

Sustainability Appraisal Consultation 2018
 Forward Planning
 Mid-Devon District Council
 Phoenix House
 Tiverton
 EX16 6PP

11th April 2018

Please find my comments relating to the land at Higher Town Sampford Peverell known as SP2 in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal Consultation below.

Reason for selecting / rejecting option for additional housing allocation	Comments
<p><i>In the Sustainability Appraisal Proposed Submission Report (2015) it is noted in Chapter 4 'Reasons for selecting/rejecting policy alternatives' it is stated that this option was not preferred because it had the potential for greater landscape or visual impacts. As set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Update (2017), criteria have now been included in the policy to ensure landscaping and design respects the setting and character of the area, conservation area and listed building.</i></p> <p><i>The site is proposed to be taken</i></p>	<p>The topography of this site has not changed since 2015. If developed it would be the highest development in the village which would be clearly visible from miles around. No amount of landscaping or design can mitigate the visual impact on the surrounding area.</p> <p>The reasons here fail to recognise the close proximity of TWO conservation areas (in the plural) as both the Sampford Peverell Conservation Area and The Grand Western Canal Conservation Area would both be seriously impacted by this development. In contrast, the report when considering reasons to reject the site at Hartnoll Farm, states on p59 <i>"The site is classed as agricultural grade 1 land development could impact on the Grand Western Canal Conservation Area to the South and the East of the site which is also classed as a County Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve."</i></p> <p>SP2 is grade 2 agricultural land and no mention is made of the Grand Western Canal Conservation area. The Grand Western Canal is a valuable tourist attraction in Mid Devon. Any development on the SP2 site would be highly visible from the towpath and would detract from the rural setting.</p>

forward as an additional allocation and addressed in the Sustainability Appraisal Update (2017) through policy SP2. The site was considered as part of the J27 Implications Report presented to Cabinet 15th September 2016 and Full Council 22nd September 2016. It was noted at this time that Land at Higher Town could provide 60 dwellings. The site is elevated and would require careful landscaping and mitigation measures. The development is proportionate to the scale of the existing village.

The Highway Authority has advised that any development of the site should be phased until after improved access to the A361.

The J27 Implications Report presented to Cabinet 15th September 2016 and Full Council 22nd September 2016 noted that other potential sites in Sampford Peverell were not considered to be of an appropriate scale or would impact adversely on heritage assets. Several of the sites in Sampford Peverell are reasonable alternatives and have similar landscape or heritage characteristics. They have an advantage of being slightly closer to J27 than Higher Town. However, they are part of more extensive tracts of land, and their allocation would result in larger housing sites than the identified additional need for 60 dwellings. It would not be realistic to seek to artificially subdivide sites to limit the number of units that are developed. As such, development of a number of potentially suitable sites in Sampford Peverell would result in much more significant expansion of the village This would be contrary to the spatial strategy in Policy SP2 of the Local Plan Review, which concentrates development in the three main towns and has limited development in other settlements aimed at meeting local needs and promoting vibrant communities. Conversely SP2 is a naturally enclosed

This is common sense and this condition must be maintained.

No evidence was submitted in support of this claim. Other sites **are** available and new information has been provided to MDDC showing an alternative site at Mountain Oak Farm that would be closer to J27 and is soon to be linked to Tiverton Parkway Station by a new illuminated footway. A site for 60 houses has been shown to be deliverable without artificial subdivision of sites. Development on this side of Sampford Peverell would have a lesser impact on Conservation areas and would better serve pedestrians and cyclists than SP2. To put 60 houses on SP2 requires subdividing the land into housing and green infrastructure by not using current field boundaries. This counters the argument put forward against the site at Mountain Oak. 60 houses sited east of the village would give the same number of houses as is proposed for SP2.

site, bounded by hedgerows and road, and its development would be of a scale acceptable within the parameters of Policy S2 and local infrastructure constraints.

The location of the site on the west of the village is considered to be only a minor disadvantage compared to the other sites in the village.

The site is being actively promoted and is deliverable.

Development of SP2 would require significant demolition of hedgerows to provide the required visibility splays for vehicular and pedestrian accesses. Moreover, in the latest planning application for this site, the developer seeks to provide vehicular access on to a minor road with only the national speed limit and to achieve such access would require the demolition of a stone wall which is not specifically listed as an asset but is referred in an Historic Environment Appraisal (Dec 2016) as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. The H.E.A. stated that “*Any scheme for development should be designed to retain this feature.*”

People who live in Sampford Peverell see this as a **major disadvantage**. Pedestrian and cyclist access to the main village facilities (Shop/Post Office, Village Hall, Doctors’ Surgery, Tennis Courts, Children’s Playground, Hairdresser, Sports Field) is along Turnpike which has no continuous footpath along what DCC describes as a ‘*dangerous road*’. DCC Highways have made some suggestions that would make pedestrians from SP2 to the village centre, cross Turnpike twice (on one occasion on a blind corner) to get to the village centre, or three times to access the footpath to the Grand Western Canal. In contrast, sites to the east of the village are already served by adequate footpaths, soon to be improved further.

At least one site to the east of the village has been promoted and is deliverable.

In conclusion, it must be noted that in September 2016 SP2 was added, at the last minute, to the Local Plan only as a result of development at Junction 27 being included. Addition of SP2 was done without proper local consultation at that time. Since then there has been a huge amount of opposition to the siting of SP2 particularly from local residents who know the village well. The main reason for those objections stem from the location of SP2 related to the main centre of the village and for the adverse impact housing on the site would have on the surrounding area particularly the Sampford Peverell Conservation Area and even more on the Grand Western Canal Conservation Area to the south. The location is poorly served by footpaths and Turnpike has be assessed by DCC as dangerous. A site to the

east of the village would be closer to most village amenities and within easy walking distance of Tiverton Parkway Station. Also, most vehicular movements tend to be towards the A361 and J27 so a development east of the village would create less traffic at the village centre.

It is regrettable that the terms of reference given to LUC by MDDC did not include investigating and comparing the sustainability of alternative sites in Sampford Peverell.

Personally, and I believe that I share the views of many local residents, I am not against development in Sampford Peverell on a limited scale. Indeed, many local residents would welcome more housing in the village, particularly affordable housing.

In terms of sustainability, particularly with reference to pedestrian/cyclist access and safety, impact on Conservation Areas and the impact of extra traffic through village centre, a site to the east of the village would score better. Contrary to the Sustainability Assessment presented, a site to the east of the village is available and is deliverable. I can only hope that trust that when the Inspector considers all the evidence related to SP2 in the Local Plan, he will declare the allocation of SP2 **unsound**.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Bond