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WILLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to Parish Council Ms K Taylor, 40 Townlands,
Willand, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 2RS



26 June 2016

Forward Planning
Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House
Tiverton
EX16 6PP

Dear Sir

Draft Statement of Community Involvement

Willand Parish Council considered the above document at its meeting on 23 June 2016 and I attach the agreed response.

Yours sincerely

Kate Taylor
Clerk to the Willand Parish Council



WILLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Response to 'MDDC Draft Statement of Community Involvement'

1. In the main the major part of the document appears to present a sound and workable process and policy. There are some observations/concerns which appear in the following paragraphs.
2. **Consultation Approach.** Paragraph 2.3 appears to set out reasons to excuse whatever action/decisions officers take and it appears to partially negate the principals set out in the previous two paragraphs. There would be more confidence in the process if the 'balancing act' and 'discretion' included recognition of the observations and points raised by Parish/Town Councils and those more likely to be closely affected by the decisions.
3. **Local Plans.** Paragraph 4.1 should also state that significant weight will be given to the views of Parish/Town Councils as they know their areas better than most.
4. **Planning Applications.** 4.1 Paragraph 6.2 – final sentence – if required could this sentence be written in clearer language?
4.2 Paragraph 6.4 – It is felt that Parish/Town Councils should be notified of 'minor material amendments' involving 'variation of condition' as well as 'neighbours'.
5. **Pre Application Discussions.** Paragraph 6.7 – The procedure is understood and is recognised as aiding the planning process by resolving quite a lot of potential problems at an early stage. The non inclusion of Parish/Town Councils is of concern when the public have been 'sold' the principal of 'localism' as we are left with the feeling that it stops at District Council level. Currently Willand Parish Council is aware of discussions taking place on a potential major development brought about by alleged failings in the local plan and land supply. By the time the 'developer' came and spoke to the Parish Council they had perceived plans as to a way forward from Officers and Ward Councillors as to infrastructure and the provision of 'community facilities' which were flawed and in some cases incorrect as to serious material fact. We hear that the ideas may have since been modified but again on incorrect and/or incomplete information. This could have been avoided if the Parish Council had been represented at the discussions from the outset. Such comments are now being made that the Parish Council will have 'to make the best of a bad job' and decide 'its' priorities' – whatever that implies!
6. **SCI6 Major Applications Pre-Application Consultation.** Paragraph 6.11 – Parish/Town Councils need earlier involvement in the process – please see paragraph 5 above for explanation.
7. **SCI7 Application Consultation.** Consideration should be given to including text to ensure that ALL applications in an adjoining parish which are in one parish but the settlement area of the adjoining parish should be the subject of consultation. This could possibly be achieved by expanding the wording of the proposed paragraph 6.15.