

**CABINET
SEPTEMBER 2016**

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION

IMPLICATIONS OF MAKING A MAJOR MODIFICATION TO THE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW TO ALLOCATE LAND AT JUNCTION 27 OF THE M5 FOR A LEISURE/RETAIL/TOURISM AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT.

Cabinet Member Cllr Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning and Regeneration

Reason for Report:

At the Council Meeting on the 27th April 2016 the Council considered the following Motion (Motion 525) in respect of the current Local Plan Review.

1. That the outcomes of the Local Plan Review pre-submission consultation and subsequent technical work together with officer recommendations be considered by Cabinet and Council prior to plan submission and;
2. That the report of these outcomes include the implications to the local plan of making a major modification to the Local Plan Review to allocate land at J27 of the M5 for a leisure/retail/tourism and employment development.

Both parts of the motion were carried.

Issue 1 will be reported to Cabinet and Council at future meetings in October / November 2016.

Issue 2 is addressed in this report.

OPTIONS FOR DECISION.

- 1) RESOLVE NOT TO ALLOCATE THE SITE, OR
- 2) RESOLVE TO ALLOCATE THE SITE FOR TOURISM, LEISURE AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
and in the event of the decision to allocate land at J27
- 3) ALLOCATE THE ASSOCIATED ADDITIONAL HOUSING SITES GIVING THE EXTRA PROVISION FOR 260 ADDITIONAL HOUSES.

Relationship to Corporate Plan:

The Mid Devon Corporate Plan 2016 to 2020 seeks to bring new businesses into the district and grow the tourism sector. It sets out under priority 1, the economy section of the plan, the following aims:

- Aim 1 - Attract new businesses to the District
 - Focus on particular sectors and their supply chains e.g. agriculture, food and drink offer, leisure and tourism, professional scientific and technical, etc
- Aim 4 - Grow the tourism sector
 - Increase the number of people visiting, staying and spending money in the District

Therefore the additional housing requirement resulting from this proposal would be 260 dwellings during the plan period, which equates to 13 additional dwellings per year.

- 5.7 The table below sets out the various local plan housing requirements referred to above:

	Plan period requirement	Annual requirement
Pre-submission Draft LP	7,200	360
LP adjusted to reflect latest evidence	7,600	380
LP with J27	7,860	393
Additional dwellings required if J27 allocated	260	13

Additional Housing Options.

- 5.8 If members are minded to make a modification to the plan to allocate land at J27, sites for the additional 260 dwellings will also need to be allocated in the Local Plan. The Planning Policy Advisory Group met recently and considered various options over how an additional housing need could be met. The selection criteria used for identifying additional sites were as follows: sites previously consulted on as part of the Local Plan Review Options consultation (January 2014) or received as a local plan representation; sites considered by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Panel; compliance with the Local Plan Review Distribution Strategy; and proximate to the development proposal at Junction 27.
- 5.9 **Cullompton** is the main focus of growth during the plan period. Any additional development would have to be phased until after the strategic highways improvements have been delivered. A significant amount of development is already programmed for Cullompton during this period. Cullompton was therefore not considered as an appropriate location to meet this extra level of need.
- 5.12 **Crediton** is not well related to the proposal at Junction 27 and is therefore not an area considered for additional residential development to meet this extra need.
- 5.13 **Tiverton (Appendix 3)**

The Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension in the adopted Local Plan allocates up to 2,000 dwellings. The figure of 2,000 dwellings reflected advice from Devon County Council with regard to constraints on the highways network. The proposed number of dwellings for the site was subsequently reduced as part of the Masterplanning work to 1,520 dwellings. The Master Plan figure of 1,520 dwellings was included in the Local Plan Review. An additional 480 dwellings could therefore be allocated within the existing 'planned for' infrastructure constraints. It should be noted however that if a further 480 dwellings were to be accommodated in the area this would need to extend beyond the currently allocated area as work on Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension Masterplanning would suggest that there are limitations on site densities on the existing allocated site.

