Phase 1: Start at Willand Rd near the surgery as per plan. Start at Tiverton Rd as planned but bring forward the Phase 2 houses to be built in his area to Phase 1. Move the development of building polo adjacent to St George’s View to Phase 2 negating the need to use the St George’s View as an access road.”

“The increase in the trigger for the full link road from the occupation of 300 (in the previous version of the masterplan) to 500 dwellings before the completion of the link road is concerning and not apparently supported by evidence.”

7. Any other comments about the draft masterplan?

25% of respondents put forward the suggestion to allocate a section of land next to the Culm Valley Integrated Centre for Health for use as a Community Health Garden. Four percent of respondents were concerned about the impacts of the proposed development on the town centre of Cullompton. Other comments referred to the impacts on the town centre, visual impact, flood risk and heritage assets.

Community Health Garden

“It would be lovely for this [Community Health Garden] to take place for all concerned.”

“Similar community gardens throughout the country have proved to be a great asset to the locals. I see no reason why this should not prove to be of benefit and used by many.”

“As an ex-cancer patient and diabetic this garden would educate people with these conditions as well as mental health patients.”

“A small plot of land behind the surgery will complement the vegetable and herb garden and allow more people to enjoy this activity.”

“I feel that this is such a worthy project, please let it be accepted.”

“I would consider it vital to have some open space rather than an area totally covered by buildings as Cullompton is rapidly coming.”

“I think we need a community garden to help people understand where food comes from.”

“A worthwhile cause for numerous reasons: Educational, Functional, Environmental and money put into the community for all needs!”

“This would be a great help, not only for the disabled but to help sections of the community to meet and perhaps help others.”

“As the NHS is under a huge challenge as demands for treatment grow, this is the kind of initiative which is likely to be vital in the future and in the best interests of patients.”

“The garden will have a threefold purpose: to provide healthy outdoor activity for the gardeners, to provide and demonstrate attractive plants and healthy food and vegetables, and to provide an educational resource for patients, school children and others.”

“This is a forward thinking, innovative project with enormous potential to provide health benefits for the community and is the way of the future for health care.”

“The Health Garden has the potential to provide huge benefits not just for College Surgery patients, but for the whole community and potentially the new primary school.”

“A Community Health Garden would be a huge benefit to us all in helping us to look after our own wellbeing.”

“A little garden there would be a meeting place for new and established residents and would be an asset to estate and to the wider town.”

“I believe that such a garden would be a great asset both for the local community as well as for the Health Centre. It could provide a quiet area for some people to sit and enjoy the planting and wildlife whilst enabling others, including volunteers, to be active, to teach and learn gardening skills and to socialise in a safe environment.”

Town Centre

“Unless you can protect the High Street, the integrity of this Market Town, the Farmer’s Markets, the other Markets so that everything can continue to be enjoyed as a pleasant town to walk around and enjoy – no new housing, roads, or businesses should go ahead.”

“Turn Cullompton into the ancient market town it used to be in the 70s. The High Street could be pedestrianised, good free/cheaper car parks, interesting businesses and places to go, before you even consider more housing.”

Visual Impact

“We understand a large number of homes are going to be constructed. These will be a complete eyesore and totally destroy the rural feel of the area as well as destroying prime agricultural land.”

“Looking at the pictures at the back it will have a large visual impact on Bradninch – especially from Trinity etc and the top road but the provision of green areas and parks may ameliorate that.”

“The boundaries of Hilltop Park should be extended and any residential development approximate to the park should be of lower profile (e.g. bungalows) to avoid compromising the skyline.”

“The visual impact of development at a high level on the steep slopes of Rull Hill and St George’s View would appear to be inconsistent with existing development within Cullompton, to which there has been significant objection from the community. The Growen Land has no visual impact

concerns, and from Willand Road this development would sit directly behind the new elevated link road and local centre development."

Flood Risk

"There should be a contingency plan/financial fund should the provision not be robust enough in the event of sewerage, pipework, flooding or similar issues."

"We are concerned about the increased run off into the water meadow behind St George's View as this regularly floods during the winter, mainly because of the small water outlet underneath Willand Road."

"It is vital that any building work will ensure that runoff is diverted from Rull Lane and adequately drained elsewhere."

Other comments:

"When completed the development will be beneficial to Cullompton, but consideration must be given to those in St George's View, Willand Road and Close areas who will be affected for several years by construction traffic."

"The plan may be good for Cullompton development overall, but I am concerned that the prospects for Rugby in the town will be regressive and not developmental"

"These places will turn into tomorrow's slums if they are put up too cheaply and without adequate space"

"As a key stakeholder it is concerning to learn that Mid Devon DC has prepared the draft SPD in conjunction with the adjoining land promoters but without the involvement of Persimmon Homes."

"The developments in this area should contribute towards the improvement/expansion of capacity for recycling in the Mid Devon Area. Contributions will be calculated on a fair basis but the masterplan should reference the need for them."

"Has someone consulted with the residents of Willand who will have another 750-1000 cars passing through their village?"

"The effect of the building on the surrounding current housing should be noted including the possibility that current residential roads will be used as short-cuts by construction traffic and early new residents."

"The quality of the development is in question unless the Council can convince me that they have the power to control this and will exercise that power."

"In its current form the SPD is not supplemental to the adopted Development Plan, and may not reflect the provisions of the emerging plan once examined and adopted."

“It would be worth emphasising that should significant heritage assets be identified by archaeological investigations these could represent constraints to development of parts of the site, and may have an impact upon the layout of any development here.”