

Rep No: 4002

Name: Christopher J Rignall

Date sent: 14.05.12

Having studied the New East Devon Local Plan, I believe that the EDDC development plans for future housing and employment areas in the Sid Valley are ill conceived and I am particularly concerned that the plans may be foisted upon the local population without adequate consultation, justification or acceptable democratic process.

In particular, I support the views of many fellow local residents that::

The countryside around Sidmouth is a beautiful asset for residents and visitors and it must be protected by observing the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), not by developing within them. We must ensure that the approaches to Sidmouth remain attractive and that development does not undermine the reasons why tourism thrives here.

□□□□□□□□ There is no tangible evidence that Sidmouth needs 5 hectares (10 football pitches) of new employment land in the AONB between Sidford and Sldbury and we urge EDDC to pursue making full use of the Alexandria Road site, gaining access from Bulverton Road. If further land is required it must not be in the AONB.

□□□□□□□□ New houses will continue to be bought by incomers rather than local young people, so demand will never be satisfied. It will only increase the need for more facilities, with further developments to service the increased population. Any further building should be within the town boundary and not in the AONB.

□□□□□□□□ EDDC should re-open discussions on the development of Port Royal with a widely representative group of the Sidmouth community to devise a more generally beneficial and acceptable solution than the development of expensive, private apartments on the sea front.

□□□□□□□□ Any future sale and redevelopment of the Knowle should ensure protection of the open spaces and parkland, respecting tree preservation orders, public access and rights of way.

In view of the widespread public opposition to EDDC's plans for the future development of the Sidmouth/Sid Valley area, I trust the District Council will now scrap these current plans and ensure that any future plans do not involve building developments within the existing Sid Valley AONB areas.

Rep No. 4003
Name: Peter Argent
Date sent: 07.05.12

Address: Robins
Crampmoor Lane
Romsey
Hampshire SO51 9AJ

Comments:

A group of us visit Seaton annually to have a ride on the trams. We were pleasantly surprised at how fresh and vibrant the town seemed to be compared to previous visits. We had a look around the new Tesco very attractive and impressive and then went into the town centre. We usually head off to Lyme Regis for a late lunch but we stayed in Seaton and had an excellent lunch and enjoyed a lengthy walk along the promenade before getting the bus back to Axminster and the train home.

We were so impressed that I agreed to feed back our thoughts to the Council.

Rep No. 4004

Name: Roger H. Till

Date sent: 16.05.12

I am a Sidmouth resident at 44, High Street.

I wish to comment on certain aspects of the local plan proposed for Sidmouth.

1. Any development at Port Royal would ruin the balance of the area unless it is low rise. The view along the Esplanade towards the East is currently balanced and affords an uneven rising vista from The Lifeboat Station, through the Sailing Club and the Drill Hall to Pennington Point and Salcombe Hill. The gap at Port Royal, before the rise to Pennington Point allows the full appreciation of the landscape, which is an important part of the Heritage Jurassic Coast.

If a multi-storey development were to be allowed the balance would be lost and the East end of the Esplanade would feel very cramped. If a marina was to be developed in this area, the landward side would be unattractive with a multi-storey facade and I believe that this would have a detrimental effect on the aesthetics of the area, making it less attractive to people seeking a mooring. I cannot stress too much that the variety provided by Port Royal as a contrast to the built up frontage of the rest of the Esplanade needs to be retained in order to avoid a bland characterless seafront.

From the middle of the seafront to the Western End is full of character and variety, but the Eastern end has been marred by the 1980s development which continues the flat high-rise facade of the Royal York and Faulkener towards the east. This pattern should not be continued further eastwards.

2. The Knowle, particularly the arena fronting onto Station Road, is an essential part of the beauty of Sidmouth and an incredibly important gateway to the town. The arena and surrounding gardens should be designated a public amenity space and protected in perpetuity to the fullest extent that the law allows. The Knowle itself should be considered for listing, the original parts being an important part of Sidmouth's heritage. The cost neutral suggestion of moving EDDC from Sidmouth to Honiton is not compelling evidence for cost saving and I am far from convinced of the validity of the calculations. A move of this magnitude should display much more clear cut benefits. But whether EDDC moves or not, the Knowle and its grounds must be protected for the benefit of future generations.

3. The need for more industrial land in Sidmouth has yet to be proven. Do not let national government or county government dictate overrule the local requirements. The economy of Sidmouth is sustained by tourism and anything which acts against the attractiveness of Sidmouth for tourists will have a detrimental effect on what is now managing to be a thriving community. The existing Alexandria Industrial Estate has ample space for any developments which are likely, realistically, to be needed in

the short and medium term. I do hope the rumours of Morrisons being interested in acquiring the site are unfounded. Sidmouth is amply catered for by supermarkets from the high end Waitrose, through the mid-range Co-op and Tesco, to the low end Lidl. Anything further is unnecessary.

4. Development in the AONB is unwarranted. The whole point of it being designated as such is that it should remain inviolate for future generations. Once lost it cannot be reinstated. No development is necessary north of the A3052. The blot on the landscape of Sidmouth Garden Centre which can be seen to the north of the A3052 when leaving Sidmouth should be a salutary lesson on what happens once development on the AONB is allowed.

Rep No. 4005

Name: Les Coates

Date sent: 14.05.12

Plumb Park:

I notice that it is now stated at 350 homes, has that figure been agreed or is it still up for discussion?

