

INTRODUCTION

Mr Persey and his family are long standing owners of large areas of agricultural land in East Devon. Our client's interests include much of the land around the village of Plymtree and the surrounding area. The family continue to farm the land today, and also have commercial operations including Fordmore Farm Shop and other commercial space on the East Devon / Mid Devon border.

Our client therefore has a wide range of land and building interests in the district and they are actively promoting a site for housing in the village of Plymtree (Plym_03).

Against this background, Bell Cornwell LLP has reviewed the policies and information set out in the East Devon Local Plan (2020 -2042) Regulation 19 Consultation Draft and makes the following representations.

CHAPTER 3. THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

Strategic Policy SP01: Spatial Strategy

Mr. Persey supports the overall approach of Strategic Policy SP01: Spatial Strategy which encourages development and housing allocations at service villages like Plymtree.

The general strategy approach, which will see development allocations delivered at 5 different tiers of settlement in a dispersed approach to growth, is entirely appropriate and a sensible route to take.

As service village, Plymtree (with its existing services, facilities and infrastructure) is well placed to take proportionate but much needed growth. The village has a good range of facilities (school, shop, village hall, pub) and is not environmentally constrained being entirely outside of the AONB. It ultimately has more facilities and is less environmentally constrained than many other villages in the district.

Plymtree has appropriate facilities to receive an allocation, and the scale and form of growth can be carefully controlled through local development management policies so that it complements the character of the area and helps meet local needs. The current PAN number for the primary school shows that the school has capacity to accommodate more children, and additional development will help sustain village facilities.

MR J PERSEY

REPRESENTATIONS ON THE EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN (2020 – 2042) REGULATION 19
CONSULTATION DRAFT (MARCH 2025) BY BELL CORNWELL LLP

Collectively, villages could make a meaningful contribution to the district's overall housing land supply and growth of this type would also have the advantage of diversifying supply, meeting local needs and supporting rural facilities.

Securing housing growth across a wide spread of settlements is the most appropriate strategy for the district.

One of the failings of the current Local Plan (and part of the reason why the LPA have suffered from a lack of 5 year housing land supply in recent years) is due to the current strategy that sees the vast majority of delivery in a single location (e.g. Cranbrook) and in a new town which takes significant time to deliver due to the heavy infrastructure requirements that exists with delivering housing in such locations.

In our view, the current local plan did not focus sufficiently on existing towns and villages and an approach that looks to re-engage and deliver development at all tiers of settlement should be welcomed. Even small villages like Plymtree, have existing infrastructure (a school, a pub, a shop) that can provide services and facilities for a proportionate amount of growth and additional housing will support these facilities and prevent rural villages from falling into a 'sustainability' trap, where they are not allowed to grow or thrive.

It is important to ensure that the new local plan can deliver sufficient supply to allow for choice and flexibility in the local market. The ability to deliver employment and housing in service villages is a positive approach which will ensure the districts housing and employment needs are catered for.