

TVBC,

Over the previous months Charles Crosswaite-Eyre under the parish council leadership of Peter Heslop has done a great job in pulling together all the components in developing a LDP for the parish of Upper Clatford. As residents and homeowners in Upper Clatford we are truly grateful for their efforts and in the vision that they have put forward within the plan. The plan shows that Upper Clatford has its own distinct identity and is a community within itself, something to which we can attest to.

We have lived in Upper Clatford since 2004, and very much appreciate the green perimeter around its borders providing a rural tranquillity rich in wildlife with a great village community, of which we very much feel a part. Despite having a very limited bus service (so limited that we have never even considered using it), no school, and no shop we love living in a rural retreat, separate from but within reach of good transport links and town facilities.

Maintaining the local gap has enabled us to enjoy the walk into Andover on numerous occasions as well as giving us a non-urban entry into the Rooksbury Mill nature reserve. While on these walks we have witnessed amazing wildlife, both in the air, on the ground and in the waters, the local gap clearly enables this wildlife to thrive and enhances the local environment. The local gap has also allowed us to cycle to work in Andover and further afield although, even then, there are some places where the roads prove to be dangerous. To this end they would need significant safety improvements if traffic were to increase, most notably over the small bridge by the playing fields where the road narrows, at the bottom of Sam Whites Hill where the road is off camber and through Anna Valley where parked cars restrict the traffic flow. The ability to cycle to work through the local gap has allowed us to reduce our carbon footprint, reduce our burden on the road network, get well needed exercise and improved our mental health.

Upper Clatford is not only home to some 1600 residents it is also home to many millions of frogs that spend most of their lives in the undeveloped land above the river Anton flood plains. Annually these frogs migrate from this undeveloped land, down to their breeding grounds and return again. We have spent many a happy evening picking these frogs up from the road and track as they migrate from the fields in front of Sunnyside and Mount Villas and ensure that they safely get to and from these breeding grounds. These frogs are beneficial to us and the environment as they reduce the need for us to use chemicals in our gardens as they keep pests such as slugs at bay. These frogs couldn't participate in the LDP, but if they could, I'm sure they would want to maintain the homes and ensure that 20 people didn't displace millions of frogs.

As already outlined, we are keen cyclists and often cycle into Andover, we also cycle to Goodworth Clatford, it should be noted however that the road between Goodworth Clatford and Upper Clatford is too narrow and fast to accommodate novice cyclists or cyclists without driving knowledge. We never walk, the road whilst well maintained offers no sanctuary to pedestrians and in the winter months the footpaths are not passable. We feel we therefore cannot share the facilities of Goodworth Clatford and hence it came as somewhat of a surprise that TVBC are intending to put Upper Clatford into tier 3 and not tier 4. On its own Upper Clatford lacks the 6 key facilities required of a tier 4 settlement. It might be perceived that by the provision of additional housing in Upper Clatford, then these new residents could support the services of Goodworth Clatford, however as we have outlined above the very limited public transport, the poor walking route, the narrow roads for cyclists and limited parking this would not occur.

This is not to say that these issues cannot be overcome, it is merely to highlight that Upper Clatford is its own distinct community separate from that of both Goodworth Clatford and Andover.

We are very aware that the UK is undergoing a housing crisis and there is a lack of affordable housing on the market, clearly new housing needs to be built somewhere, but the question is where? To build on much of the land that has been highlighted as ready for development, principally the land in front of Mount Villas and Sunnyside would require significant upgrades to the local infrastructure in the form of trunk road access, water and sewerage services (especially to ensure the Pillhill Brook is maintained as a pristine chalkstream), public transport and cycle paths. With this in mind the land on the Red Rice road towards Bury Hill would appear much more appropriate and with better road access, and would be more in keeping with the linear development peculiar to Hampshire villages.

I very much hope that the above comments will go some way to help you inform planning policy and ensure those residents to Upper Clatford remain within their own community while benefiting from being close enough to Andover.

Many thanks.

Iain & Fiona Lewis

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