

<b>Questions from Local Councillors – Addressed at Meeting on 5 December 2022 (15:30-17:00)</b>	
<p>Have the development designers taken the Crediton Design Guide into consideration, especially windows, front doors, and boundaries?</p>	<p>The design proposals reflect the local distinctiveness of the surrounding villages, as presented within the Compendium of District Design (Volume 3). Windows styles include a mix of casement &amp; mock sash fenestration patterns, some with painted concrete sills (colour to match the entrance door). Bay windows are also included. Three door styles are proposed which are found in many of the Mid-Devon villages. Modest detailing to entrances such as a simple flat roof or lean to porch canopy add interest &amp; variety to the street scene with some of the higher status dwellings including an elevated level of embellishment with door surround detailing. Boundary details include recon stone 'eye level' high walls, m/s steel railings, new walling faced in rough cast render with pantile coping.</p> <p>MDDC has confirmed that a contemporary response to properly informed local characteristics would also be appropriate.</p>
<p>Will Bellway Homes consider removing the wood cladding on the south west detached houses, which is contrary to the local vernacular?</p>	<p>Whilst there are instances of timber cladding found locally, we have reviewed the proposals &amp; are no longer applying this treatment.</p>
<p>Will Bellway consider making all roofs slate, which is the predominant vernacular roofing material?</p>	<p>Reconstituted slate roofs are proposed for much of the development and Bellway as part of our resubmission are looking at additional focal building enhancements and types of roofing materials such as natural slate or thatch to respond positively to Mid Devon local characteristics and vernacular.</p>
<p>Will Bellway consider ensuring space for place-making planting of individual specimen native trees such as oak, located to create a significant contribution to the valley landscape and setting?</p>	<p>The current proposals already feature strategically placed oak tree planting within the open space areas to echo that found in the historic parkland to the north of the site. Given the scale of the site, we understand that Local Councillors may have been unaware of this. To therefore increase their prominence within the valley we will propose specimen Oak trees in grouped stands of 3. These will assist with the formation of visual character to the reinforce local landscape typology – we hope this addition is welcomed.</p>
<p>Will Bellway consider better pedestrian connection between the town and the development, especially the proposed primary school site, by creating a footpath link from the south east corner onto Stonewall Lane/Old Tiverton Road?</p>	<p>The creation of an additional pedestrian link in the South East corner of the site is challenging due to levels, vegetation and as there are no safe onward footways to take you further South (until you get further down onto Old Tiverton Road). This was looked at, at outline stage, but it was discounted as impractical for the reasons mentioned. The need to provide visibility would result in the removal of a lot of trees, and there's not enough public highway to deliver a suitable pedestrian connection to Old Tiverton Road. The agreed strategy for pedestrians was to direct people down Pounds Hill (with associated improvements). This strategy has been approved at Outline</p>

	stage and therefore does not form part of Bellway's Reserved Matters Application which is for (Layout, Appearance, Scale and Landscaping).
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<b>Crediton COP26 Group</b>	
Given that after June 2023 new developments will have to have solar panels, would Bellway consider installing them now to help people with their heating bills as well as reducing carbon emissions?	All plots will be built to the new (nationally applicable) Building Regulations – Part L (L2021) standard, which covers the conservation of fuel and power for dwellings. Our proposed specification for the development includes energy efficient gas boilers as well as PV to all dwellings, for on plot renewable energy generation.
Have Bellway considered installing air source heat pumps at some of the homes, to take advantage of the government subsidy of £5000 for each pump installed?	Unfortunately, we would not be able to claim any type of subsidy as we are a commercial entity.
Can as many houses as possible be built south facing to take advantage of the sun?	The layout has been designed to reflect local spatial character & prioritises placemaking & frontage over solar orientation. All homes will be designed & built to modern energy standards.
Can Bellway contribute to a route with limited gradients from the site to the centre of Crediton to encourage people to walk or cycle rather than using cars?	<p>The highways strategy for the site has been agreed at outline stage and the associated works are being progressed and designed in principle to comply with the terms of the Outline Permission and the s278 technical approval is in its final stages.</p> <p>The same principle has already been addressed above, but in short summary, the creation of an additional pedestrian link in the South East corner of the site is challenging due to levels, vegetation and as there are no safe onward footways to take you further South (until you get further down on Old Tiverton Road). Bellway Homes acquired the site with Outline Planning Permission with Access agreed, as such the application before Mid Devon District Council is a Reserved Matters Application for Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping only.</p>
Would Bellway please produce a carbon reduction plan showing in specific ways how this development will help MDDC in their target for net zero by 2030?	Further details of the site specific energy measures have been provided within a sustainability statement which has been submitted with the resubmission in December 2022.
Will Bellway incorporate higher spec insulation to demonstrate their statement of responsibility and sustainability.	Yes, our Part L (L2021) specification incorporates thicker insulation in both floors and roofs. We also have thermal lintels and an improved ventilation strategy system 1 to system 3, intermittent to constantly running fans.

