

## Land Assessments

I once again find myself standing before this group feeling disenfranchised and that I am somehow the enemy.

When this project started almost three years ago at the very first meeting with [REDACTED] certain points were raised about the Neighbourhood Plan.

- A NP is a land use plan. It is not about stopping development but gives communities a greater say.
- It is prescriptive in process but tailored to community circumstances;
- The community needs to be engaged and consulted and will ultimately vote in a referendum;

The group then decided that:

- It would be useful to identify key local partners and stakeholders such as local organisations, groups, and individuals that have particular interest in Exbourne.

Community engagement would be assisted by good publicity.

All these points talked about engaging and consulting with the community. Yes we had news letters, yes we had questionnaires, yes we had the community consultation day. None of which really gave the landowners, stakeholders in this process like everyone else, a voice. You could vote for certain things but not, vote against them, if you see what I mean.

Throughout this whole three year process this group has not once, as far as I can ascertain, consulted, engaged, asked, questioned or talked to the landowners of the sites put forward for possible development. There has in fact been a deafening silence coming from this group about the very issue it was set up to look into.

At no point have any of this group asked any of the landowners what their vision for their own land is:

- How many houses, If any, they would want on their land?
- Where those houses could be placed?
- How any design and construction could limit the wider effect on the village
- How many parking spaces we would be willing to allocate to each house.

Surely there is much community benefit to be had from discussing things with the landowners, we have the ability to offer solutions to some of the issues you are looking at and to offer creative possibilities that could enhance village life. Some landowners are happy to explore the possibilities of providing for the village:

- a village green,
- a car park,
- public rights of way,
- passing places for traffic,
- Pavements
- Space for the school sports facilities

You have never asked us how we feel about West Devon's assessment of our land or explored with us whether there is some way of mitigating some of the negatives of those assessments.

I know West Devon did a desk top assessment of the land that was put forward by the various landowners. But you are not West Devon you are a local community group who answers to the

local parish council not West Devon. So why is it that no one on this group has come to talk to me or visit my land or any other landowner's land to make their own assessments. In fact how have you actually done the assessments, at the dead of night, using your psychic powers? Why have you not discussed with any of the landowners their objections, their suggestions, their ideas. Why have you not consulted with us?

I know the NP thinks Stowe Lane is the best site for development but what do they base this on? I thought the village voted for small developments of two and three houses integrated into the village. The two sites that were recommended by West Devon were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and.

- Why have we heard nothing about these two sites?
- Why have you not approached [REDACTED] as his field which abuts the new development behind the garage. He could negotiate access through their site.
- What about our own land? Why has our orchard not featured in your assessments, whereas the East Field has? It was put forward for assessment but does not appear to have been included.
- Why is the footpath through the church not mentioned in your assessment of our land as a means of access to the village centre?
- Why when mentioning road access in the assessment of our land, did you not mention that people can travel down Blenheim Lane to Holebrook Lane from our field and not just through the village?
- Why not make Blenheim Lane a one way road? We could offer access to the orchard through the pub, we could offer a village carpark, parking for the pub, a pub garden, a village green, a passing space down Blenheim Lane.

These are just some areas perhaps worth exploring, that I have come up with, without talking to the landowners involved. Surely these are the sort of solutions you should be exploring in consultation?

Material facts are also missing from the assessments. Surely this must put into question the impartiality and truth of the whole process? The assessments are quite subjective in that they mention putting a footpath in for Stowe Lane and screening and placing the houses in a position where they won't be seen. Why were these considerations not explored with other sites? Also the assessments vary greatly in that there seem to be some listed buildings in the village that appear to have been given greater significance than other listed buildings. They carry the same listing grade and do not appear in the assessments. What is going on?

This group was set up to consult with the community, with stakeholders with interested parties to find the best way forward for the housing. I find it totally unacceptable that what is meant to be a transparent, consultative process to try to find the best places to build Exbourne's housing allocation, has turned into a secretive process that has actually ignored and alienated the very people who could hold the key to this problem.

I will be approaching the Parish Council and West Devon about my concerns about this group ignoring one of its fundamental criteria - that of it being a transparent and consultative process.