

10th March 2014
For the attention of:
Mr Anthony Thickett
HM Planning Inspector for ED Local Plan

Dear Inspector,

The Need for a new entrance to the "Alex"

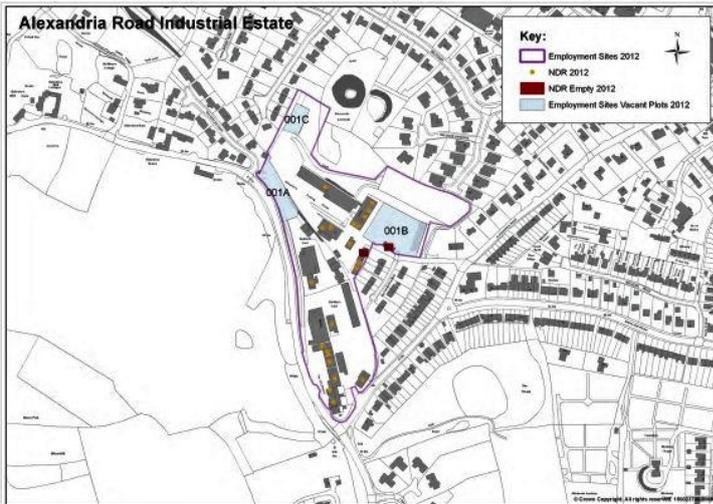
In respect to the Sidmouth section of the Local Plan it is the offer by a major supermarket to purchase the Alexandria Industrial Estate which is underwriting the proposed industrial development in the Sidford AONB and is the generator of the EDDC's masterplan for the extensive redistribution of employment land in the valley. Should this be allowed to proceed it will have a considerable impact on the economic vitality of the town centre and the run-off will contribute to flooding downstream at Port Royal. The Bulverton Road access to the industrial estate is therefore the lynchpin to the whole employment land debate in the resort.

The Alexandria site has operated under capacity and has been neglected over many years, but with some modest reconfiguring such as an improved access it is capable of accommodating more employment space. You asked who will do it but Morrison's included just such an entrance location in their plans for their supermarket and filling station. During the late afternoon discussions on the 25th February the case against increasing capacity and introducing a new vehicle entrance were deliberately overstated by the Ford's agent. We were told the access road was problematic because it would cost £1m to install and that the ransom strip was owned by 13 different parties. On this matter as I fear the persuasive powers of the Ford's agent were intended to distract, I would recommend an independent assessment is made.

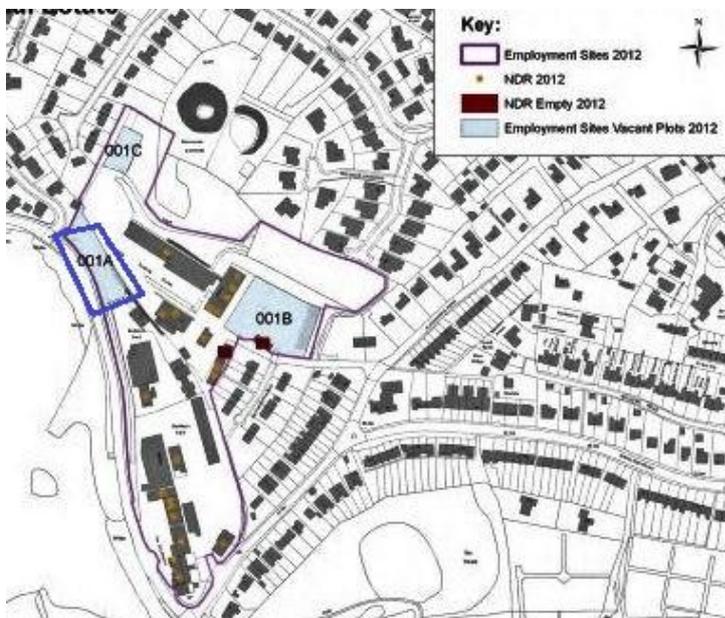
Former local professionals without a vested interest estimate the cost for a simple T junction to be more like £300K and this could be financed by building a series of business units along the strip as per the diagrams below. Furthermore I do not foresee any planning reasons against permitting a new means of access. The number of owners however is irrelevant as we are only interested in one particular section of the ransom strip. On the question of who owns this particular part of the site, according to local knowledge nearly all the land belongs to Colin Mayor and his brother in law Colin Farnsworth a former co-director of Skinners Construction. It is a clearly a case of where there is a will there is a way!

Consequently a cost benefit analysis of whether the access is viable would have to be compared with the cost to Sidmouth of further large scale out-of-town retail and commercial development. Currently Sidmouth has a well distributed and sustainable live-work balance but the proposed single zone of 5 hectares lacks evidence and has poor transport connectivity. On the other hand the more sensible Roger Tym's calculations of 1 hectare of employment land is achievable by refiguring the Alexandria estate and introducing mixed developments in Eastern Town and on brown field sites elsewhere. Please note the views expressed above are largely shared by the Sidmouth Town Council and the majority of people in the town.

Yours sincerely
Graham Cooper (Sidmouth Resident)



Please refer to site 001A above. You will find this highlighted strip of land has a long tail stretching down to the old station building.



Access however is required through the section indicated



A simple T junction paid for by the new B1 offices