

We object to the proposal for the additional houses in Thornbury, over and above those already proposed within the Core Strategy in 2012 and accepted by the Inspector .

1. As an attendee/speaker at the Public Inquiry, I reviewed the initial findings by the Inspector. There was NO intent for any housing to be included at Morton Way within those comments. Some weeks later, we were appalled to find that the first we knew of any suggestion of this proposal for additional housing as part of the Core Strategy in Thornbury, was on the front of the Gazette . Also that it was not even discussed with the local Councillors. As contributors, we would have expected some consultation. We are pleased that the Inspector agreed that there should be a total review of ALL potential sites across the District before he concludes the site of any additional housing should be agreed to. Already, we seem to have other spurious applications for houses cropping up...Alexander Way nursing home,...how long before the Upper School site becomes a part more potential sites...and then we will not have just the 500 houses they are telling us we have to have?

2. In the Autumn, I noted the pieces in the Gazette re the flooding issues at Park Farm, where 500 additional houses are proposed within the Core Strategy (along with School playing fields). We too at that time, had our cellar flood ‘within’ the space of 24 hours...from ‘bone dry’ to 2 foot of water. We had damage to property we had stored there. Never before in the 13 years that we have lived here, have we known that to happen. At extremes we have had water ingress (twice before in that time) and we have a sump-pump to cope with this, BUT never before has there not been a warning. Clearly, it is a water table issue. The ground becomes saturated to the point the water table rises and at some point there is a break in the substrate that allows flow...we were pumping out at a rate of 0.5 of a cubic meter half-hourly, for many days. If 300 houses are built a field away from us...do we end up with ‘no cellar’ as it’s permanently waterlogged or more prone to flooding? - Archimedes principal means that the water table **will rise...on a permanent basis**. Climate change, predicts that more rain will be the norm. We have to be mindful of its long term implication.

As discussed at the Public Inquiry, there is still one fundamental question ...does Thornbury require mass additional housing development?

In 2006, the Inspectors view in the current plan...indicated that there was no evidence to support the need for mass housing. What has changed in 6 years or **will change** in the foreseeable future?

- There is No new major employment locally...in fact it has recently diminished with South Glos choosing to relocate staff away from Thornbury. Several years ago land was set aside for ‘industrial type development to support the employment in the town....within the lifetime of that plan, Hopkins Close was sanctioned thereby removing what had been designated as potential land for increasing the local employment opportunities.

- There is much discussion of the imbalance of the demographics of the Thornbury population (the 20+ group is low, whilst the 65+ is high). However, one must look at how this came about...Thornbury grew as a dormitory town to Bristol, in the heyday of the likes of British Aerospace and Rolls Royce amongst others...Many came here then, raised families and then stayed (often in that same property) because they like and enjoy the ambience

of Thornbury. Natural life advancement will in **due course** change that profile over the coming few years and those properties will be released back into the marketplace and the property profile will change accordingly.

Regards the 20+ group...

- a. fundamentally, many move away to study or chose to work in the 'city scene' ...They do not wish to live in a more rural setting.
- b. they do not want to commit to a house purchase, they often wish to travel, settling later in life. Note also though, that Thornbury is no more out of reach to young families' than it ever was –arguably less so as there are more options....
- c. they want to minimise their travel costs and time to their point of study/work and be in close proximity to their 'leisure pursuits' ...far more akin to 'city life'. Travel costs are very high/ parking in the city is exorbitant!

Hence with the best will in the world....the 20+ group will always remain smaller....

- Any potential development in Thornbury opens the floodgates as has been demonstrated since the advent of the discussion re the Core Strategy. Clearly, if any development is allowed beyond the **natural curtilage**, there will be an on-going speculative pressure from developers...There are 'brownfield sites' within the Town which should be considered before obliterating the superb rural setting that we enjoy...once lost, it will never be regained.
- Our understanding is that *should any power station* development go ahead, there will be NO associated need for mass housing.
- It has been suggested that we need houses to fill schools...Fundamentally this is **wrong**...schools are a service provider to the Community(houses) NOT the other way around!...Thornbury's health and well being as a social and cohesive community is the primary objective....so its need for housing should **only be based** on whether that will result...filling schools is a 'by-product'. If there are surplus places then for that period the benefits that ensue should be enjoyed or hard decisions have to be faced and taken. Urban sprawl, **destroys** community....
- Housing **WILL NOT** re-invigorate the town Centre. The vast majority of the new residents would work outside of Thornbury and they, like a significant proportion of the current residents will shop out of Town at Cribbs Causeway! We will never survive as a mini Mall. Places like Haye-on-Wye are very successful as they support a niche market.... We need to encourage the 'unique' shops to provide the alternate 'shopping experience' to that at Cribbs...We have to try and become a 'specialist shops town' - many visitors will then come too. Britain in Bloom, The Arts festival, Christmas Lights, The Carnival, Farmers markets, Antiques Fairs , independent shops etc all help to make Thornbury somewhere that people will choose to come and shop/spend

time in....they certainly will not come here to shop at ‘national traders’...
‘Boots’ say! **Fundamentally we have to ‘Use it or Lose it’**

- Thornbury has a vibrant Community feel with numerous groups willing to operate on a voluntary basis. (We had the ‘BIG SOCIETY’ before the Government initiative!). We believe there is a real danger of reaching the maximum point at which that ‘goodwill’ prevails...we need to protect the willingness of that voluntary community culture...it is Thornbury’s lifeblood. If Thornbury gets much bigger, the network of known people diminishes and leaflets through the door do NOT breed involvement. 300 houses with another potential 600 adults, 600 children/young adults with another 600 cars will make the community potentially more insular. One of the reasons that Thornbury’s community is so strong, is that people do stay here for so long, people want to live here and get involved...they might not if it grows much bigger and loses that community feel.
- In recent years the UK has experienced far more flooding issues than ever before...mass housing has undoubtedly contributed to that. Those of us who have to rely on septic tanks are aware that changes in the level of the water table have taken place...undoubtedly such an increase in the proportion of new properties locally would have a knock on effect...
- ...and actually, where are all these people supposed to be coming from, to fill all these new houses?
- The current population of Thornbury is perhaps 12,500+. Already the Core Strategy makes provision for a further 500 houses, with a potential increase in population of 2000... a further 300 houses, would mean a further 1200 people...totalling 3200. That represents MORE than a 25% increase in the population....that will inevitably ‘change the face’ of Thornbury. The ‘market town’ ambience would be lost forever.
- We are due to lose one of the car parks in Thornbury. Bus transport is very expensive and I suggest commuter transport towards Bristol, is at capacity at ‘rush hour’ times. Further permitted development will already exacerbate this situation.

Our view is that there is no evidence for further mass housing provision in Thornbury and that any development should take place on existing ‘brownfield sites’ within the district.

Thornbury’s vibrant community should be allowed to prosper and develop, encouraging visitors to enjoy the personal service and hospitality afforded by our unique traders...alongside excellent leisure activities.