Are there any sports provisions attached to the plumb park proposal for Littleham?

Rep No. 4006

Name: Mrs J Glennie

Date sent: 19.05.12

As I shall not be able to come to the next public meeting I would like to make some comments –

Detailed proposals of the placement of possible dwellings on the Knowle site need to be made public. It's not unreasonable to build dwellings on the site but the long green area next to the road leading down into the town from the entrance gates should be kept as public land. It is vital that Sidmouth should retain this feature as an open space – it's a wonderful introduction to the town.

20 dwellings on the manstone road depot is ok, but what sort of dwellings.

30 dwellings on the esplanade is ok at the ham end is ok, it would save the area from industrial development which would mar the sea front and also protect it from tinpot unfeasible thoughts of a marina.

12.5 acres of employment land at Sidford is not a good idea. Sidmouth's reputation is NOT built on industry but in its charm as a residential/shopping/gentle leisure beautiful seaside town and to make its environs 'industrial' in any way shape or form would be stupid desecration.

On a separate issue, I do think the plans to allow the vet practice to share the garden centre site is a sensible one. Hatchets should be buried now over old planning issues, points have been made, it's a publicly popular site, the vet practice is popular and needed in Sidmouth and there is adequate parking space in an already occupied site.

Rep No. 4007

Name: Eric White

Date sent: 18.05.12

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to the latest draft of the local plan.

Firstly I would like to welcome the plans for rail improvements for East Devon in general and the Exmouth Exeter Link in particular. The provision of longer and more frequent trains between Exeter and Exmouth is to be welcomed.

However may I suggest that a simpler solution to increasing capacity for a twenty minute interval service. This would be the reinstatement on the old platform 1 in Exmouth.

Then an extension of the passing loop at Topsham over the Clyst bridge, and between the main Waterloo line junction towards the motorway bridge. This would save on the construction of passing loops and extra platforms at Lypstone and Digby and Sowton.

Both of which sites will have access problems and have major construction work required.

Thus a train would depart from Exmouth on the arrival of the next service. It would then remain in the station until next Exmouth bound service arrives. Trains would then cross on the Exmouth side of Topsham and again between the motorway bridge and Exeter Central. All the land required is, I believe, still owned by the residual board of the railways. No new platforms will need to be constructed. Although some will benefit from short extensions.

With reference to the plans for Exmouth. I would like to object to the planned building of houses in the Maer valley site, sometimes called Plumb park.

This site is totally unsuitable for housing development.

Firstly road access is limited to two possible gateways. Through the "Pankhurst" industrial site or Buckingham close. The former site although much under used, still receives a significant number of heavy goods vehicles. This will only increase should the site be brought to full capacity. This is incompatible with through traffic to a housing development of the planned scale. The Buckingham close site road will pass Danby Court a Devon County facility for those suffering from Alzheimers disease.

The increase in traffic and potential for accidents makes this route extremely unsuitable. Considering most households now have at least two cars. Especially the demographic for the those projected for this site, i.e. young working families. This

could translate to approx. 700 plus cars requiring to use these two unsuitable access points. Further more both routes will feed the majority of extra traffic onto Littleham

Road. During the Summer months this road is already at grid lock with the much increased Sandy Bay traffic. This all tries to feed onto the Salterton Road at the traffic lights. There is no provision for crossing the road to the well used small shops in Littleham Cross, from the numerous retirement flats sited on the other side of the road. An increase of 700 plus cars in this area will make the situation intolerable and dangerous for existing residents. Despite hopes for an increase in employment in Exmouth the vast majority of potential residents of this site will commute to Exeter or beyond, putting yet more pressure on the A376. To which there appear no plans for an increase of this roads capacity.

.Secondly. I note that that attached map has now, no area marked for a recreation area/ open space at the top of what I have always called Ball Hill. Now sometimes called Donkey hill. This area was offered in the list of possible social benefits offered by Clinton Devon Estates, for this development. However I note that little was actually promised, as the offers were written in very vague language. With most benefits being "considered" or "possible". I also note that the proposed development between Exmouth and Lympstone, was rejected by the council. This subsequently went before a planning, inspector and was rejected again. I recall that this site has many promised social benefits, including a Doctors surgery, shop, extension to school places etc. I also recall that some of the reasons given for the rejection of this site were overdevelopment and road access on the A376. Both of which reasons, I believe apply to this site.

Thirdly. There is a problem with the sewage system in this area after heavy rain. The open space at the Maer is transited by sewerage outfall pipe below ground. This overflows after heavy rain onto this area of SSSI.

Another large development upstream of this pipe will only make this considerably worse.

I note that your plan calls for encouragement for food production to be locally protected, to enable local supplies to be available in the area. It also strives to maintain the ecological and wildlife biodiversity to be enhanced in East Devon. This seems to be in direct conflict with plans for this large development on good farm land.

So that we will not only lose available agricultural land, but also a proportion of our Devon hedgrows around the fields being considered. This could also result in the farm being unviable to remain in agricultural use by its smaller residual size.

In previous discussions held between the Council, CDE and local residents. Much has been said about the need for social housing provision. However I have noted reports recently from the BBC website. That now that construction has begun.

Problems have been identified with mortgage lenders for this type of housing. And now the designation of these Social housing units have been altered, so as "not to result in unsold units".

I find this bizarre, that the Social housing units may now not be provided and possibly some of these houses may not be sold and remain empty, when conventional thinking; is that we critically short of houses and especially social housing.