<b>Sandford PC</b>	
Why is the location of the school not adjacent to the proposed Rugby Club to enable the school to have easy access to the Rugby Clubs sports facilities etc. and easy access to the	The school was relocated at the time of the Outline Permission as there was a preference from the County Council (as Education Authority) to have the school located further south, to be more accessible to both the new and existing residents on the Northern side of the town.

<p>A3072? This would also mean that the construction costs of the school would be less as a site next to the Rugby Club is levelled than the sloping site in 'Chestnut Field'</p>	
<p>Why is there no pedestrian / cycleway access from the development to Sandford in the North west corner of the site? A cycleway link at this point should also extend directly to the Rugby Club facilities and would 'link' with the proposed cycleway at Furlongs in Sandford.</p>	<p>The access strategy for the proposed development has already been agreed and is not a subject of the Reserved Matters Application. However, to provide a short summary, a link to the North West (towards Sandford) is not part of the agreed/approved strategy and there are no desire lines in this direction to key (town) facilities. The "Furlongs" did not feature in discussions at Outline stage.</p>

<p><b>All other questions submitted concern key infrastructure delivery</b></p>	
<p>Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline permission safeguards land for a future Primary School.</li> <li>• Capacity for the school was considered at outline stage.</li> <li>• Early Years Contribution – is required under the s106</li> <li>• Primary School Contribution - is required under the s106</li> <li>• Special Needs Contribution - is required under the s106</li> </ul>
<p>Health Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Contribution - is required under the s106</li> </ul>
<p>Public Transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Transport Contribution - is required under the s106</li> <li>• Sustainable Travel Voucher - is required under the s106</li> <li>• Right Of Way - is required under the s106</li> </ul>
<p>Impacts of road traffic on nearby communities sitting between the proposed development and Exeter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline Permission / Access already agreed and is not a matter under consideration as part of Bellway Homes proposal.</li> </ul>

# **Submission to Devon County Council's consultation exercise about Buses: Crediton local town services.**



## **Summary**

I explain the problems with the present provision, the Dartline 607 "Town Circular".

I show that Tiverton has roughly 3 times the population of Crediton, yet enjoys roughly 24 times the number of local bus services as measured by hours of service.

On the basis of fairness, there would seem to be a straightforward case for Crediton to have a substantially better local bus service than at present.

I propose that we cut the 607 route and redesign the local bus provision to take into account recent developments in the town and other strategic objectives, and attract more passengers.

My suggestion for a redesign has 3 elements

- 1: create a "virtual" bus station next to Tesco / the new Surgery
- 2: Route the 5,5A,5B,5C, 369 to this bus station. Some would need a small diversion.
- 3: Replace the 607 with a new local bus provision designed to provide as many residents of Crediton as possible with a convenient local bus connection to this bus station.

The benefits of the idea are

- 1: More Crediton residents will be able to get to the Surgery and Tesco by bus
- 2: They will be able to make a connection to the number 5,5A,5B,5C services, and the train
- 3: People will be able to get to all other parts of the town by changing bus at the bus station.
- 4: By following the example of Tiverton and having short loops from housing estates to the bus station we will have a better service that attracts more passengers.

I have a few suggestions as to possible routes within Crediton. These are purely illustrative, a proper plan would be needed, of course.

## **The problems with the 607**

The service only runs on Tuesdays and Fridays, and there are only 3 loops per day.

There is a gap. 607 buses start at 10.05, 12.05 and 13.05.

The effect of this gap is as follows: lets say my elderly Mum wants to go to Tesco. Mum lives on Longmeadows, the first bus goes past at 10.42.

She boards the bus at 10.42, arriving at Tesco at 10.55. So far, so good. But the gap means that she has to spend 2 hours at Tesco before catching the return bus at 12.55. The route home takes Mum from 12.55 to 13.42 because the bus visits so many parts of the town.

So, Mum has just this option, the 10.42, on a Tuesday and Friday. She has to spend an hour on the bus and 2 hours at, say, the doctor's or Tesco and she gets home 3 hours from departure.

The 607 was cut in 2015 because passenger numbers were low.

My view is that passenger numbers are low because this is such an inconvenient service.

# Local bus comparison between Crediton and Tiverton

I am using the excellent [devon.gov.uk/travel](http://devon.gov.uk/travel) Mid Devon bus guide.

I am choosing to ignore village buses and through routes.

In Crediton, I am ignoring the numbers 5, 5A,B,C, 369, 647, 669, 667, 870 and am focussed on the local town bus, which we already know is just the 607.

In Tiverton, similarly, I ignore the 55, 55A, 55B, 155, 870, 398, 697, 1, 1A, 1C, 22. The local buses I use for my comparison are Tiverton's town buses: 343, 348, 349, 352, 353.

## Crediton

The 607 makes 3, one hour loops, two days a week. A total provision of 6 hours bus time a week.

## Tiverton

All 5 local bus services run 6 days a week.

To get a total number of hours of local bus provision, I have looked at, for each service

- how long does a "loop" take?
- how many loops are there a day (roughly)?
- Then I multiply 6 (days a week), x number of loops a day x time per loop.