- 5.14 If the eastern urban extension site, currently identified in the local plan, was to be extended it is logical for this to include **land at Hartnoll Farm** which abuts the current urban extension. This land was previously considered at the Local Plan Review Options Consultation January 2014. If only part of this site was needed it would be sensible for this to comprise the western and southern parts of the site which are predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land and are well screened from wider view. This would also allow for the areas adjoining the Grand Western Canal to be left undeveloped, also maintaining the strategic green gap between the edge of Tiverton and Halberton village. A new access, or reconfiguration of current Hartnoll Farm/employment land access arrangements, would be needed to allow development to occur independently of the development of the current eastern urban extension. If members are minded to allocate some land at Hartnoll Farm it is recommended that this should be capable of accommodating approximately 200 dwellings to allow flexibility with further refinement of densities at Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension should that be necessary.
- 5.15 Alternatively the whole of the Hartnoll Farm site could be developed, which would trigger additional highways improvements. This would require approximately 1,000 dwellings at Hartnoll Farm and the development of land at Blundells, referred to below, would also be required to provide a new strategic access point. This would equate to 1,200 dwellings in total, which is over and beyond the additional need referred to above. It would also involve grade 1 agricultural land and extend Tiverton significantly closer to Halberton.
- 5.16 **Land at Blundells School** is allocated in the adopted Local Plan for 200 dwellings. The site is bounded by development to three sides, with the River Lowman forming the northern boundary. It is currently proposed to be deleted in the Local Plan Review as the site had not come forward. However officers now understand that the land is still available and developable. Development of the site would need to safeguard highway access to accommodate growth beyond the plan period. Part of the site is brownfield and the development would provide an opportunity to clean up contaminated land. Devon County Council officers have confirmed that development of 200 dwellings at Blundells would be acceptable over and above the current Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension limit of 2,000 dwellings, if the Blundells development is accessed off Heathcoat Way and a future highway route safeguarded.

- 5.17 The flooding issues associated with the development of this site have been examined previously and have been the subject of discussions with the Environment Agency. It is considered that flooding issues can be overcome via mitigation. This development would create a total of 6 hectares of developable land along the southern edge of the site, and 8 hectares of floodplain, which would be provided as Green Infrastructure.
- 5.18 Sampford Peverell (Appendix 4)
Land at Higher Town could provide 60 dwellings. The site is elevated and would require careful landscaping and mitigation measures. This development is proportionate in scale to the existing village. The Highway Authority has advised that any development of the site should be phased until after improved access to the A361. Other potential sites in the village were assessed but were not considered of an appropriate scale or would impact adversely on heritage assets.
- 5.19 Hemyock (Appendix 5)
Land south west of Connigar Close was assessed positively through the SHLAA process and an application has recently been submitted. This site could provide 22 dwellings. However given that the site is within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty it would need sensitive design and landscaping. Other sites were considered in Hemyock but were not favoured owing to their scale and impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 5.20 Kentisbeare (Appendix 6)
Land was previously included in the Local Plan at Kentisbeare next to the Village Hall as an affordable housing allocation for 20 dwellings. This was removed owing to a lack of impetus in the site coming forward for affordable housing and due to strong objection from the Parish Council. However if allocated for a mix of market and affordable housing it is considered that it would come forward for development. This site was not supported by the Planning Policy Advisory Group.
- 5.21 Uffculme
Sites were also considered at Uffculme but were not included as options as the sites were not deemed to be appropriate extensions to the village, had access difficulties and some were in Minerals Safeguarding Areas.
- 5.22 Willand
Given the proximity of the proposed development at Junction 27 to Willand its suitability to accommodate potential additional housing sites was also considered. Although there are developable sites in the village, sites in Willand are not recommended as Devon County Council has advised that development of these sites would exacerbate traffic problems prior to planned future improvements.
- 5.23 The **Planning Policy Advisory Group** considered the options set out below. The Group recommended to Cabinet that if Cabinet Members were minded to recommend an allocation at Junction 27 to Council, then **the corresponding additional housing should be met at Land at Blundells, Tiverton and at Higher Town, Sampford Peverell**. This is also the favoured approach of officers in meeting the additional housing need should members decide to make a J27 allocation.