To sum up I believe this site is both unsuitable and unnecessary for the construction of new houses.

Rep No. 4008
Name: June Chapman
Date sent: 20.05.12

East Devon Local Plan ---- Axminster

1. **Housing.** Why is it thought necessary or desirable to 'encourage the building of substantial numbers of new homes', 1,050 in all when there is neither the infrastructure nor the employment to justify them?

In the event of their being built, where is the provision for enlarged medical facilities and the schooling for increased numbers of children, of both primary and secondary age?

If, as seems likely, adequate schooling and employment for children and adults are not readily available, then Axminster will become more of a retirement ghetto than it already is. In that event, enhanced medical facilities will certainly be needed. What is the plan?

Why are 400 of these proposed dwellings being built on the edge of a flood plain?

2. **Employment.** The planners can designate employment land until they are blue in the face. 8 hectares (18 acres approximately). No employer has come forward to occupy the Rodney Rendell site for purely industrial use, a situation which has prevailed for years. The local planners saw fit in recent months to refuse a perfectly reasonable planning application for this site because it did not exactly fit the 'industrial' use requirement. In the present economic climate what reasonable employer will be tempted to come to Axminster when the derelict Rodney Rendell site is the first sight to greet the eye on the main road into Axminster? And this, for the sake of the lack of a little common sense on the part of the planners in these difficult times.
3. **North South Relief Road.** A relief road should not be contemplated according to the present plan. It will irrevocably damage unspoilt land of great landscape value and cause harm to wildlife. In the 19th century railway engineers built the line adjacent to the flood-plain. If the line could be raised at that time above the flood-water it should not be above the wit of man to accomplish it for a road in the 21st century. On the other hand, to build dwellings involving great areas of paving, concreting and asphaltting besides the buildings on a flood-plain is a nonsense.
4. **Conclusion.** Forgive my bluntness; the planners both local and E.D.D.C. need to

descend from cloud cuckoo land and visit the real world. I also suggest that they visit the area adjacent to Weycroft Mill after a night of heavy rain and look out across the fields to the west. The railway line has been engineered to cope with the flooding. The same could be said of a relief road. An estate of 400 dwellings is, as I have already stated, a nonsense.

Rep No. 4009

Name: M Jerrome

Date sent: 21.05.12

Sir

It would be a criminal act of vandalism to build on ANY of the parkland at the knowle. DO NOT DO IT. This land MUST be left as it is.

Rep No. 4010

Name: Steve & Sally Jellyman

Date sent: 22.05.12

Having attended two amazingly well supported meetings regarding the proposed local plan we feel that we must convey our feelings on this matter.

We have lived in Sidmouth for ten years. We wanted to live in Sidmouth. Why? Because Sidmouth is a unique and beautiful place - there is nowhere else like it. These feelings were very strongly expressed at both meetings by young and old alike. Once Sidmouth is ruined there is no turning back. It is high time that our Councilors listened to the people of Sidmouth who have the best interests of the town at heart.

We would make the following points:

1. The proposed industrial development between Sidford and Sidbury. There has been no evidence presented by EDDC to show that such a large area of industrial estate is needed by the town. It is also in an AONB with terrible access from all directions i.e. the traffic lights and narrow roads in Sidford and also Sidbury with the narrow bridge. There is plenty of traffic using these roads already. If evidence is provided that more small industry is needed then surely a better location could be found. It is also interesting that the small development at Sidmouth Garden Centre was refused as it was in an AONB - have the rules changed now? We would very much like to see the evidence that industry is needed on such a large scale in this area.

2. Tourism has always been one of the major businesses in Sidmouth. Therefore any developments must be very carefully thought out so as not to spoil the environs of Sidmouth. As residents we all remember the fiasco of the redevelopment of the Fortfield Hotel - nobody listened to the overwhelming feeling of the hoteliers and residents at the time. With the proposed move of EDDC from the Knowle and the idea of redevelopment of the land, again like the Fortfield, this is a change of use of the land from business to housing. When EDDC think we need so much more business in Sidmouth why build more houses? They certainly would not be "affordable housing" which is what Sidmouth needs most. Also the protection of the parkland around the Knowle is essential as a unique area in Sidmouth and another reason why tourists visit the town.

3. My wife works at the Sidmouth Health Centre. You must be aware of the enormous deficiencies of this 50-year old building where the doctors and staff are working in cramped and outdated conditions. Before there is anymore redevelopment perhaps the infrastructure of Sidmouth should be addressed. The Health Centre and hospital cannot cope with anymore people as they are. Also roads and parking must be addressed with more people living in the valley.

3. Development of Port Royal. It has been understood for many years that this area was left to the people of Sidmouth for recreational purposes. This area has long been an eyesore with the derelict drill hall and shabby sailing club building. Surely every effort must be made to redevelop this with the said recreational facilities in mind. There should be great effort to make the most of this area and provide monies for this end. There should be a

strong initiative taken to provide the finances for such a redevelopment for the people of the Sid Valley. The last we want in this area is more expensive apartments. As we have seen with previous developments, and this will no doubt happen with the Fortfield Development, that wealthy people buy these expensive apartments and then only occupy them for a few short weeks in the year. This is no good for the town businesses and will lead to Sidmouth becoming a ghost town in the winter like many other seaside towns. The businesses will suffer and slowly disappear.

