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Email:

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Planning Policy
Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House,
Phoenix Lane,
Tiverton,
Devon.
EX16 6PP



Dear Sir/Madam

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: SCOPING REPORT – REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF TAYLOR WIMPEY

We are pleased to be able to enclose representations on behalf of our client Taylor Wimpey in response to the Mid Devon Local Plan Review: Scoping Report (hereafter referred to as Scoping report) which was published for consultation in July 2013.

Our client has an interest in land known as 'Morrells Farm' which is located within the village of Sampford Peverell. This site was recently submitted to the Council via the recent call for sites as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013. Sampford Peverell is identified by the existing Core Strategy as being a village and therefore the focus of this representation focuses on the policy position for villages.

Villages

As highlighted above the Core Strategy identifies a total of 21 villages which it considers through Core Strategy Policy COR17 to only be suitable for minor proposals and suitable site allocations. The Core Strategy also defines settlement limits for the 21 villages, beyond which development proposals would be assessed against countryside policy (COR18).

The Scoping Report identifies two options the first of which is to continue with the current strategy but



reassess which villages should be defined as settlements suitable for development. The second option is to take a more permissive approach to development in villages.

In order for the Council to be able to pursue the second option it would be necessary to also amend its approach to the 'Amount and distribution of development', which I touch on in the next section of this letter.

Our client favours an option which falls somewhere in between the two options as outlined within the Scoping Report. Such an option would still place the main focus of development on the four core settlements of the District but would take a more flexible approach to the treatment of villages, especially those villages which benefit from a good range of services. In the case of Sampford Peverell the village facilities include a school, doctor's surgery, public house, post office and general convenience store, making it an eminently sustainable settlement to accommodate appropriately scaled new housing development.

It is noted that the Council is currently undertaking a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which once complete will ultimately indicate the level of housing required and provide a more up to date figure than currently underpins existing Core Strategy policy. The outcome of this assessment will clearly assist in better informing any shift in policy.

The Government has made increasing the supply of new housing a priority and this focus is reflected within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In order to make a step change in the delivery of new housing it will require a more flexible and pragmatic approach to be adopted by all Local Planning Authorities, with the key test being more focussed on whether the development of one site represents sustainable development in that location rather than strictly controlling development to a certain location.

Furthermore the allocation of large scale housing sites whilst they have clear and obvious benefits need to be supported by a fluid and flexible supply of smaller sites which can be quickly and more easily developed when compared to larger sites which suffer in part due to the need for the delivery of strategic infrastructure requirements.

As above our client would support an option that would fall somewhere between Option 1 and Option 2, in terms of still placing the core focus on the main settlements of the District but would take a more flexible approach to development within the larger villages. Such a strategy would still clearly be sustainable and would fully be in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 55 of the NPPF which supports development in rural areas "*where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities*".



Conclusion

In conclusion our clients, Taylor Wimpey would be keen to see a hybrid option developed which would allow for a more flexible approach to be taken when considering applications for development within the District's larger villages, such as Sampford Peverell.

Yours faithfully

Alex Bullock

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For and on behalf of **WYG Environment Planning Transport Ltd**

