



An **APLEONA** company

Report

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**Mid Devon Local Plan
Review Examination
Hearing Statement on behalf of
Blundell's School (ID776)**

Allocation TIV16

27 September 2017

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For and on behalf of GVA Grimley Limited

1. Introduction & Context

- 1.1 This statement seeks to build upon the detailed representations submitted by GVA on behalf of Blundell's School in relation to their land interests within the proposed Tiverton allocation TIV16.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with our previous representations including those dated 14th February 2017. In summary Blundell's School support the allocation of TIV16 for residential development noting a significant proportion falls within their ownership. The School seeks through this statement to demonstrate that the site should be considered deliverable.

2. Response to Inspector Questions

- 2.1 We deal with each of the Inspector's question in turn where we consider it appropriate for the School to respond and without seeking to repeat our previous submissions.

17. *If a site in Tiverton is necessary to cater for additional housing need resulting from the Policy J27 allocation, is this site the best performing?*

- 2.2 We would suggest that the site performs extremely well in the context of local and national planning policy considerations. Fundamentally the site is highly sustainable being situated within the settlement boundary of Tiverton and surrounded by development on all sides. The site also includes a significant proportion of vacant previously developed land and buildings, and uses which are incongruous with their surroundings. Therefore any development will significantly improve this position and benefit the immediate environment. Furthermore the site has excellent linkages to adjoining employment uses, is close to the centre of Tiverton with a broad range of services and is situated on bus routes and cycle and pedestrian linkages.

18. *Is the site deliverable?*

- 2.3 The site is considered deliverable by the School and as we understand it, the other main landowners. The School is now committed to seeking to facilitate development on their land holding and is in discussion with representatives of those seeking to promote the adjoining land.
- 2.4 The School has commissioned a significant amount of technical and design work to support a future planning application. Work to date includes masterplanning capacity work and an analysis of access options. A extended phase one ecology survey has also been undertaken for the School land and detailed species surveys are currently underway to ensure that a robust evidence exists to support a planning application submission next year. We also

understand that a range of technical work has also been undertaken on the other landholdings including a bat survey of the vacant buildings.

- 2.5 We do wish to note one issue which will be key to deliverability, notably the policy requirement for the future highway linkage to the Eastern Urban Extension (EUE). Whilst the School supports the principle of taking traffic away from Blundell's Road we do note that further work is required to ensure that the development of this site alone is not responsible for funding the upgrade and access for the entire linkage (noting the additional costs that will be required in terms of increasing capacity for the EUE). In addition we seek further clarity with regards to the potential ransom position that the allocation implies with regards to the removal of the scrap yard before the wider development can come forward. Flexibility in the policy wording as suggested in our representations of 14th February 2017 will assist with deliverability of the site.

19. *Is the approach to the compensatory flood plain adequate?*

- 2.6 The School has been party to discussions with the Environment Agency, the Town Council, Mid Devon and occupiers of the business premises on the northern side of the River Loman with regards to flood solutions in this location. The site allocation includes a significant area of land upon which it is accepted that development will not come forward due to the flood designations and ecology considerations along the river corridor, therefore there is sufficient flexibility for the compensatory flood plain to be defined as detailed engineering work is undertaken.

20. *Is there sufficient appreciation of the historic environment (the setting of Knightshayes in particular)?*

- 2.7 We understand that the Council has undertaken a strategic assessment of this issue and we will therefore refer to the Council to confirm the current position. However in summary we are not aware of this being a significant constraint and note it has not precluded the site from being allocated in previous Plans. We would note that given the surrounding context of built form of the existing industrial development to the north, the School and residential properties to the south and west, and the forthcoming Eastern Urban Extension to the east that the development of this land will have a negligible detrimental impact on the historic setting of the surrounds. We would however expect that the development on the site will be of high quality to respect the character of the existing School campus and the recently designated conservation area.

21. *Does provision have to be made within the policy to tie it to Policy J27?*

- 2.8 We do not believe that this is necessary. TIV16 has been previously allocated and deemed suitable for residential development and the site is highly sustainable and could still come

forward as a windfall opportunity even if not allocated. Such a tie will place an undue burden on the delivery of this site which already has wider infrastructure requirements in terms of the facilitation of a link to any future expansion of the Eastern Urban Extension.