Remember what this all means. Sidmouth is unique - we love it and that is why we are here. Don't ruin for future generations - our children and grandchildren love visiting because it is such a special place. Even Jeremy Vine loves it as expressed on his radio programme and in the Daily Telegraph. It is wonderful publicity for Sidmouth. He remarked that "there will never be a riot in Sidmouth"

I WONDER!!

Rep No. 4011

Name: Gavin Tompkins

Date sent: 24.05.12

I must express my concern and upset at this proposed development. This is an AONB that will be ruined by this unnecessary development and the unique charm that makes Sedmouth so popular will be lost forever.

Surely the location for this proposed development is completely unsuitable. Not only will the beautiful countryside be destroyed but the road links between Sidmouth, Sidford and Sidbury are barely adequate now at Sidford Cross, School Street and through Sidbury. The additional HGV traffic that this proposed development will bring will lead to gridlock on this stretch of road.

Hopefully once this proposal has been fully considered and debated , common sense will prevail and it will be deemed unsuitable.

Rep No. 4012

Name: Gavin Jones

Date sent: 24.05.12

Sir/Madam,

The proposal to allow the development of c.5ha of prime agricultural land adjacent to the A375 at Sidford for employment purposes is unacceptable. This land is within an AONB and as such should be protected by that council which we have elected. At no time have I seen or heard of local AONBs being considered as suitable for development - especially not for industrial development. You do not in my opinion have a mandate to ignore such legislation which was put in place by Central Government specifically to prevent such unsuitable development.

If this development were to go ahead, there would be increased traffic on the A375 through Sidbury and beyond. Fore Street and Chapel Street in Sidbury are already heavily trafficked during working hours and nothing has been done by East Devon to ameliorate this situation. In fact requests to do so by myself and others have either been referred elsewhere or ignored altogether. Industrial development not only infers increased traffic, it also means more noise and other forms of pollution.

If this plan goes ahead the value of property in Sidford and to a lesser extent in Sidbury will no doubt be adversely affected.

I beg you to reconsider this proposal which appears to serve no useful purpose other than to tick a few policy boxes. There is in your documentation no indication of a need for this development. In a time when large numbers of new homes are about to be created within the District at Cranbrook I can see no requirement for industrial development in the Sidmouth area. I am at a loss to understand the council's thinking on this matter.

Rep No. 4013

Name: Chris Shaw

Date sent: 20.05.12

I agree with the following statements recently forwarded to me by Mr G Russell.

The countryside around Sidmouth is a beautiful asset for residents and tourists that must be protected by observing the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), not by developing within them. We must ensure that the approaches to Sidmouth remain attractive and that development does not undermine the reasons why tourism thrives here.

There is no evidence that Sidmouth needs 5 hectares (10 football pitches) of new employment land in the AONB between Sidford and Sldbury and we urge EDDC to pursue making full use of the Alexandria Road site, gaining access from Bulverton Road. If further land is required it must not be in the AONB.

New houses will continue to be bought by incomers rather than local young people, so demand will never be satisfied. It will only increase the need for more facilities, with further development to service the increased population. Any further building should be within the town boundary and not in the AONB.

EDDC should reopen discussion on the development of Port Royal with a widely representative group of the Sidmouth community to avoid further development of expensive apartments on the sea front.

Any future sale and redevelopment of the Knowle should ensure protection of the open spaces and parkland, respecting tree preservation orders, public access and rights of way.

Rep No. 4014

Name: Susan Gifford

Date sent: 22.05.12

As a Sidmouth resident, I would like to register my concern over EDDC's proposals for the Sidmouth area.

In particular:

I do not support 12.5 acres of employment land in the AONB between Sidford and Sidbury, especially when the existing Alexandria Road estate would appear to be a suitable site for such. There can be no justification for destroying an AONB, and I would question the need for such employment land, especially with the huge expanse of employment land being created nearby at Cranbrook.

I do not support the construction of 50 (or any number of) dwellings on the Knowle. This should be retained as the special parkland it is, for the benefit of residents of/visitors to Sidmouth. It is particularly important to retain all the trees.

Traffic is a huge problem in the town centre; with the construction of 30 dwellings on the Esplanade, a bad situation can only get worse.

The infrastructure is already under huge strain, but no proposals seem to be included for this in the current situation, let alone with any new proposals in mind.

Those houses already built/currently being built in the AONB in the Stowford area are just boxes close together, not even architecturally pleasant to look at. AONBs should be left alone; green spaces are important for everyone, including wildlife. The new housing estates do not enhance the approach to Sidmouth in any way.

EDDC risks ruining Sidmouth's special-ness for ever.

Rep No. 4015

Name: Sheldon Ware

Date sent: 28.05.12

I am writing to you to strongly oppose to ANY employment/industrial development to the west of Hayne Lane, Gittisham, Honiton. As a Hayne Lane resident i assure you that there is absolutely no need for any further employment land in the area. Most of the existing Heath park estate is undeveloped as it is. The field behind my property has planing for several industrial units, non of which are likely to be built by the present owner as there is no demand. From a traffic point of view the Turks Head junction can not cope with the traffic at peak times as it is. Doubling the size of Heath Park will nearly double the HGV use at the junction...If you time it wrong now you have to wait up to 5 minutes to get onto the Exeter road..Double the traffic will mean twice as long queues and the problems/accidents caused by traffic queueing on the A30 off ramps. Hundreds of thousands of extra pounds that I as a tax payer will have to find will need to be spent to improve the junction.

