

OUR PLACE IN THE FUTURE RESPONSE FORM

PLEASE RETURN BY 24 OCTOBER 2008

Question 1 (page 9):

Should we take the suggested steps to meet our identified needs?

No

If no, which steps should we leave out and why?

The suggestions outlined in (a) – (k) Pages 6 – 9 are fine if the steps are taken. Evidence shows that, for instance, the impact of (d) is not being considered. There appears to be a doctrine of solving the problems when they arise, not considering what problems are going to arise if (d) is approved. Therefore it is important to consider the impact of the increase in population on the infrastructure at the same time. Similarly “(h) Using new developments to solve local problems” have already been ignored. The recent development approved for Redrow Homes in Wick Lane by Salisbury District Council has totally ignored Downton Parish Council’s concerns. Particularly the increase in traffic entering Wick Lane and the considerable increase in children trying to cross a very busy road, which has an accident record, without proper crossing facilities being provided. This was something the developer acknowledged at a recent meeting but regrettably is doing nothing about this, simply because it is not required to.

When questions were asked of Forward Planning at the recent meetings about the document “Our Place in the Future” the question of Infrastructure was pushed aside. These issues are a priority to the people of Downton. Residents are concerned about the flood level in the area, the drainage problems, which are considered inadequate and the impact of both increased resident population and suggested labour force. The need for larger schools, better roads and medical facilities, to just mention a few points, are extremely relevant and the essence to a larger Downton.

Question 2 (page 10):

Do you agree with the ‘dispersed growth’ approach?

Yes

If no, which other approach would you suggest?

The suggestions outlined on page 13 for Downton over a 20 year period are not something which Downton Parish Council has any great opposition to. However, the employment suggestions are not something that the Parish Council or the public, as confirmed at a recent meeting, want to see.

There seems to be a clear intention to increase the size of the area for “increase sake” and by doing this little attempt is being made to preserve the qualities of South Wiltshire which makes it such a beautiful and successful part of the county in which to live and work.

With regard to Downton, there is no attempt to consider what an attractive and successful village has been created over hundreds of years. The proposals put forward would change the nature of the area significantly to no benefit.

The Parish Council does not see the need to increase the industrial usage of land in the village, which would increase the traffic problems and other infrastructure issues.

The Parish Council does not wish to see the village become the site of a large industrial estate. In Salisbury and Amesbury, in particular, there are large areas of land already available for such usage. It is suggested that employers see Downton as an attractive village (at the moment) handy as it is for Southampton and the M27/M3. If this is the case then proper provision for such businesses should be made in Hampshire, in closer proximity to the previously mentioned facilities. There is no logical argument to develop Downton in this way and in this age of “Green” issues it seems unrealistic to encourage such an increase.

The document seems to be saying, “bring employment for the sake of it and when it has arrived, we had better build the houses to accommodate the employees”. There is no realistic thought behind why this should be and there is no logic in increasing the size of the village. It seems to be a case of build for building sake, in an area where there is neither a need nor where it is practical on the scale suggested.

The Council also feels that no consideration is given to the problems of light and air pollution. The question of drainage in a low lying area is also of serious concern and the size of the development suggested would create considerable problems. Downton is basically a rural community, close to a National Park.

Question 3 (page 11):

Do you agree that these sites are appropriate to meet our needs?

Yes

If no, can you suggest any alternative sites?

The suggestions outlined on page 13 for Downton over a 20 year period are not something which Downton Parish Council has any great opposition to, provided the necessary infrastructure is considered. For instance, the present schools would not be big enough if there is a growth in the population.

Question 4 (page 15):

Do you agree that these sites are appropriate to meet our employment needs?

No

If no, can you suggest any alternative sites?

These are areas which Downton Parish Council has no problem with. However, as previously mentioned, the suggestion on Page 16 of managed growth in Downton is not something that makes any practical sense. Any growth of the present Industrial Site on the Salisbury Road will bring additional problems. There is no requirement for additional employment opportunities. The extension of the Estate would be ugly and create a most unpleasant and discouraging approach to the village.

Question 5 (page 15):

If these sites are developed, what type of business activity would you like to see?

Downton Parish Council has not considered this issue as it was not considered to be relevant to the authority. There is a view, however, that there should be a mix of usages.

	Offices	Research and Development	Light Industry	General Industry
Harnham Business Park				
Churchfields				
UKLF, Wilton				
Solstice Park, Amesbury				
Fugglestone Red				
Old Sarum				
Hampton Park				
Archers Gate, Amesbury				

Question 6:

Do you wish to make any other comments, including on any of the other issues discussed in this magazine or the previously published Preferred Options document ('The Black Book')?

Downton Parish Council is seriously concerned that Salisbury District Council's Employment Land Review document has not been made freely available to the public. It is a document which contains serious suggestions, particularly in relation to Downton. No attempt has been made to openly discuss these issues. Downton Parish Council has also made strong representation regarding the changing of the Conservation Area and is concerned that every effort is made to preserve its historic character and not have it changed into a conurbation of Salisbury, for change's sake.

At the present time the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (February 2008) is under review. Downton Parish Council holds the view that the suggested definition in this document is inadequate and far too tight. It is considered that the conservation area should comprise a large part of the footprint of Downton. It should contain those areas that are or will be developed in the future. This is so that the village can be developed in a systematic and sympathetic manner. Several of the suggested areas are on the "Gateways" into the village. The suggestion to extend the industrial estate without proper landscaping and presentation, will, and is all ready; creating a view that Downton is not an attractive village. Many people's first impression of Downton is when they travel along the A338. The view of the existing trading estate is not what is wanted. It could, however, be vastly improved with proper landscaping, i.e. seasonal colourful trees and beds and screening in front of the industrial buildings.

If this area is extended and the intended development in Wick Lane proceeds, it will be most unsatisfactory. There is a need to undertake a total review of this side of the village and how the traffic is going to move through the area. Access to Wick Lane is currently inadequate, dangerous and very poorly thought out. Consequently, this is a classic example of where the conservation area serves no useful purpose in its present form. If the conservation boundary finishes where it is suggested, then this is clearly a statement that there is nothing beyond this line worthy of conserving. What should be conserved is an attractive and prime entrance to a lovely village.

If the conservation area is extended in most villages as suggested, then the tighter control theory will apply overall. The idea of having separate and limited conservation areas is outdated and has led to many of the "piecemeal" developments seen today.

Future developments in all areas should only be entertained where there is a clear policy to build in a manner which is sympathetic to the overall effect and appearance of the surrounding settlement. High density building should not be the dominant factor anywhere.

This issue is of prime importance to the Council and includes the other entrance roads to Downton, i.e. Lode Hill, Bournemouth Rd (A338) Slab Lane and Moot Lane.

The traffic into Salisbury and through Downton, especially on the A338 is at times congested. There is often a "tailback" of traffic from the central traffic lights for 2 miles or more and it is a scene of constant accidents. There is no proper provision for access to Southampton or to other major centres to cope with that which is proposed within the document.

The impact of development on the road systems and the availability of proper infrastructure is a prime issue. A full study of environmental concerns should be undertaken by the developers on each and every occasion, with proper local consultation.

Downton Parish Council would like to see a policy pursued which will be aimed at protecting and enhancing Downton's role as a centre to the south of Salisbury in a modest manner, respecting its historic significance and preserving its outstanding qualities. The documents that have been prepared are such as the previous Core Strategy document and Conservation Area Appraisal, in its view, ill conceived and present a view of Downton which is totally misunderstood by the compilers.

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