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**Sandra Hutchings**

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**From:** Nigel Wiggins  
**Sent:** 23 March 2014 23:04  
**To:** DPD  
**Cc:** Catherine Marlow  
**Subject:** Local Plan Review. Consultation.

Holcombe Court  
Holcombe Rogus  
Wellington  
TA21 OPA  
23 March 2014

By email to Forward Planning Team

Dear Sirs

Local Planning Review. Consultation.

I live at Holcombe Court, Holcombe Rogus and have only just had the review of the Local Plan brought to my attention.

I write from a particular viewpoint in that I see it as my responsibility to help to protect the immediate environment of one of Devon's most important houses. Your own Conservation Officer, Catherine Marlow, has said that the Court is her favourite house in Mid Devon. No lesser a figure, Nicolaus Pevsner, wrote that "Holcombe Court and the church form an uncommonly attractive group on the hill ..... The village climbs up to house and church."

Holcombe Court is Grade 1 listed and the listing describes it quite simply as "the finest Tudor house in Devon."

My concern is to protect the Court and Holcombe Rogus from inappropriate development. As no more than the transitory custodian of Holcombe Court I wish to protect the house and its immediate setting from changes which will make both the house and the village less special.

It is my view that Holcombe Rogus and the neighbouring villages of Westleigh and Burlescombe are under threat from ill considered development due to the proximity of the M5 motorway. This piece of countryside, still rural farmland, charming but maybe unexceptional, seems to be seen as available for many forms of industrialised development in the shape of warehousing, retail warehousing, new and extended industrial parks, solar panel fields, expansion of quarries and other development, major (junction 27) and minor.

My specific concerns are twofold:

First, the proposed change in planning status of Holcombe Rogus, from Countryside to Village. This seems to me to be, quite simply, wrong. We have no bus service worthy of the name. In 12 years I have never seen the alleged bus. Then, the village shop. The only reason we have a village shop is that it is attached to a garage and motor repair workshop and is run by the same family. The shop could not survive on its own and will surely soon close due to retirement.

Second, the Proposed Settlement Limit. This does appear to be quite tightly drawn and it needs to be to avoid unnecessary infill. My particular concern is the area at the top of the village where the Court sits on its little hill, with the church, dovecote, Priest's House and Vicarage forming a charming and historic group of buildings. Part of its charm is that it is connected to the village but sits apart, almost entirely without modern development encroaching on an historic setting. I fear that if Holcombe Rogus is redefined as proposed then it is only a matter of time before



the tightly drawn village boundary is redrawn and the green spaces which are the lungs of the village and give Holcombe Court such a powerful presence will disappear.

In addition to the above, I consider the proposed vast development at junction 27 to be unnecessary. Certainly it will create its own demand but it will suck some of the life and dynamism out of Taunton and Exeter and have a damaging impact on the already struggling centres of Tiverton and Wellington.

I do hope that these comments are of some assistance to you in the formulation of the revised Local Plan.

Yours faithfully

Nigel Wiggins