Hayne Lane farm site is also not needed...Why build so many new houses when the infrastructure of the town would not be able to cope and with a housing market already flooded with starter and mid size homes who will be living there?, especially with the new development outside Exeter (where the jobs are)?

And on a personal note i purchased my property because of the great location, surrounding countryside and peace and quiet....You building a dirty great soulless industrial estate on green land would destroy that. Also will East Devon District Council be willing to compensate me for the dramatic loss of value to my property?.

Rep No. None

Name: Jill Arnold (Mrs)

Date sent: 28.05.12

I am writing to express my support of the planned development at Cloakham Lawns.

In my opinion this development will be of great benefit for the local community as it will increase the amount of people in the town resulting in better opportunities for local business to increase their sales, thereby helping the town to grow!

Rep No. 4017

Name: Peter Cowper

Date sent: 30.05.12

Having studied this Local Plan I think 22 Louisa Place is now within the Holiday Accommodation area. How will this affect the conservation area it also stands in? Reading the notes which go with the HA area these seem to be at variance with those required for the conservation area.

With regard to the increase in housing numbers there seems to be little recognition that Exmouth is already heavily dependent on the use of the private car for journeys within the town. For instance will car clubs be part of these new developments? Will developers be required to address this issue in any detailed plan?



Tamarix,
Griggs Lane,
Sidmouth
EX10 9QF

11th May 2012

East Devon District Council,
Planning Department,
The Knowle,
SIDMOUTH EX10 8HL

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to record a formal objection to the changes contained in the Local Development Plan for Sidmouth area.

I am a resident of Sidmouth and have lived here for seven years. Our reason for moving from the Midlands is obvious. Until seven years ago we lived in a congested cheek by jowl type of environment, where on nearly every street corner there was either a large supermarket or industrial estate. Retiring down here has always been our dream and I am therefore dismayed at finding that you are planning to emulate that which we have left behind.

The outlying areas, nearly all of which have been designated areas of outstanding natural beauty are very special indeed and something worth saving, not just for us but for forthcoming generations. Mess that up and it can never again return to its former beauty.

The wealth of Sidmouth is not in industrial endeavours but tourism. Surely you must know that. What person would want to spend their holiday in an area that is very much the same as the one they live in?

Yes, there was perhaps a need for some more affordable houses but there has already been lots of building work taking place in Sidmouth over the past couple of years. Isn't that enough?

I urge you please, to leave Sidmouth alone. Cranbrook, with goodness knows how many dwellings, is only a few miles away. Will that not suffice?

Yours faithfully,



Jean Malin (Mrs)

cc. Sidmouth Town Council

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL ECONOMY			
14 MAY 2012			
ACK	CIRC	SEEN	FILE

Graeme Thompson

From: Matthew Dickins
Sent: 11 June 2012 17:18
To: Richard Eley; Localplan
Subject: RE: Local Plan Submission - UNCLASSIFIED:

Richard

We will log your representation. Could you, however, please provide a map showing the site/land in question that you are proposing for the hotel.

Thanks Matt

From: Richard Eley [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 June 2012 08:04
To: Matthew Dickins
Subject: Local Plan Submission

Hi Matt,

Below is my private submission in response to the latest Local Plan consultation. I hope the thinking behind the proposal is clear. Now we have made a formal submission, I look forward to an opportunity to meet with you and/or the rest of the Policy team, to discuss our proposal in greater detail. I have circulated the submission to a number of relevant individuals and I am pleased to report that it has been very favourably received.

In passing, I ought to let you know that John Dyson, who helps run the Hopper Bus, has the figures for car park usage at the weekends at Knowle. The numbers are remarkably high (they genuinely surprised me). I had not appreciated that the Knowle car park was so well used at weekends and during Bank Holidays. In these circumstances, it is inconceivable that the Knowle car parks can be included in the housing boundary within the Inset Maps of the draft Plan. An urgent revision is surely required.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any aspect of the submission that you would like to discuss further, or if there is any more information that you require.

Kind regards,

Richard

Submission by Richard Eley on behalf of the Eley Family

To Development Management Committee, East Devon District Council

Response to Draft Local Plan Consultation

10 June 2012

Background

The Draft Local Plan has reached a critical stage, with important decisions to be made in respect of employment provision

in Sidmouth. The current proposal is for 5 hectares of employment land to be allocated to a site to the north of Sidford. This has been very controversial with a large number of private individuals and community groups clearly stating that they believe the allocation to be far too large, and that the location is inappropriate. This was also the view of the Town Council, who at a special meeting attended by 150 residents, agreed similar resolutions.

We will not dwell on the shortcomings of the current proposal, but would point out the main reasons for this broad expression of public disquiet:

1. The District Council has gone against the advice of its own consultants, property professionals and almost every representation made in response to consultation documents. The allocation is clearly too large.
2. Specifically, the calculations included a big and clear error. The 5 hectare allocation was generated by the desire to reduce commuting, but the wrong numbers were placed in the wrong column, leading to a figure of 5 hectares rather than 1 hectare if the correct figures had been used.
3. No evidence has been provided of demand and/or need for the level of employment land being proposed. On the contrary, there is clear evidence that demand is limited. Unemployment in Sidmouth is very low, local estate agents report little demand, and there are numerous empty premises in the area. The Alexandria Industrial Estate is clearly under-used.
4. The only demand is likely to come from out-of-town retailers, especially supermarkets, and it is a widely held view in Sidmouth, again supported by the evidence of Grimleys, consultants to EDDC, that further out-of-town retail provision would adversely affect the viability of the town centre.
5. The core idea of reducing commuting that is the justification for the allocation is wholly flawed. Sidmouth is a town of net in-commuting, so further allocations will only exacerbate the problem rather than cure it. Moreover, Sidmouth, with 67%, is believed to have the highest job retention rate of any small town in England, and it is therefore very unrealistic to expect that figure to increase in any significant way.
6. Sidmouth's working population is predicted to fall by 8% over the plan period.

