

TORBAY LOCAL PLAN - A landscape for success: The Plan for Torbay – 2012 to 2032 and beyond

PROPOSED SUBMISSION PLAN (FEBRUARY 2014)

PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS TO THE SUBMISSION LOCAL PLAN

LIST OF REPRESENTATIONS BY PERSON/ORGANISATION IN TOPIC & ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Consultee ID	File No.	Person /Organisation Consultee	
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Pickhaver, David

From: Adrian Gee [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 March 2015 12:27
To: Planning, Strategic
Subject: PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE SUBMISSION TORBAY LOCAL PLAN

I would like to comment on the PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE SUBMISSION TORBAY LOCAL PLAN.

Collaton St Mary, owing to its topography and location, is unsuitable for high density housing development as proposed in the Modification Submission. Torbay has invested heavily in a new link road. It is in this area of Torbay, and the new infrastructure, that would so much better suited to large scale new development.

Totnes Road is Torbay's link road with the City of Plymouth. The traffic problems that development at Collaton St Mary would cause when the road has to cross the river Dart at Totnes Brutus Bridge has been completely overlooked.

Homes in Collaton St Mary are built low in the valleys and are surrounded by steeply sloping farmland. It is wrong to 'predict' having to use this arable farmed farmland for housing. Clearly, it would be more logical to leave the decision to develop Greenfield land at Collaton St Mary until the next Local Plan. 395 homes will more than double the size of Collaton St Mary and would unnecessarily set a precedent for urban sprawl on Torbay's farmland fringes. It accounts for only a small fraction of the total homes needed for Torbay. The Neighbourhood Forum, the people of Torbay and the residents of Collaton St Mary do not feel that it is necessary to include land at Collaton St Mary for development in the Emerging Local Plan. My comments on the original Draft Local Plan clearly identify the problems with developing Collaton St Mary. They have been completely ignored and are now shown to be very real in the Collaton St Mary Masterplan.

The Modification Submission states that a Masterplan for Collaton St Mary has been commissioned. It is available for viewing at

www.torbay.gov.uk/index/yourservices/planning/masterplans.htm
www.stridetreglon.com/torbaymasterplans

This Masterplan, and comments on should, and must, be carefully inspected and included in decisions taken by the Government Planning Inspector on development at Collaton St Mary in the emerging Local Plan. Therefore I have included excerpts from the comments I sent to Torbay Planning department on 20/11/2014. The plan struggles with design and has been a catalyst for reconsidering the housing numbers for Collaton St Mary in the Proposed Modifications.

Comment letter I sent to Torbay Planning department 23/11/2014:

I would like to comment upon the draft Collaton St Mary Master Plan prepared by Stride Treglown.

Unfortunately Stride Treglown have been assigned a difficult task. Collaton St Mary, owing to its topography and location, is unsuitable for high density housing development. Torbay has spent millions on a new link road and no doubt Stride Treglown will have noticed by now that it is this area of Torbay, complete with its new infrastructure, that would so much better suited to large scale new development. The exacerbated traffic problems that development at Collaton St Mary would cause at Totnes Brutus Bridge has been completely overlooked. Very poor vision I think.

Phase 1

A nice idea but the trouble is that Collaton already has a large village hall, a church and a local pub and so the Master Plan is simply adding more of the same.

Although well meaning, the idea of using the Flood Meadow as a recreation area is a bit strange. As its name suggests, this area often tends to flood and is mainly peat substrate. During and after rainfall it would not be a pleasant place to be.

I must assume that there is to be an engineering solution to the very real and serious increase to the flooding tendency which will come with the proposed new developments which more than double the size of the village. I have looked closely at the plans and can only find comments of 'enhanced drainage' and no evidence of suitable engineering proposals.

Phase 2

A most unusual idea, and can be seen to be a poor effort at town planning and community design.

Essentially, it's the development of Higher Ridge, grade 2 green fields. As its name suggests this is a ridge of land that is higher than the land that surrounds it. At present this field is undertaking a very important role in preventing flooding at Collaton St Mary and beyond. Rising steeply up from the Flood Plain it is acting as a soak away for water coming from the Ridge. It is not sensible to build on steeply rising land adjacent to a flood plain particularly where there is housing at flood plain level. It would be common sense to leave more soak away land here than is shown. I was pleased to see that there is no proposal to develop the less steep soak away land on the other side, between Stoke Road and the Flood Meadow. Although to a lesser degree, the same scenario applies.

