

From: Cllr Megan Armstrong
Sent: 15 January 2023 21:41
To: Planning Policy
Cc: Matthew Dickins
Subject: Response to Draft Local Plan consultation

Categories: Reg.18 consultation

Dear Planning Policy Team

Please see my comments below regarding the draft Local Plan consultation, which are in two sections, the first being general comments about the overall Plan strategy and the second being more specific comments, especially with reference to Exmouth, as one of its District councillors.

Overall Plan Strategy

- Although the latest government advice on required housing numbers has not yet been fully clarified, would it be possible to delay this Local Plan process until the new government policy is made public?
 - The need for social rented housing is a priority and not just so-called 'affordable', the numbers of which are often reduced drastically by developers on the basis of 'viability'.
 - Not to build on greenfield, but only brownfield sites wherever possible.
 - Not allow the felling of trees and removal of hedgerows. Can we, as a local authority agree our own strategy to ensure that this is a priority as part of the planning application process?
- Also if it can be proved that a developer has removed trees and/or hedgerows prior to an application, can we ensure that they are penalised for so doing?
- We must preserve mature trees for their carbon capture properties in this current climate crisis, and both hedgerows and trees are essential for protecting the ecology and wildlife.
- I support the idea of a new town, although I understand the complexities of achieving this, especially the assumed long time frame, but this should be pursued as a matter of urgency.
 - The need for sustainability in any proposed developments, such as public transport and avoid the reliance on car use.

Specific Exmouth-related comments

- I am very concerned about the proposed Built up Area Boundary changes in Exmouth which apparently were not drawn to the attention of, let alone discussed by, members of the Strategic Planning Committee, before being included in this draft Local Plan. It seems that most, if not all of the proposed changes are in areas where there may be controversial developments, and I would suggest that this is rather unfairly pre-empting what may actually come forward as definite proposals in future.
- I fully support the North East Exmouth Residents' Group proposal to remove the sites allocated in the NE of Exmouth - EXMO 12, LYMP 9,10, 14, not only for the reasons they give, but also because I support the idea of a green wedge in that vicinity to retain the green gap between Lymptstone and Exmouth and a link to the nearby Pebblebed Heaths.
- Also, these sites are all proposed on greenfield land and would encroach, and possibly destroy the two ancient woodlands close to Lympt. 9 and 14 and other mature, protected trees along Hulham Road.
- There is a lack of appropriate infrastructure for any further sizeable allocation of new housing, particularly health services, the secondary school. sewage infrastructure and flood risks.

- Smaller scale housing (flats, etc.) is needed in/nearer to the town centre, which could allow the more appropriate use of brownfield sites and within walking distance of local facilities.

With many thanks for including my above comments in the current consultation process.

Kind regards

Councillor Megan Armstrong
Ward Member for Exmouth Halsdon
East Devon District Council

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