The location has also been widely criticised for the following reasons:

1. It is in close proximity to residential properties, whose owners are obviously concerned about the impact of noise and traffic upon their lives.
2. There are clear traffic problems associated with increasing use of Sidford Cross and the A375 through Sidbury.
3. The industrial estate will be visually intrusive within the AONB.
4. There are longstanding flooding and groundwater issues.
5. The new industrial estate, situated on one of the main routes into Sidmouth for holiday traffic, would have an adverse effect upon Sidmouth's tourism offer.
6. The new estate would greatly diminish the 'green wedge' between Sidford and Sidbury, leading to the partial absorption of the historic village of Sidbury into a 'Greater Sidmouth'.

We believe that the case for proceeding with the 5 hectare allocation at Sidford is extremely poor. The evidence against it is overwhelming. Popular feeling against the proposal is very strong.

Some objectors do not want to see any employment allocation at all, claiming with justification that the Alexandria Industrial Estate is under-used and should be better exploited. There is little technical evidence to support further employment land provision. However, there is a longstanding impression that Sidmouth is operating at times within economic constraints imposed by landscape protection policies. The Built-Up Area boundary has barely changed at all in the past forty years, and there is a feeling that some 'tweaking' is required to encourage economic activity. This has been

reflected in a number of representations.

Outside the Built-Up Area, there is almost no land available that is not within the AONB. Some of that land is owned by the Eley family. Although technically, this land might qualify for employment or residential allocations, the land in question is in the area of 'The Byes'. This is a most attractive riverside locality, and in our opinion is not suitable for employment land designation. This is a widely held opinion in Sidmouth.

Any employment land provision for Sidmouth is therefore almost inevitably going to occur in the AONB. We recognise that this is an inherent problem of the Local Plan for Sidmouth. The only solution is a carefully considered and sensitive allocation that will have the minimum impact upon the landscape quality of the town and its environs.

Our Suggestion

We own nearly thirty acres of land either side of Fortescue Road., just south of Steven's Cross, and therefore close to the A3052. The land to the west of Fortescue Road is in The Byes and is a picturesque area either side of a three hundred yard section of the River Sid. It is crossed by a little used footpath connecting the A3052 with Fortescue Road. The land to the east of Fortescue Road comprises three equally sized fields laid to grass.

Of the three fields, one has frontage to Fortescue Road. We are suggesting that this be the preferred location for an employment site, and we are proposing that it be the location for a new boutique hotel.

The Need for a New Hotel

Sidmouth is renowned for its hotels, and it is widely accepted that quality hotels are the signature component of the town's tourism industry. They are the key to Sidmouth retaining its status as a destination town, and are widely seen as essential if Sidmouth's range of shopping is to be maintained.

Sidmouth's hotels are generally successful and enjoy high rates of occupancy, much higher than other seaside resorts in the South West. They tend to open all year round and are significant local employers. They are normally of a high standard, profitable and rarely change hands. Yet in recent years, many have closed. It is extremely important to stress that this is not because of a lack of viability. The explanation is simple: they occupy sites of great value for residential development. This is ALWAYS the reason why a hotel closes in Sidmouth.

EDDC has a policy in the present Local Plan that discourages hotel closures in specific locations, but this failed in the face of a determined applicant in the case of the Fortfield Hotel. Outside the 'hotel protection' area, we have seen other hotels recently close, such as the Salcombe Hill House, the Abbeydale, and the Byes Links. All were replaced with blocks of flats.

The present Plan also has a policy to encourage the building of new hotels, but only within the Built-Up Area. In practice, this is impossible, and no new hotels have been secured: the District Council's forty-year aspiration for a new hotel has not been fulfilled.

So current policy cannot prevent our hotels from closing, but precludes new hotels from being built. It is fair to say that Sidmouth's hotel industry is therefore destined for extinction in the medium term, despite the fact that it is profitable and recognised as crucial for the local economy.

We propose that the Fortescue site be given a specific allocation as a hotel site in the Local Plan. This would mean that it could not be developed for any other purpose.

The new hotel, although small in scale, perhaps 10 to 12 bedrooms, would provide employment directly, but would also improve the tourism offer of the town. Importantly, it would offer something completely different to the existing hotels, with a semi-rural location, extensive grounds of thirty acres, riverside walks, and fishing. A new build offers the chance to provide very high standard accommodation. Direct access to The Byes and Sidmouth's extensive footpath network are other advantages. So the location and design of the new hotel would complement rather than compete with the hotels we already have.

In order to improve the distinctiveness of the new hotel, and ensure all year occupation, we propose that the new development would subsequently include a cookery school and 'artisan workshops', dedicated to food craft, using local produce. This again will provide employment and up-skill our workforce. We believe that a food emphasis will give a new dimension to Sidmouth's tourism offer.

