



Strategic Planning (Emerging Local Draft Plan Comments),
Blackdown House,
Border Road,
Heathpark Industrial Estate,
Honiton.
EX14 1EJ

7th January 2023

Ref: Honi_01

Dear Sir,

I write to express in the strongest terms my objections to the inclusion of the AONB land south of the Heathfield Estate, Honiton within the proposed draft Local Development Plan for East Devon.

I understand that in February 2022 this area of land adjacent to Old Elm Road was on the draft plan Red List meaning no housing development allowed, the EDDC are now within the new draft plan putting forward for this land to be developed. This follows further representations from Gleeson, the same developer who unsuccessfully applied for planning permission in 2015. It appears that the boundary for this area of land has been redrawn. I would like to know when consultation took place regarding this, and who has taken responsibility for this action.

My understanding is that none of the reasons why the planning proposals turned down in both 2014 and 2015 have changed.

- 1) The site remains within an Area Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2) It is within open countryside outside the built-up area boundary. Despite the need for additional housing in the region the land has not been reconsidered for proposed development since it was specifically excluded from the emerging local plan in 2012.
- 3) It would result in unacceptable increases in traffic for residents on the Heathfield Estate and increase traffic on both the Sidmouth Road and the Sidmouth Road roundabout.
- 4) Sewage and drainage systems would be overloaded.
- 5) Flooding/Run Off/Drainage from the site is a serious issue since flooding from surface water has already occurred. The rising topography to the south of the existing built-up area gives rise to surface water run off during periods of heavy/persistent rain. Any development would lead to an increase in the amount of surface water run-off at the site. Climate changes will only exacerbate this problem.
- 6) Any development of this area will be visually prominent from a number of locations, affecting properties in and around Oak View, Laurel Road, Honeysuckle Drive,

Heather Close, and Bracken Close. In many cases it would give rise to overlooking and over shadowing of existing properties. It would also be visually prominent from Hayne Lane, Beech Walk and Roundball Hill.

7) With the exception on Tesco store and Heathfield Public House, key facilities are between 1.4 and 2KM distant with steep hills or major traffic routes in between. This means access will be unlikely for pedestrians, cyclists, or those using the limited public transport. Development would markedly increase, leading to further congestion in the locality.

8) Any development would have huge implications for both health and educational services within the town. There are already unacceptable waits to get an appointment at the surgery with our doctors serving large numbers of patients. Our schools do not have the capacity to take an increase in pupils.

9) This area forms part of a wild life corridor and nurtures many of our native fauna. These are a vital part of our heritage and well- being. We must value and ensure the survival of our wildlife for future generations.

Honiton is a small country town and not suitable for large development. In the past seven years we have already had the impact of the Hayne Lane development, which continues to expand and which impacts on all aspects of the town.

The local area relies heavily upon tourism to provide employment for many local people. If we continually build upon our AONB and destroy the hills and woodland that attract our annual visitors will they want to come to East Devon?

The Local Plan is important, but needs to develop our precious land in a sensible, sustainable way. Rather than nibbling continually at our small towns and villages with their small pockets of AONB would it not be better to plan for a new town. This could be climate neutral, meet the requirements of the twenty-first century and include the utilities that are needed for people to thrive. It should be predominately affordable housing to meet the need of local families.

Yours faithfully,

