

Kath Thorne,
SGC PO Box 2081
S. Glos BS35 9BP

3rd February 2013

Dear Kath Thorne,

FAO The Inspector, March Enquiry Day re Housing Development in Thornbury

We feel very strongly opposed to both the 500 houses planned for Park Farm and especially the 300 extra houses planned for Thornbury in the changed Local Plan.

We have lived in Thornbury for 37 years and have seen in filling and developments in the area which have been done at a steady pace but without any extra facilities being provided or changes to main roads. Morton Way has acted as a suitable limiting boundary to development and if this is crossed it will open the way for further unsuitable developments and change the nature of Thornbury forever.

Our main reasons for trying to persuade the inspector not to change the overall plan are as follows:

- a) Increased Traffic – the roads around Thornbury especially towards Bristol along Grovesend and the Bristol Road as well as the A38 and the Almondsbury motorway junctions, do not cope with traffic in the rush hour at present and it can take over an hour to reach the centre of Bristol at this time. Public transport is inflexible and also oversubscribed at these times and we fear that an extra 300 houses/600 commuters will exacerbate an already difficult problem. Where too will these cars park when they reach Bristol and where indeed when they need to visit Thornbury? (The 500 homes at Park Farm will have increased this problem too with an estimated extra 1000 cars.)
- b) Drainage – at present Wessex Water can barely cope with the waste water from current drainage and leaks and flooding are common from over full resources, especially in the recent bad weather. Are new drainage schemes planned to ensure extra housing does not jeopardise current land use?
- c) Employment - as there is insufficient employment in Thornbury, the vast majority of these residents will be commuters to Bristol. Are there any plans to provide sustainable extra jobs locally?
- d) Housing type – if a mix of housing is assumed it is unlikely to attract older people as the distance to the centre will be too great. Will increased bus routes be provided? If younger, how will they afford it? Thornbury already has a premium house price compared with greater Bristol.
- e) Schools – there is an increase in the primary population at present, will junior schools be able to cope with further increases? Can an already over-subscribed and popular secondary school cope with further students? Will new ones be provided? Indeed parking near

schools is a major rush hour problem in Thornbury and unlikely to decline if extra places are provided.

- f) Car Parking in Thornbury- as we are about to lose one of the car parks in Thornbury (Castle Court behind Nat West bank) are there any plans to increase car parking to accommodate these extra people who will have to drive to the centre of Thornbury or alternatively go elsewhere depriving Thornbury of trade?
- g) NHS facilities – these are already creaking and it is difficult to get same-day appointments. Would more people be required to travel to Bristol for appointments due to lack of facilities in Thornbury? We have been promised local enhanced walk-in facilities and a cottage hospital, but as ever, Thornbury is the last to receive any monies after other areas in S. Glos. Have been developed and has to make do as the poor relation. (This has also happened in funding for schools and the arts). If other areas are so good – why not build there? (Yate, Downend, Kingswood, Bradley Stoke etc.)
- h) Social facilities – many groups and clubs are already bulging at the seams and to accommodate more will be a burden on available facilities and lengthen waiting lists.

To be positive, we would like to suggest that brownfield sites are fully developed such as those along the A38 at Rudgeway or over the Gloucestershire border at Newport; that small infilling continues and that derelict buildings in St. Mary Street, Thornbury are pulled down and redeveloped. Why not use empty or unsalable houses and encourage down-sizing to suitable, well-spaced accommodation?

Why not build closer to Bristol? Our son and daughter-in-law have tired of the commute to Bristol from Thornbury and have bought a house in Bristol so that they can walk to work and socialise in better facilities. Many young people will be thinking the same. Thornbury is too far out in this day and age of expensive fuel and limited parking, wasted hours of travelling and inadequate facilities and resources.

Thus we would ask you to reconsider the overall Plan and not increase it from what was already proposed. There is plenty of space at the former Filton Airport to provide housing and proper facilities for a new town, why ruin a rural community to increase commuting, noise and pollution and over-burden already stretched and over loaded facilities? To have so much unwanted extra development thrust onto local people without consultation, will ruin the character of the small town of Thornbury and the lives of many people. Once agricultural land is built on, it is lost forever.

Yours sincerely,

Alison & David Makepeace