We respectfully contrast our vision for an employment site that will underpin the local economy and bolster the town centre, with an alternative that will mean exactly the opposite. Our proposal precludes out-of-town retailing, rather than encourages it, and supports the town centre shops rather than threatens them.

The History of the Site

The site has been in the ownership of the Eley family for about fifty years. A previous application for a hotel was refused in the 1980s. Highways issues were dealt with satisfactorily at the time, and the site has enough frontage for a 90 metre visibility splay. The Steven's Cross junction is adequate to serve the low level traffic generation of the intended use. Although a visible location, we feel that an attractively designed building would fit well in the landscape, sitting alongside the large private house 'Greendale' and the recently much extended 'Holmesley Nursing Home'. The site was recently identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as suitable for a development of 63 houses. It was not eventually selected as the site lies within the Coastal Preservation Area; however, it is widely known, and has been confirmed in writing by EDDC, that the site was only included in the CPA as the result of a drafting error in the 1980s. It clearly does not meet the criteria for inclusion, especially since the stand of limes in the grounds of 'Greendale' has recently been made the subject of a TPO. We strongly recommend that a change in the boundary of the CPA be sought.

I confirm that as part of any application, we would allow public access to our land in The Byes, offering the prospect of an attractive riverside footpath, and the opportunity for a new bridge to connect the existing footpath network with the under-used footpath to the east of the river. There is no reason why the land could not also be used to accommodate an extension to existing cycle routes. Furthermore, by using our land to the east, there is the prospect of a new footpath connecting The Byes with Salcombe Hill.

By providing a link across the River Sid, we can improve access to the Blue Ball Inn and eastern Sidford. We think the Blue Ball could benefit significantly from both improved access and the proximity of the new hotel.

The Context

Although the hotel would be relatively small, in technical terms the site extends to two hectares of employment land. Provision of this site alone would considerably 'free up' the new Plan, as this would be a significant allocation.

Our land at Fortescue was included in the SHLAA, but we were extremely surprised to learn that it was not even considered as a potential employment site. We were informed that EDDC did not consider any site for employment use which was not the subject of a formal submission. Not only is this highly unusual: EDDC did not tell anyone that this was their policy. Apparently, the Policy team thought that their stance was normal practice. It is not. We contacted nine neighbouring authorities who all confirmed that they looked at ALL potential sites, not just those put forward by way of formal submission.

Only two sites were submitted (Sidford and the Garden Centre), so our policy team have approached employment provision from a very narrow perspective. This is an inflexible stance, and we suggest that the new Plan would be best served by a much more open and imaginative approach.

We think the Sidford site is completely unsuitable and we propose that it be abandoned completely. On the other hand, there is a case for a small scale extension to employment capacity in the vicinity of the Garden Centre. Although rejected at appeal, the application for a new veterinary surgery at the site was not unpopular, and was supported by Sidmouth councillors. The location on the A3052 and the relatively unobtrusive location within the landscape make the Garden

Centre a suitable site for a modest employment land allocation of, perhaps, half a hectare. In the context of Sidmouth, this is a significant provision.

We also strongly support the view that the Alexandria Industrial Estate is under-used. We suggest that the highways circumstances be re-examined and a slightly more lenient approach should be adopted, allowing for a modest increase in use. The Sid Vale Association has quite rightly pointed out that uses in the past have generated much greater traffic. This needs to be revisited.