When designing a community housing area, careful attention paid to the impact any proposals might have upon existing local community should preside.

From the Saxon Meadow area of Collaton St Mary, the proposed development will be very oppressive. Proposing a row of buildings along the high point of the Ridge alongside St Mary's Park is socially inconsiderate. A row of new homes here would be overbearing and intrude drastically upon existing residents lives and privacy beyond good reason. The new homes at the south east corner of the proposals would be some 20 foot higher than existing homes. Higher Ridge is surrounded entirely by bungalows. I can see nothing on the draft Master Plan that stipulates single story. The artist's impression avoids showing the steeply rising Higher Ridge but shows, what appears to be, double story buildings. This is unacceptably thoughtless design shown in deceptively good light with much artistic licence. It almost suggests the unmentionable rude finger gesture to the St Mary's Park residents. So, what if these homes are given permission for double story? Is it right?

Surely it would be better to integrate the play area with the publicly accessible meadow in the south west corner? This would have three effects;

- 1. It would give resident children from St Mary's Park integration with the community and easy access to the play area from the lower end of St Mary's Park.*
- 2. It would retain an important flood defence soak away area.*
- 3. There would be less homes on the steepest part of Higher Ridge where they would be the most overbearing and intrusive to existing residents.*

I was relieved to see that St Mary's Park remains a cul-de-sac. It was good to see that Stride Treglown deem it to be inappropriate for this to change.

Phase 3

Well, nobody is entitled to a view!

Except it seems when you are outside your house stood on the road. I talk here about the proposed homes on the southern edge of the plan. Surely where possible we humans prefer to have a view from inside our homes rather than have to go outside in the rain to see it? We should strive to improve quality of our lives and our homes not to lower them.

But again, perhaps just a poke in the eye for the existing residents living along the A385?

Phase 4

The homes proposed to the west of the school on the north of the A385 seem relatively well thought out except for the issue of traffic and flooding. But only half of the field to the north of the A385 is shown as developed. This is illogical, This area is perhaps the most suitable area in Collaton St Mary for development. Here there would be very little impact upon existing residents and the land slopes away from the A385 softening any visual impact.

Again, even though it has planning I was pleased to see that there is no proposal to over-develop important soak away land next to Blagdon Lane.

It is the new homes proposed to the north of the A385 and to the east of the Collaton Church that are serious cause for concern in this phase. This part of Collaton St Mary rises very steeply indeed behind existing homes and it seems unacceptable and intrusive to plan development here.

The plan's emphasis upon continuous green infrastructure and the 'green spine' concept is commendable. The idea of a Green Gateway is hopeful. But there is an important area in the Master Plan that has been completely overlooked - it's effect upon existing residents. The feelings, thoughts and lives of the local people have all been left unconsidered.

One must regard oneself lucky if you do not live in one of the many homes affected by the looming antisocial proposals.

Surely it is inhumane to suggest that through poor planning so many people should have live with the threat of accepting such a catastrophic intrusion into their privacy and daily lives?

Adrian Gee

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The decision to develop Collaton St Mary is best put on hold until the next Local Plan. There is quite enough more suitable land elsewhere in Torbay for these 395 homes.

All good design and planning is conceived and achieved with love, not with fear.

With the exception of some in the Planning department, no one I have spoken to loves the development proposals for Collaton St Mary. Those who are aware of it fear it. The planners have based their proposals upon fear. Fear of not enough land for homes in the future. Fear and avoidance of the Collaton St Mary residents reaction to their proposals. Planning our communities should be based upon love not fear. The residents of the village of Collaton St Mary have to live in fear of what the planners are proposing to do with their environment in the Emerging Local Plan. People living downstream from Collaton St Mary fear flooding. Residents in Collaton St Mary are likely to have elevated double story housing estates physically casting very real dark shadows on their lives. They live in fear of the looming Government Planning Inspector's decision.

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