



Budleigh Salterton Town Council

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East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040 **Response from Budleigh Salterton Town Council**

Budleigh Salterton Town Council (BSTC) met on Monday 12 December 2022 to discuss the emerging East Devon Local Plan and formulate a response.

BSTC noted that the Settlement Boundary, agreed by both BSTC and East Devon District Council (EDDC) when the Budleigh Salterton Neighbourhood Plan (BSNP) had been 'Made', had been amended. While appreciating that the EDDC Strategic Planning Committee have the right under current Government legislation to make changes to supersede some policies in Made Neighbourhood Plans, Members were disappointed that BSTC had not been consulted regarding these changes. Members would be grateful if BSTC could be notified of any proposed amendments to the BSNP in the future and those views will be taken into consideration.

Members noted that the proposed allocation of new homes for Budleigh Salterton was 152. The comments on the proposed sites earmarked for potential development are detailed below.

Budl_01 – Land adjacent to Clyst Hayes Farmhouse

It was noted that small parts of the site are a 'second choice' site for 50 new homes and 0.2 hectares of employment land.

Budleigh Salterton is the only town entirely within the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and as such is afforded a considerable level of protection. In their assessment of the site EDDC acknowledge that 'there are not considered to be sufficient reasons to justify this scale of development in such a sensitive location'. BSTC Members wholeheartedly support this view. Grade 1 agricultural land is at a premium throughout the country, the loss of such land would be contrary to HM Government's commitments to increase agricultural production and preserve the natural environment.

At present St Peter's Primary school is oversubscribed and has neither the funds or capacity to expand in order meet the needs of additional numbers of children who may wish to attend the school should any housing development take place nearby.

The B3178, which passes through Knowle Village, is already a busy through route with frequent delays at the junction with Exmouth Road. Any additional housing adjacent to this road would only increase the level of congestion.

BSTC therefore opposes any development on this site.

Budl_02 & Budl_03 – Land at Barn Lane

It was noted that these two sites, if developed, could yield around 80 dwellings. It was also noted that EDDC considered that these two sites would not be suitable as they are classified as 'Grade 1 agricultural land, which are also in a drinking water source protection zone and could also be at a high risk of flooding'. BSTC agrees with these views.

These particular sites have now been included within the Settlement Boundary. As noted earlier these changes were not discussed with BSTC and while acknowledging EDDC's right to change Settlement Boundaries, Members were concerned that such action would create a precedent leading to further Settlement Boundary changes throughout the northern sector of the Parish. Such action would totally undermine and detract from the town's location within AONB. One of the key reasons why the town was included in the AONB was because of the attractive vistas and views afforded of the local countryside in this area.

The issues highlighted with regard to site Budl-01 similarly apply to these two sites. BSTC therefore opposes any development on these sites.

Budl_04 – The Old Orchard, Halse Hill

Members agree with the view that development on this site is unachievable. The site forms part of the Green Wedge detailed in Policy NE7 of the BSNP. This Green Wedge contains three Devon County Wildlife sites. This policy states that this area should be protected to maintain landscape and wildlife interest and prevent coalescence of the land between Exmouth Rd and Little Knowle. Section 7.31 Strategy 8 of the East Devon Local plan 2013-31 states that 'development within Green Wedges will not be permitted if it would add to existing sporadic or isolated development or damage the individual identity of a settlement or could lead to or encourage settlement coalescence'.

Green Wedges such as this site were instrumental in AONB's decision to include the whole of Budleigh Salterton in AONB.

BSTC therefore opposes any development on this site.

Budl_05 – Little Knowle

This site is adjacent to the Green Wedge and the same arguments apply to this proposed site as highlighted in the response to the proposals for Budl_04. BSTC agrees with EDDC's view that the existing field formations forms an attractive feature in the street scene, and is at risk of flooding.

BSTC therefore opposes any development on this site.

Budl_06 – Budleigh Salterton Community Hospital

This site was proposed in the initial version of the East Devon Local Plan when the Community Hospital was earmarked for closure. Since then, the site has been developed as a flagship Community Health Hub, serving not only Budleigh Salterton but also Woodbury and Exmouth. Senior government ministers have supported this development commending it as an exciting and important new approach to health care. To date this Hub has saved the NHS in excess of £340,000 annually. This initiative now forms an integral part of the East Devon health scene and is well supported by the community.

BSTC therefore opposes any development on this site.

Budl_07 – The Old Smithy, Dalditch Lane

Members note EDDC comments and agree that this site is not suitable for development.

Budl_08 – Lower Station Road Car Park

This site is a well-used car park located in the centre of the town. Consequently, it is well used by both shoppers and those working in the town. The provision of this car park is vital as it limits the need for vehicles to be parked in nearby streets and consequently reduces congestion. While at this stage, BSTC opposes any development on this site, no final decision can be made until the report is received from EDDC following the HELAA tests.

Budl_09 – Brook Road Car Park

BSTC agrees with the comments made by EDDC regarding the unsuitability of this site for development because of its size and the potential risk of flooding.

General Comments

The proposals to build 152 houses would lead to an increase in population of between 300 and 600 people. The Medical Centre provides care not only for residents of Budleigh Salterton but also the surrounding villages. This increase in population would put an unacceptable strain on the medical resources in the town.