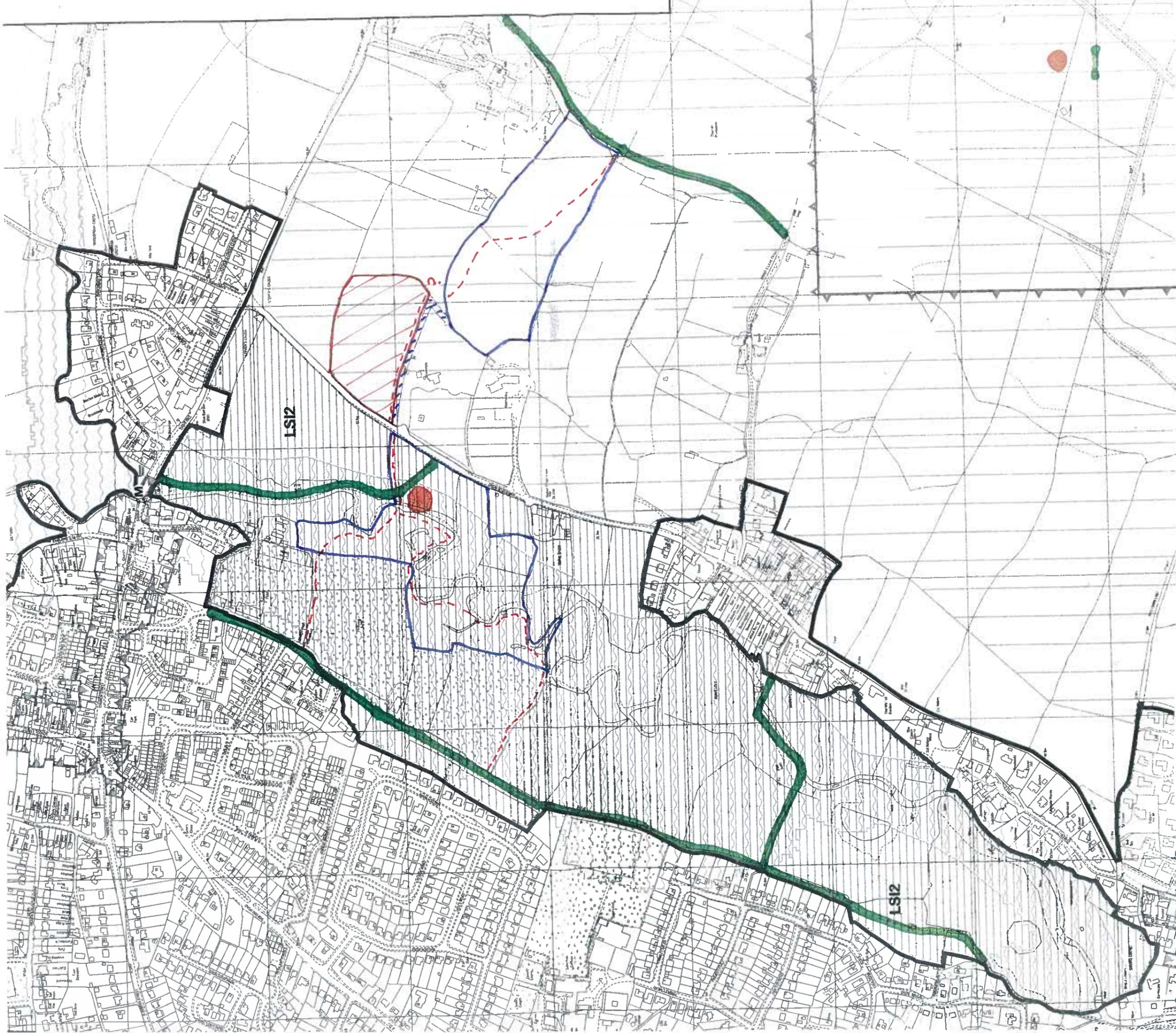
The problems of gaining access from Bulverton Road to the Alexandria Estate are well known and we have great sympathy with Fords in this regard. This situation needs to be 'unlocked'. One way of achieving this is to allocate a relatively small part of the site, perhaps half a hectare or a little more, at the northern end, for residential development. This might accommodate twenty to thirty units, maybe more. The 'added value' of residential might facilitate a solution to the problems of access. In practice, no current employment use would be lost.

A combination of a slightly more relaxed approach to highways issues at Pathwhorlands, and a modest housing provision to the north of the site, would bring more employment and housing to an under-used site within the Built-Up Area. This has to be an idea worthy of consideration and support.

This would have the added benefit of making it much easier to accommodate the 150 unit housing allocation within the Built-Up Area rather than on Greenfield sites.

It is difficult to see this Alexandria 'solution' coming forward without an employment allocation such as we propose with the Fortescue hotel.. We acknowledge it is a tenuous connection, but we feel it can be legitimately argued that a new hotel would effectively negate the need for housing development in the AONB. This is the nature of Sidmouth: it isn't easy to finesse a solution, and we need to collectively put a lot of thought into developing the optimum outcome.

The Save Our Sidmouth campaign, which I strongly support, has done a superb job in exposing the shortcomings of the present employment land proposals. A rethink by the District Council is clearly required and inevitable. We hope that the idea of a new hotel, combined with increased public access to The Byes, will be a useful contribution to the debate that must then follow. We very much hope that the Development Management Committee, having now taken charge of the Plan, will genuinely engage and consult, and that from that process a suitable and attractive solution will emerge.



Probable location for bridge

Existing footpaths

Proposed footpaths

"Missing link" to be acquired by negotiation

Other land owned by Eley family

'Hotel' site

Land over which we enjoy right of way - does not extend to footpath use

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL ECONOMY			
13 JUN 2012			
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The Planning Policy Section
East Devon District Council
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Sidmouth
EX10 8HL

31 May 2012

Dear Sirs

Views on East Devon District Council's Emerging Local Plan Consultation on the Inset Map and Policies for Exmouth on Behalf of Clinton Devon Estates in Relation to Land at Littleham Exmouth and Land at Liverton Business Park Exmouth June 2012

On behalf of Clinton Devon Estates, we welcome the opportunity to comment on East Devon District Council's Emerging Local Plan "**Consultation on the Inset Map and Policies for Exmouth**" in relation to land at Littleham, Exmouth, and land at Liverton Business Park, Exmouth.

At all times what we say herein has to be read in conjunction with our previous representations to East Devon District Council's plan making processes and we are expecting the Council to take those into account too.

The Exmouth inset map is reflected in "**Strategy 22 – Development in Exmouth (formerly DS17)**" which states, amongst other things:

"Strategic Land Allocations at Exmouth – as part of the delivery mechanism strategic sites are allocated and shown on the proposals Map for development at:...

b) **Phase 3 at Liverton Business Park** – around 3 hectares of employment land. Liverton Phase 2 does have planning permission but it is also calculated into allocations with 8 hectares.

c) **Littleham** – around 350 new homes (at the Plumb Park site)."

Specifically in relation to b) and c) our client:

- endorses the allocations as outlined in both "Strategy 22" and the Exmouth inset map;

- supports the broad locations of the allocations as outlined in both “Strategy 22” and the Exmouth inset map; and,
- expects detailed boundaries to be determined through the planning application process.

We trust that our comments will be taken into account before the final document is produced. Should you wish clarification on any matter raised therein please contact Bell Cornwell LLP’s Exeter office.

Yours faithfully

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