

Examination of the New East Devon Local Plan 2006-26

Mr M Dickins
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By email only

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Dear Mr Dickins,

Thank you for your letter of 16 July.

I agree that given that the different work streams are inextricably linked to housing need and supply that it is sensible to produce and submit them together with an overall conclusion regarding a) the objectively assessed housing need for East Devon and b) how that need will be met. With regard to the latter, the Council will need to demonstrate that it can provide a 5 year supply of housing land on adoption of the Local Plan. Resolving the issues identified by Natural England and your consultants with regard to the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment will be critical to the delivery of new housing particularly at the West End. I am sure that I don't have to emphasise the seriousness of any threat or delay to the delivery of housing at the West End arising from the need to avoid or mitigate harm to the Special Protection Area.

Turning to the proposed timetable; if the new work does not lead to a need for significant changes to the Plan, I do not understand the need for your Development Management Committee and Full Council to consider the new information. This would cut 3 weeks from your programme and enable interested parties to be consulted on the new evidence much earlier.

If significant changes are required it must cast doubt on the Plan's strategy and the veracity of your latest evidence, evidence which took the best part of a year to produce. I remain committed, as far as is appropriate given the nature of my role, to helping you secure a sound plan. However, you should be aware that any significant change to the overall number of houses required or the strategy to deliver them may raise questions as to whether the Plan is fundamentally different to that submitted for examination. Should that be the case we would need to explore the best way forward for East Devon.

Yours faithfully

A Thickett

Inspector