Service	Time per loop	Loops per day	Total hours a week
343	1 hour	say 5	30
348	25 minutes	13	32
349	25 minutes	12	30
352/353	25 minutes	22	55
Grand Total			147 bus hours a week

I then looked at how long people in Tiverton spend on the bus if they want to go to and from the centre of town. I chose 3 random starting points:

343 starting at Palmerston Park. 20 minutes to get into town, 10 to get home. Total: 30 minutes on the bus.

348 starting at Lime Road, about 10 minutes each way, total: 20 minutes on the bus.

352/353 starting at Glebelands Road, about 10 minutes each way, total: 20 minutes

In summary, comparing Crediton with Tiverton

	Crediton	Tiverton
Services	607	343, 348, 349, 352, 353.
Days a week	2	6
Total hours	6	147
Typical time on bus	1 hour	20-30 minutes
Population	7000+	22000 or so (~3x Crediton)

## Crediton ought to have 50 hours, not 6.

If a town of 22000 can have 147 hours of local services, a town of 7000 might have 50 hours.

For 50 hours to be justifiable

- there needs to be a route / schedule design that attracts many more passengers than the 607
- the proposal should support larger strategies like encouraging people to use the bus rather than cars and maybe reducing car traffic on the A377

## Reasons for redesigning the local bus service

1: The 607 is very inconvenient and so attracts few passengers. If more resources were available, I think a redesign would be much better than simply providing more loops of the 607 a week.

2: Relevant changes in the town since the 607 route was created are

- Housing estates have been built that have no service
- The Chiddenbrook and Newcombes Surgeries have recently merged and moved next to Tesco.
- We have the link road.

3: Global Warming.

Lets say a Crediton resident would like to "do their bit" for global warming and use the bus to go to Exeter, rather than take their car.

Many residents have no option but to walk to and from the A377 to catch a bus to Exeter. Whether they walk and take the bus, or use their car, will depend on: how far they live from the A377, how up hill, how fit they are and the weather. In my view, a local bus connection to the A377 would help increase bus use on the A377 and reduce car use.

4: In some places the 607 route duplicates the number 5 and 369.

## The "virtual" bus station idea

The place I have in mind is the vacant land just beside Tesco and the new Surgery,

Normally bus stations provide facilities for bus drivers, but Tesco has toilets, a cafe and sells sandwiches and other lunch options. And Mole Avon has a cafe as well. So we have a "virtual" bus station by using those existing services and won't need to build a typical bus station.

## The strategic value of the bus station in that location

If we redesigned the Crediton local buses so that they shuttled people from housing estates back and forth on direct loops to the bus station, that would give the following benefits.

- People can get to the Surgery and Tesco very conveniently
- They can connect to the A377 buses, and the train, also very conveniently
- Other parts of Crediton can be reached by a simple change of bus

## My, non expert, thoughts on routing

I would aim to connect as many people in Crediton to this bus station as possible.

I would not use local buses in parts of Crediton that have either the 5 or the 369. Nor would I route buses to parts of Crediton that are within reasonably easy walking distance of the A377.

Taking those ideas together, my suggestion is to create a service to the bus station for

- 1: Barnfield
- 2: George Hill / Avranches
- 3: The Longmeadows estate, Beech Park, Old Tiverton road
- 4: The houses beside Exhibition Road

But people might reasonably ask: "what about the high street, Morrisons or the Sports Centre?"

I would try to ensure that all such points are visited by at least one of the services.

For example,

- a bus serving Exhibition road might naturally go up the link road, past the Sports Centre.
- a bus serving Longmeadows might naturally pass Morrisons

- a bus serving George Hill / Avranches might pass the Library

The main benefit of having a bus station is to make it extremely easy to change buses. Which means every local bus does not need to visit every important place in Crediton.

In that way, the loops might be kept to 25 minutes which will help attract more passengers.

## **My, non expert, thoughts on how to use 50 hours**

Assuming:

- 50 hours total service a week
- 4 areas with their own route
- 6 days a week, as is the norm for any "proper" bus service
- Each loop takes about 25 minutes
- That an hourly service is acceptable for any given area

I would pair up the routes. For now, I assume that 1&2 are paired and 3&4 are paired.

There would be 2 buses: loop 1/2/1/2 etc and 3/4/3/4 etc

50 hours total would give each area 4 loops at hourly intervals. It would take 25 minutes on the bus, total, to get to the bus station and get home. Passengers could "stay on the bus" and visit the other loop of the pair, or change to the other local bus, the number 5's or 369 to get elsewhere.

An experienced bus planner will likely laugh at all of this, of course. But my objective here is not to do the planner's job for them.

All I hope to do is show that Crediton might have a good bus service, that people would use for all sorts of reasons, if we had 50 hours a week and a re-design around the bus station idea.

## **Acknowledgement**

I benefitted a great deal from a very helpful, courteous and informative series of emails with Ryan Mounce, Transport Co-ordination Officer, Integrated Public Transport, Devon County Council.