

## **Bovis Homes proposals for Matford/SW Exeter**

### **Comments BP5**

Bovis Homes' (BH) proposal for Matford/SW Exeter is substantially different from the Edge of Exeter plan of Teignbridge District Council (TDC), and will have a significantly greater impact on Alphington village than the TDC plan due to the greater number of houses closer to Alphington.

Although the comments are on Bovis Homes' proposals, the planners and councils have much to answer for in poor planning and poor coordination. In particular, in trying to get as much money as possible from the New Homes Bonus, the maximum density has been set far too high for this area. This is leading to a development half the size of Cranbrook in an area of significant landscape value and little supporting infrastructure. To cap it all a major trunk route runs through the middle of the development, making it impossible to create a distinct Matford village/settlement.

#### **a. Traffic**

Bovis propose to build 1000 homes north of the A379, 500 more than envisaged by Teignbridge District Council. This will add even more to the traffic through Alphington.

Alphington Primary School already has problems with cars and the junction of Ide lane with Chudleigh Road will become choked at peak times. There has been some alleviation in traffic in recent years probably due to the opening of the link road at Sainsburys, but 2000 new homes at Matford will add to the congestion through Marsh Barton, making the link road a less attractive route to Cowick Lane and St Thomas.

The future Marsh Barton station will do little to alleviate congestion, as there are no suitable parking facilities at stations to the west such as Starcross and Dawlish. Bridge Road to Countess Wear is a vital link and will not be able to cope with extra traffic generated by the new development.

Dawlish Road must be retained for traffic, to allow for alternative access to Alphington, however it must be re-engineered at the roundabout to make entry to the A379 safer. A clear majority of consultees in Alphington want to see Dawlish Road kept open for two-way traffic.

The T-junction at Chudleigh Road is unsuitable for present traffic as it is difficult and dangerous to turn right from Chudleigh Road. There have been several accidents here, and significant re-engineering of this junction will be required.

One way to take traffic off the A379 near Alphington would be to have a new junction on the M5 at Exminster. In order to save money this need only be for traffic to and from the A38, i.e. one on and one off slip road.

#### **b. Separation of Alphington and Matford developments.**

TDC envisaged a degree of green space between Alphington and the Matford settlement, with much of the area between Chudleigh Road and Dawlish Road being open space. However Bovis propose to build houses on most of this area with no separation, leading to urban sprawl and adding to pressure on Alphington amenities. Although this is cultivated land with currently no public access, it is visually attractive. It is essential that green spaces are provided and linked together.

### **c. Schools**

The positioning of schools is difficult to get right and will require very careful consideration by developers and planners. Bovis' proposed location for the secondary/through school is on the wrong side of the A379 for much of the housing they propose.

Alphington Primary school would be unable to cater for the demand from the extra 500 houses Bovis propose on the north of the A379.

Bovis have suggested that the reason for moving the secondary school location is due to the slope of the ground at the TDC location. Although the TDC site may be challenging it would not be impossible and with some careful design following the contours with curved façade, and using spoil from excavation perhaps as noise bunds an architecturally interesting solution might be found. In any case the ground at the Bovis location slopes, albeit not quite as much.

### **d. Park and Ride facility (P&R)**

A P&R should be located before built up areas, in order that cars do not add to urban congestion. Ideally the P&R for traffic from the A38 should be located near Peamore Farm/Tucker's garage.

The proposed park and ride location appears to have been chosen because Bovis want to use the TDC proposed position for a school. The proposed location will require an extra junction on the A379, slowing traffic on the A379, encouraging traffic to turn left on to Chudleigh Road.

The existing Matford P&R works reasonably well at present because the A379 is fast and relatively uncongested before the roundabout. It serves both the A379 and the road from Dawlish.

Finally the Bovis P&R would cover part of what could be an attractive valley park.

### **f. Wildlife/ Environment**

The fields to the south of Alphington, although mainly cultivated, provide a haven for wildlife including deer. They also act as a corridor for wildlife from the riverside to the hinterland around Shillingford. In particular Waybrook lane is one of the few crossing points of the A30, and should retain hedgerows with at least a five metres wide green

strip for wild life. Similarly for Markham Lane, which should be extended to Devon Motel area. Native tree species should be planted.

### **g. Shops**

The proposed shop location is at the school, on the high outer edge of the development. A better location would be closer to Devon Hotel, where it would be appropriate to have 3 storey flats with retail shops on the ground floor. This could also help to provide affordable housing close to transport links and shops.

### **h. Amenities**

Alphington's village hall and community centre will be unable to cope with new users in the northern Bovis development. With TDC plans it would have been just about acceptable.

The GP surgery is overstretched at present given the experience of existing patients and would be difficult to expand in its present location. The RDE hospital at Wonford already has much longer waiting times than previously and will be unable to cope with demands of new housing. Some provision should therefore be made for a GP practice at Matford.

### **i. Accessibility**

The major barrier to accessibility is the A379. DCC do not wish to impede traffic on this road, and the only light controlled junction should be at Chudleigh Road. Pedestrian bridges should be provided, for safety and to keep traffic moving. There is a natural point for such a bridge at the Chudleigh Road T junction, where the land is above road level on both sides. A new pedestrian bridge should be built near Devon Hotel to allow cycle and pedestrian access to the trading estate. The road should be widened to allow for a central reservation for safety purposes. The whole area of housing should have green pedestrian/cycle connections.

### **j. Density**

Average housing density should not exceed 30 dph. Flats in the area behind the Devon Hotel could be at 50 dph or so. They would support retail units and provide affordable housing.

### **k. Design**

New housing should be innovative and varied in design. Solar photo-voltaic (PV) systems should be integrated into roofs. Hipped roofs on dwellings increase light penetration and views of greenery.

### **l. Pollution**

The introduction of several junctions on the A379 will increase air pollution, due to stop/start traffic.

### **m. Collaboration**

Bovis should collaborate with other developers, the councils, and adjacent communities, to ensure a coherent development, especially near Devon Hotel where there should be a commercial heart.

### **n. Transport**

Buses run along the A379 from Newton Abbot, Plymouth and Torbay, and the new B bus route passes Devon Hotel. A new service from Matford to Pinhoe and Cranbrook would avoid the city centre and could link various employment sites with the new housing to the south and east of the city. The B bus could be routed through Alphington along Dawlish Road to serve new housing. All of these routes converge at the Devon Hotel where a bus station (basically a shelter with toilet facilities etc) could be created to act as an interchange.

### **o. Sports facilities.**

The Bovis proposal does not contain any provision for sports facilities. There are for instance no tennis courts in Alphington, and only one playing field. Matford will need its own access to a playing field.