

Presentation for meeting at the Bastin Hall on 19 October 2004

Have East Devon really found the Key for Unlocking Exmouth?

Exmouth Residents Association - Our approach

“Making Exmouth a better place for Exmothians”

- Seek to improve Exmouth for people who live in Exmouth
- Not from a business viewpoint – Chamber
- Not from tourist – Council
- Not from visitors to Exmouth whether Exeter or beyond

BUT we believe that if we focus on making the town centre a place that you and I enjoy visiting

- More people in the town will spend more money in the shops
- Tourists and other visitors will similarly enjoy coming to our town
- Larger business and multiples will be attracted to the town because of its obvious new attractions and resultant prosperity

By focusing on we Exmothians, we are in fact developing the catalyst that will drive the regeneration of our town for all who visit it!

The main key for unlocking Exmouth (The Basis of our thinking?)

We believe that the key to unlocking our town centre is pedestrianisation, allowing people to roam freely about our town without the nuisance of traffic, exhaust fumes, vehicle noise, curbs to mount or any other obstacles to overcome

The centre of our town should be for people not cars or lorries. It is people who experience pleasure and it is only when they are on foot that they make purchases and generate prosperity to the businesses in our town.

To turn this key we need:

- Easy access
- Ample parking adjacent to the town centre
- Excellent facilities for the disabled who we hope will be one of the greatest benefitters from level paved areas without curbs and other obstructions.
- A good range of interesting shops, cafes, pubs and entertainment

This was one of our greatest disappointments about East Devon's proposals was the fact that they proposed that £5 million that might be generated by the proposals was earmarked for the replacing of a sports centre, something we already have, and not for the improvement of our town centre so that people might be tempted to visit and linger there.

Make Exmouth an enjoyable and safe place to be for all, including the young, the elderly, the infirm and the disabled.

The Issues

- Sale of land. We believe that it should be leased with a maximum period of say 30 years
- Absence of a strategy for the Orcombe area
 - Maer Road car park
 - Orcombe Point

- Foxholes Carpark
- Safety at Mamhead slipway; no overall plan for boating centre
- First call on money should be pedestrianisation of the town centre
- Affordable housing should not be part of a regeneration plan
- Multi-storey car parks should be a last resort
- Parking near town should be for visitors to the town
- Any development must be high quality
- A new site is required for the existing lorry park

An Opportunity

Two statements have encouraged us to put forward what we believe are fairly innovative proposals:

- Karim Hassan's declared wish to give fair consideration to all suggestions and his decision to obtain public input when it would have been all too easy to adopt a "take it or leave it" stance. We applaud this professional approach and are delighted to be able to suggest what we believe are far reaching and exciting alternatives
- Councillor Jill Elson, Exmouth's only portfolio holder stated recently at the AGM of the Town Management Forum that there should be no restrictions on the ideas put forward at this stage. She added that this is an opportunity for truly innovative ideas if these would radically improve the town's image and attractiveness.

So here we have a rare opportunity not only to shape the way our town is developed but also to make radical suggestions which might, at other times, be dismissed out of hand.

What are we trying to achieve tonight?

- Make you aware of some of the changes that the ERA believes should be considered
- Open up the debate by introducing radical ideas which might otherwise go unnoticed
- Show you how you can contribute your ideas – more of this later
- To seek your backing for the work of the ERA and wish that the ERA, acting on your behalf, should be involved in the planning process.
- Obtain an initial response to the ideas proposed tonight.
- What we are asking for this evening is your backing to ask EDDC to give serious consideration to these ideas before deciding upon the best way to develop our town
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A Plea

- Some of the suggestions that follow may be new to some of you
- You will be tempted to immediately see all the problems – this is unfortunately our self defence mechanism – we see the dangers before we relax and say "Actually some of this is rather good"
- We have a great opportunity to make the centre of Exmouth into something rather special for all of us
- Exmouth Residents have been considering the problems that Exmouth faces and the opportunities that exist for more than two years. We believe that our proposals have tremendous potential benefit for the town and all of us who live in it
- All these suggestions have been carefully considered and we know that, whilst you may have a number of questions about them, they are all well thought through workable propositions.
- Our question for you tonight is "If the ideas are viable, would they provide a better way to develop our town?"

Our Proposals

- Road in front of estuary – very short way only before it joins up at the far end with Imperial Road
- Why?
 - Pedestrianises the area between the car parks and the town centre
 - Provides space for a new supermarket, opposite the Kentucky restaurant. which would not involve demolishing the swimming pool
- Supermarket site – Opposite the Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant
- Why?
 - Becomes part of the town centre
 - Does not involve demolition and rebuilding of the sports centre
 - Should release money from developers for pedestrianisation schemes within the town
 - Finally, I wonder how many of us remember how, when the old station buildings were demolished, the temperature in the Parade in Winter plummeted as the town was laid open to the wind from across the estuary. A supermarket in the same position would see a corresponding increase - again making the Parade a more pleasant place to be - Perhaps this is how it should look??

Which Supermarket?

Other Points

- Mamhead slipway
- Elizabeth Hall
- Maer Road car park
- Orcombe Point
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And the key is:

“Exmouth for Exmouthians, a town centre for all, that we enjoy visiting and choose to linger in.”

Not included:

Traffic circulation – can be done – already discussed with DCC

Parking and possible park and ride for commuters leaving Exmouth

Heritage Centre – Needs smart promenade

Design is important – quality must not be sacrificed

Multi-storeys unpopular

Lorry park relocation

Station car park

Do not sell, only lease for say 30 years.

Where is there information:

Geoff Morris – 19 October 2004