We are a volunteer run group working towards a sustainable future for the local area: transitiontavistock.org.uk.
This site is not, as claimed, “optimally located .. to avoid private car use” nor “in an ideal position to access an array of facilities and services .. using sustainable modes of transport.” Safety improvement via new junctions does not justify safety hazards from additional vehicle traffic and inadequate walking links.

In summary, the application:
- Makes a serious error regarding access by public transport.
- Understates barriers which deter walking, wheeling & cycling to local facilities
- Plays down the development’s impact on road safety hazards & peak traffic delays.

Many objections from nearby residents raise similar issues, describing safety issues on roads & paths near the site which the application does not address.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT
The proposed site layout would prevent bus #98, the only service passing along Green Lane or Mount Tavy Road, from taking its current route, which uses the full length of Violet Lane. The application does not recognise this. The sole evidence of site connections to public transport relies on this bus, but the papers expect residents to leave the site, walking uphill to use the existing stops.

As Green Hill is clearly unsuitable for buses, the obvious re-routing is along the spine road of the proposed development, with bus stops included on it. (It might then attract enough custom to justify improvement to an hourly service.) Yet the proposed roads are too narrow, and designs for the new junctions with Green Lane and Mount Tavy Road do not discuss suitability for buses.

In our view this error should result in the application in its current form being rejected:
- It renders invalid a key element of the transport sustainability claims.
- Whether due to poor research or avoidance of the issue, it casts doubt on the reliability of the Transport Assessment overall.
- It brings the proposal into conflict with Policies TC2(v) & TC5 of Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan.

FIT WITH NDP
While the application mentions a few NDP policies, it ignores the Transport & Connectivity section. Policy TC1 (v) requires major developments to “respond positively to the Tavistock Design Codes and Guidance”. There is no reference to these in the application, though they are highly relevant to aspects of the Design and Access statement.

WALKING & WHEELING
- No shops are within 800m walking distance; health facilities, the Library, Bus Station & leisure centre are over 1200m away; Tavistock College over 2km away.
- We agree that, if there is development on this site, the proposed traffic restrictions on Violet Lane and new junctions with Mount Tavy Road and Green Lane would be needed, but these do not enable safe walking between the site and local amenities. That requires additional off-site crossings and footways which the application does not offer.
- Walking into town via Green Hill, Violet Lane, or the proposed Mount Tavy Rd junction involves crossing the B3357 – with no protection - to use the narrow pavement on the far side, and then the A386 using an island at a junction forecast to get busier.

- Additional footway is offered on a very short section of Green Lane, but this does not address safe access to Whitchurch Down. The major sections of Green Lane with no footway are not

“shared space environment” but the route to popular open space. NDP policy TC2.2 identifies this as an issue for any development in the area to address.

• Healthy, safe and inclusive places require walking connections suitable for pedestrians and wheelchairs users both day and night, all year round, yet public footpaths across field and moorland are cited as relevant links, including PROW10 with 5 flights of steps.

CYCLING

While cycling to and from the site would be feasible for confident cyclists, it would not be a safe way to reach Tavistock College, shops or sports facilities, as busy road sections are involved. Discussion of cycling routes lacks understanding of the local context – typified by inclusion of a 2008 cycle map, predating significant changes to NCN 27.

The Design and Access Statement makes no mention of provision for residents of terraced housing to park cycles securely (or to access EV charging).

DRIVING

Modelling results in the Transport Assessment show the development having significant impact on peak hour queues, but the main discussion dismisses this. Blaming already committed developments is invalid. The nature of queuing systems at full capacity is that a small increase in the arrival rate disproportionally increases queue length.

Neither the review of past collisions nor modelling of the impact of extra traffic cover a wide enough area. A more robust assessment would look at a range of possible travel patterns. Future commuting patterns are hard to predict and both the B3557 & A386 are affected by seasonal tourism.

Site traffic seeking alternative routes to Plymouth would flow via risky junctions not modelled here, inc Down Road, Church Hill and Whitchurch Road.

We recognise Tavistock’s need for affordable housing, but it does not outweigh these objections, as people on low incomes may have more need to reach facilities without relying on cars. Access problems built into developments blight future generations.

OTHER ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

Additional concerns include:

• Caveats by other objectors, & in Devon CC ecology assessment, re claimed biodiversity gains.

• Risk of the public open space becoming unsafe, or failing to meet the biodiversity claims made, as the cost of maintaining this large space seems to be borne by residents via a management company.

• Tree Officer’s point re undeclared removal of important tree for road.

• Dismissal of ground source heating without site-specific appraisal.

Supporting detail & photos: Transition Tavistock 0887-26-OPA-attachment.