**TDBC Community Scrutiny Committee. 14th November 2017.**

Councillors, thank you for this opportunity to address you on the subject of the Nexus Business Park.

The area concerned is a floodplain, that is a fact confirmed by the Environment Agency and others. The application is to build a business park in the centre of the floodplain which will be bordered by high risk flood areas.

Without doubt this application will increase the risk of flooding both downstream and upstream of the development. While Ruishton are concerned with the downstream effects I am more concerned with the upstream effects. The lower parts of Stoke St.Mary are in the highest risk flood zone and rely on the flow downstream towards the proposed development to drain the area. Any restriction in that flow will result in the flooding of homes in the village.

As you will know from your papers, a developer wants to build housing towards the edge of this floodplain which will only increase further the risks of flooding both upstream and downstream.

The whole development is both unnecessary and unwelcome.

I also understand that various speculators have purchased options on land from the Nexus site to the Nags Head pub at Thornfalcon. If these sites ever get the go ahead the Nexus site will become inundated. Isn’t it a little strange that some speculators can spend large amounts of money buying options but cannot afford to build affordable homes.

In the finer print you will also note that the the site is to be developed on a ‘plot by plot’ basis. Did I not read something along similar lines for the Firepool project? How long has that site been waiting for the right punter to come along and put his money down before the work starts.?

A farm producing large amounts of poultry for the domestic market will disappear. Most of the grain and feedstuffs used in this enterprise is grown on land in the local area. Given that the UK is now only 60% self sufficient in food should we not be giving priority to sustainable farming as opposed to speculative developments?

I fail to understand why Taunton Deane Borough Council are trying to ‘steamroller’ this development through the planning process by use of a Local Development Order. Why should the ratepayers of Taunton Deane pay for all the research work for this application which normally would be borne by the developer?

I believe it is absolutely essential that this application be postponed until Highways England Ltd release their revised proposals for the A358 and decide exactly which route they intend to pursue.

In the meantime perhaps Taunton Deane might consider the use of an LDO on the Firepool site, a brown field site, for which LDO’s were specifically designed.

Could I please ask Tim Burton two questions:

Who first came up with the idea of using an LDO? TDBC officers or Summerfield or their advisors/lawyers.

If the LDO is granted the land value will increase considerably. Should Summerfield decide to sell the land to another developer, who would gain from the transaction Summerfield or the public purse?

Stoke St.Mary Parish Council are concerned that we do not have a voice in Taunton Deane Borough Council, on this subject, as our Deane Councillor, by the very nature of his position as Leader, has a prejudicial interest. I emphasise that this interest is solely as Leader of the Council.

Mike Baddeley.

Chairman, Stoke St.Mary Parish Council.