



## **Seabrook Orchards Residents Group response to planning application 23/1237/RES**

The Seabrook Orchards Residents Group (SORG) is a constituted group representing over 150 households (members) on the Seabrook Orchards development. The group is run by an Executive Committee who are elected annually by the members. The purpose of the group is to represent community interests, bring people together and resolve concerns specifically relating to the Seabrook Orchards development. The SORG executive committee is currently made up of five volunteers living in the Seabrook Orchards development. We seek to hold developers to account on the high standards set out in planning documentation, and seek to influence future aspects of community provision. We also seek dialogue with site developers and the management company, so the community can feel connected and informed as to what is happening where we live.

### **SORG wish to raise an objection to planning application 23/1237/RES on the following grounds.**

- 1) The Reserved Matters Application is for 191 homes in phase 3 and 13 in Seabrook Square, thus only 649 homes proposed for the Seabrook Orchards development in total. The Section 106 agreement requirement for the road connections between Fish Street/ Vernon Crescent and Dart Avenue/ Admiral Way is only legally required once 651 homes have been built, so this appears to be an active avoidance by Bloor to delivering these transport connections. Access from Phase 2 of Seabrook Orchards to the Greater Newcourt Area is already constrained by a lack of formal access which creates everyday issues for people commuting to work, delivering/ collecting children from Trinity School and for residents seeking to access transport connections such as bus routes, cycle networks and the Newcourt train station.
- 2) To date, 337 homes have been constructed on the Seabrook Orchards site. (200 in Phase 1 and 137 in Phase 2a.) With the remaining consented 108 dwellings (4 plots in Phase 2a and 104 in Phase 2b), plus a further 204 homes in Phase 3 and Seabrook Square, this is a further 312 dwellings to be delivered. With at least one car per home on average, this will hugely increase the traffic and congestion on Dart Avenue, Topsham Road and at the already congested Countess Wear roundabout.
- 3) The Planning Statement and Statement of Community Involvement (section 6.6) states that pre-conversations between Bloor and ECC Planners have agreed that a new Transport Assessment is not required as the one submitted with the outline application in 2011 was considered sufficient. Arguably this is not the case if the 651 dwellings trigger point for additional road connections is not met, as road/ pedestrian/ cycle connections facilitating links to public transport would not be delivered. The section 106 trigger point needs reducing by a good margin to ensure these are delivered and we request that this is a condition on this application.

- 4) Additionally, the Transport Assessment should be updated to take account of the many new housing developments which have been added in the locality of Seabrook Orchards, which have increased usage of the already busy local road network.
- 5) The proposed Reserves Matters Application does not adequately address pedestrian and cycle connectivity between Seabrook Orchards and the Greater Newcourt area. Only cycle parking is mentioned as part of this application.
- 6) We are amazed to read that Bloor consider they have consulted the community, including “liaison with the Seabrook Orchards Residents Group Executive Committee”. (Planning Statement and Statement of Community Involvement, section 8.) Bloor undertook a door drop of letters announcing that they would be shortly submitting a Reserved Matters Application for Phase 3 and Seabrook Square at the end of July 2023. The Planning Statement (section 8) says that 140 letters were circulated. The development currently consists of 337 completed properties, so this is less than 50% of households receiving correspondence.
- 7) For those who did receive a door drop letter, 8 households plus the SORG Executive Committee replied. Neither the SORG Executive Committee nor any other household received a response to their letters despite this Planning Statement stating that Bloor had provided an individual response to each.
- 8) The consultant’s summary of the issues raised from the 9 responses received also cunningly omits the major one we highlighted about connectivity to Greater Newcourt.

In summary, we feel that this Reserved Matters Application as submitted by Bloor Homes is seeking to actively avoid delivery of the high standards of development as were set out in the original outline planning application 11/1291/OUT, specifically the transport connections to Greater Newcourt.

We recommend that if this application is to be approved, that the section 106 trigger point for creation of the Fish Street/ Vernon Crescent and Dart Avenue/ Admiral Way pedestrian/ cycle and vehicular access is reduced to 600 homes or less to ensure that these are completed OR that a condition be put on the consent to mandate the creation and completion of the road connections.

We would also like to highlight that the SORG Executive Committee are more than willing to meet with Bloor and Exeter City Planners to discuss matters to aid with community consultation and feedback.

The Seabrook Orchards Residents Group Executive Committee  
Nat Baker, Ed Rashbrooke, Andrew Sails, Jonathan Goldsworthy, Annabel Harris  
23/10/2023