

Dear Sir or Madam,

I'm writing as I would like to make comments on the "Draft Local Plan 2024" and specifically what is proposed for North Test Valley and the two sites near Ludgershall:

1. The 1150 homes to the South East of Ludgershall
2. The 350 homes to the East of Ludgershall.

Since my family and I moved into the area, back in 1998 we have seen an enormous amount of change to the area. Back then there were approximately 3700 people living in Ludgershall, in 2021 this number had risen to approximately 5400 people, that's nearly a 46% increase in the population over the intervening 23 years. And during this time we have seen very little, I would almost go as far as to say *no* in improvements in the infrastructure to the area.

In 1998 there was a small police house/station serving the community, there is no longer one in Ludgershall. There is also the doctor's surgery which still has the same physical foot print as it did in 1998, whilst I appreciate they have made changes to clinical rooms and recruited additional clinicians to keep up with the population demand there have been no extensions to the building.

The main road (A342) through Ludgershall town has had no improvements, whereas the volume of traffic has exploded; as the Army have been re-based to Perham Down and Tidworth. Also many vehicles, including large HGV's, use the A342 route, to cut between the M4 and A303, and considering both Andover, Swindon and other local large towns, have significant numbers of haulage and transport companies which all use this route, no improvements have been made. The number of supermarkets has remained the same, two small supermarkets Co-Op & Tesco Express. The northern side of Andover Road (A342) still does not have provision for gas, so properties that side of the main road do not have gas central heating and therefore cannot be modified to use Hydrogen when it becomes available. Due to increased demand and poor water pressure after the initial housing phase of Orchid Drive, Primrose Road, and Cornflower Way etc. Was built around 2000 there was a small extension to the water tower but I'm not sure this will be enough to handle the additional housing. Also as far as I understand the Sewage Treatment works along Shoddesden Lane has had no increase in capacity, it is still the same unit as was there in 1998 and before, begging the question what is being done about the additional sewerage/waste water?

The 2020 Army rebasing project from Germany, saw 4000 soldiers, plus their families, returning to the Ludgershall/Tidworth area and so additional Military Quarters were built along the A3026 (Tidworth Road). Tidworth, only 3 miles away, has also seen extensive growth in housing and population. All putting additional demands on the local infrastructure system.

If the additional number of 1500 homes were to go-ahead this would put maximum pressure on the limited and inadequate infrastructure. Say for instance each of these homes had 3 people living in them, which would be an increase of 4500 people into Ludgershall an increase of 268% on the same infrastructure that was in place, and hasn't changed since 1998! This is without taking into account the additional housing already being built, and further to be built along Empress Way and the additional 400+ homes to be built along the A342 towards the Collingbournes, the houses and buildings completed on the Old Garden Centre site in Ludgershall and around 200 Military Quarters along from, and opposite Wellington Academy.

Wellington Academy was built as the Senior School and has had a few extensions. However, needs further expansion as it's the only senior school in the Ludgershall/Tidworth area.

I'm not adverse to change but this does need to be done judiciously and openly with a coherent, joined up strategy. Because the geography of these proposed developments is directly on the county border of Hampshire and Wiltshire, equally Test Valley Borough Council must work together with Wiltshire Council, Ludgershall Town Council and all other interested stakeholders involved, be it the Health Service of Wiltshire and Hampshire the two Police Forces the Education Departments Utilities Companies and any other interested parties.

As a few suggestions and comments, personally, I'd like to see the following occur:

1. The community is well served by our GP Surgery however, they would benefit from funds for further expansion, to further improve the provision for primary health care.
2. Provision for increased policing, where Hampshire and Wiltshire Police Forces work in harmony, as they are responsible for policing this area of the country.
3. A coherent education policy for all children in the area.
4. The implementation of gas/hydrogen to the northern side of the A342, into a network of pipes feeding homes.
5. The improvement to the water and sewerage system.
6. Road improvements to the A342.
7. If road improvements cannot be made, where parked cars are taking up the main road, 20mph speed limits need to be implemented.
8. Better provision for cycling and pedestrians along the A342 and the wider area.
9. A cycleway alongside the existing railway line to Andover and another to join the Sustrans cycle system onto the National Route 45 to the North West of Ludgershall at Shaw Hill.

10. Increased numbers of pedestrian crossings along the A342. There are only two in the whole area, one to the west of Ludgershall near Wellington Academy and one in the centre of town, outside the Memorial Hall, there is not one in the eastern side of the town, yet the ribbon development stretches for a further 1.3km along the busy A342. This is totally inadequate and very dangerous for pedestrians trying to cross from one bus stop to another.
11. Better integrated transport system, with the use of the branch railway line that connects to the main line in Andover and onto the wider rail system. Or this could possibly be a type of Guided Busway such as "The Busway" near Cambridge.
12. An improvement to sports facilities, perhaps attracting a private leisure company, as the ones run by The Council are overshadowed by the military use.
13. Improvement in green spaces and wildlife corridors, and areas for nature to thrive.
14. If trees and hedges are to be planted in the new estates, what would be the plan to maintain them, by nurturing and watering them in their early years?
15. Also rather than saplings, part established trees should be planted, otherwise there will be little benefit over the following 30+ years.
16. If the general plans that I saw, whilst visiting Ludgershall Memorial Hall the other day are to be used, the access points going into the new housing estates will require the need to remove many large and established trees, these should be replaced, and the number of trees in the area increased. Of note: As part of a scheme in Devon recently many trees have been relocated as part of a development to improve the A382 near Newton Abbot. Could this be done here?

Ludgershall should be an attractive place to live and not just a housing estate added to on an ad-hoc and unplanned way. We have history and beautiful surrounding countryside and wildlife, and all endeavours should be made to keep it so, whilst meeting the needs for local housing.