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Local Plan Review Consultation
Forward Planning
Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane
Tiverton, EX16 6PP



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To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Local Plan 2013-2033 Cheriton Bishop

I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the Local Plan Review for Cheriton Bishop. Cheriton Bishop is at present a small village of between 500 and 750 residents and lies on the north eastern corner of the Dartmoor National Park. Whilst the majority of the village does not fall under the auspices of the Dartmoor National Park authority, in many respects it should be treated as if it were, given that is the first port of call (so to speak) for visitors attending the Dartmoor National Park travelling from the east by the A30. Given that Cheriton Bishop is blessed with both spectacular countryside, as well as a favourable location for tourism, plans proposing development of a body of land approaching three times the size of the existing footprint of the village are a major concern. Indeed, they would forever alter the structure of an historic village that dates back many hundreds of years.

From the perspective of the village itself, there appears to be a questionable need for this level of development. For example, properties in the village are typically on market for 4-6 months or even longer (well in excess of the national average, which is reported to be close to 3 months). Further, only very recently has a plot of land sold, for which permission to build 19 properties has already been approved, having been on the market for well over a year.

Whilst a level of modest development (such as that described above) is essential to enable the continued existence of village facilities, including the grade II listed Old Thatch Inn, the Mulberry Public House, the village shop and post office, St Mary's church and the primary school, the village does not have the infrastructure to support development at anything resembling the scale suggested by the areas put forward in these plans. For example, the roads off of the old A30, particularly church lane were designed in the middle ages, are extremely narrow, and could not support large numbers of additional vehicles that development of land near the church and school would inevitably lead to.

Finally, it strikes me that the process by which this consultation has occurred is not necessarily optimal. For example, by only considering land for development which has been - at this one instance in time - nominated by the land owner, we miss the chance to proactively consider how sustainable levels of development that best fit the needs of the council's planning cycle and the needs of the village could be achieved. For example, it seems to me that land on the southern side of the old A30 on the way into the village (from the new A30), land on either side of the Yeoford Road (past the doctors surgery), as well as the Glebe could feasibly be developed without hugely altering the footprint of the village and with a minimum of disruption to the village and its residents, as they extend the village in a more natural way. Yet in this instance, with the exception of the Glebe, this land does not appear to be under consideration.

Yours sincerely

Professor J R Terry