

Somerset County Council

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Liz Pickering
Principal Forward Planning Officer
Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House
Phoenix Lane
Tiverton
Devon EX16 6PP

please ask for
Paul Browning

my reference

your reference

14th August 2013

Dear Liz

MID DEVON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW – DUTY TO CO-OPERATE AND SCOPING CONSULTATION

Thank you for your letter of the 4th July 2013 regarding the subject of the Duty to Cooperate.

The following officer response is provided in accordance with our role as statutory highways and transport authority for Somerset, whilst also taking into account statutory responsibilities for waste and minerals planning, the provision of educational and social services, emergency planning, rights of way, economic development and others.

With regard to the proposed cross-boundary issues to be addressed I agree with most of the proposed cross-boundary issues to be addressed. I believe that it may be useful to also make a specific mention to our continuing engagement with regards to ecology matters. I am also aware that my colleague Mike Highfield has made various comments regarding the acoustic topics associated with the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping (SAS) Report and the Local Plan Review Scoping (LPRS) Report.

Please note, in line with the principles of localism and our reduced role in strategic planning we intent to look towards our district colleagues to address the following matters:

- Economic development of significant size (potential effects on neighbouring centres)
- Wind and solar energy developments (landscape impacts)
- Housing matters eg Strategic Housing land Availability Assessments.

To this end, I am aware that a number of my district colleagues are already activity involved and in discussion with you on such matters.

As always we look forward to working with you on all these matters in order to positively prepare effective local plan coverage for the area.

Yours Sincerely

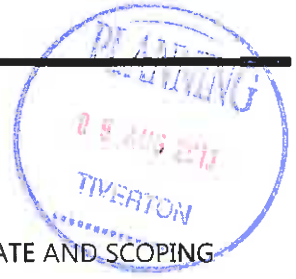
Paul Browning
Service Manager: Planning Policy

CC

Martin Wilshire WSDC
Nick Bryant TDBC

Sandra Hutchings

From: Mike Highfield
Sent: 09 August 2013 10:57
To: Paul Browning
Cc: DPD
Subject: RE: MID DEVON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - DUTY TO COOPERATE AND SCOPING CONSULTATION



I am responding to the recent Mid-Devon consultation and my comments focus on acoustic topics associated with the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping (SAS) Report and the Local Plan Review Scoping (LPRS) Report .

A Defra survey of 3700 people (Survey of public attitudes to quality of life and to the environment - 2001) identified that 'Peace and quiet was the most common reason for visiting the countryside. The five most mentioned positive features of the countryside were tranquillity (58 per cent), scenery (46 per cent), open space (40 per cent), fresh air (40 per cent) and plants and wildlife (36 per cent). However the LPRS is found to provide no specific mention on issues relating to the protection or enhancement of the acoustic environments of its settlements or countryside even though the region has many prized areas of recreational enjoyment. The consideration of soundscapes and consideration and protection of areas with valued tranquillity is an increasingly important aspect of planning and may arise indirectly for some areas through the consideration of statement 'c' and statement 'e' in COR 2 within the section on Environment but I consider further emphasis may be needed. In my view the opening statement of COR 2 might also recognise that development can enhance an environmental asset (as recognised in later statements) rather than just sustain its characteristics and the well planned development of public space can offer opportunity to improve soundscape by masking or minimising the noise from urbanisation either by the setting or by design.

With respect to minimising the adverse affects of noise in the countryside which forms part of section 11 objectives of the NPPF (123), it is possible that attempts are in progress to document important areas of rural tranquillity as part of the Devon Landscape Sensitivity Study, mentioned in 2.53. This may recognise the work undertaken by CPRE such as tranquillity maps and recognise the benefits described in their paper (Tranquillity Offers Great Rewards - <http://www.tsds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Benefitsoftranquillity.pdf>). If the adverse impacts of noise are not identified it may make it more difficult to safeguard tranquil areas or prompt the necessary consideration of noise impact from development beyond that usually reserved for residential amenity needs.

In my view the Environment Option 2 is favoured with general principles being provided in the LP to underpin more specific policies that I would expect to include consideration of noise.

The LPRS lists key issues within the section on sustainability appraisal (1.29-1.30) and indicates that the SAS identifies national policy however, I note that the SAS makes no reference to the Noise Policy Statement of England which has been provided to consider noise in the context of sustainable development as it states - '*The vision and aims of NPSE should be interpreted by having regard to the set of shared UK principles that underpin the Government's sustainable development strategy*'. The consideration of noise will be likely to apply to evaluating development options associated with several of the key issues identified in 1.30 (low cost housing, green field development, renewable technology, traffic congestion, town centre regeneration) both in terms of assessing the noise impact of development or ensuring adequate mitigation of noise is provided within proposals.

I note that the Sustainability Objectives listed in section 5.3 of the SAS (H) Ensuring community health and wellbeing) only consider noise as an issue when it is at levels sufficient to damage health or natural systems. This will not identify situations where noise impacts and issues might need to be considered more generally in the context of improving soundscapes and protecting tranquillity. In my view consideration of the impact of noise at lower levels should also feature in sustainability objectives A and B (Protection of the natural environment, Protection and promotion of a quality built environment).

I hope these comments are helpful

Regards
Mike

Mike Highfield
County Council Acoustics Specialist

Community & Environmental Services,
County Hall C-Block Level 6
PPC601-c

From: Paul Browning

Sent: 09 July 2013 18:15

To: Alyn Jones; Anthony Serjeant; 'Bob Clark'; David Clews; David Mansell; Kay Allen; Larry Burrows; Mike Highfield; Mike O'Dowd-Jones; Nicholas Wall; Patrick Flaherty; Paul Hickson; Paula Hewitt; Peter Hobley; Phil Lowndes; Phil Stone; Richard Needs; Steven Membery; StreetWorks; Tom Mayberry; Traffic Management; Trafficcontrol; Michele Cusack; Barry James; Paul Clarke - Trading Standards

Subject: MID DEVON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - DUTY TO COOPERATE AND SCOPING CONSULTATION

Dear All

For your information - see attached. The documents can be viewed at:

<http://www.middevon.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=9842>

Should you wish to make any comments they must be received by 19th August 2013.

With regard to the proposed cross-boundary issues outlined in the covering letter, from a strategic perspective I will be responding in August to advise that I agree with most of the proposed cross-boundary issues to be addressed. However, I believe that it may be useful to also make a specific mention to our continuing engagement with regards to ecology matters.

As Mid Devon DC are not the Minerals and Waste Authority it will not be appropriate to raise potential issues associated with Whiteball Quarry or Hickleby NPS but I am happy to consider others on their merits. I'm also not convinced that we need to be involved in transport matters around J 27 and J28 of the M5 etc.