

Local Plan Review Consultation
Forward Planning
Mid Devon District Council
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EX16 6PP

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Via email: localplanreview@middevon.gov.uk

31 January 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

MID DEVON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2013-2033 EXAMINATION – MAIN HEARING, MATTERS AND ISSUES

Highways England (HE) is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the Strategic Road Network (SRN), which in Mid Devon comprises the M5, namely junctions 27 and 28. Highways England has provided numerous consultation responses in respect of the Local Plan Review.

Regarding the main Hearing ‘Matters and Issues’ document, HE have made comments on matters relating to Hearing 2 Strategy and Site Allocations: Tiverton and Cullompton’ and Hearing 5a ‘J27 and SP2’ in line with our statutory responsibilities as the Strategic Highways Authority.

Hearing 2 - Strategy and Site Allocations: Tiverton and Cullompton

In response to the proposed allocations, we have reviewed the Transport Evidence base provided by Devon County Council (DCC) and can conclude that;

- The completed signalisation scheme at J28 means 600 dwellings at North West Cullompton (NWC) can be accommodated without the requirement for any further highway mitigation.
- Both the remaining 750 dwellings at NWC and the proposed 500 at East Cullompton (EC) require the delivery of the proposed Town Centre Relief Road.
- More than 500 dwellings at East Cullompton will require a strategic scale intervention to facilitate the impact of the remainder of the East Cullompton allocation, which may comprise a new Junction 28a as assumed in the transport evidence or an alternative scheme as is yet to be identified through further assessment.

- Should the proposed development come forward in an alternative order the traffic impacts will require retesting in order to confirm that transport impacts on the operation of the M5 do not become severe.

Subject to the plan being adopted in its proposed format we are content that the allocations contained within can be accommodated by the infrastructure identified through the supporting evidence base. It should be noted that whilst Junction 28a as proposed in the plan is an option that accommodates the planned growth the scheme will need to be refined and other options of a similar scale may be considered more appropriate.

We recently met with Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) and DCC to undertake a further review of some of the plan's current policy wording to ensure it accurately reflects the updated transport evidence base now available. Consequently, we (HE, DCC and MDDC) have agreed textual changes which strengthen/clarify those policies which relate to the delivery of necessary highway improvement schemes on the SRN, and where there is linked intervention, the Local Road Network (LRN). These changes are necessary to ensure that development will proceed in a way that does not result in severe transport impacts in terms of highway safety and capacity. It is understood that MDDC will present the proposed amendments as part of their hearing submission(s).

Hearing 5a – J27 and SP2

As reflected in our position statement dated 31 January 2019, Highways England attended the Preliminary Hearing which sought to examine M5 J27 and associated policies J27, SP2 and TIV16 on 20th September 2018, following our submission of a signed Statement of Common Ground. At the hearing Highways England suggested a modification to the wording in Policy J27 section b to align with NPPF 2012 paragraph 32 and to make specific reference to a necessary mitigation scheme now identified for M5 J27 to resolve this point, from;

~~*b) Provision of transport improvements to ensure appropriate accessibility for all modes, including new or improved access and egress onto the M5 motorway and pedestrian and cycling link across the motorway to Tiverton Parkway Railway Station;*~~

to; b) Provision of transport improvements to ensure safe and suitable access for all modes, including necessary capacity improvements to M5 Junction 27 and pedestrian and cycling link across the motorway to Tiverton Parkway Railway Station.

Highways England has asked that the Inspector considers the above modification as requested to address the points raised at the informal hearing, and this is set out in our current position statement. We are satisfied that the Plan as suggested makes appropriate provision for necessary infrastructure to be brought forward at M5 J27.

Summary of HE Position

Subject to Textual amendments discussed and agreed with DCC, MDDC and HE, we consider that the allocations and draft policies relating to the Plan are robust. However, as detailed above we have requested a small number of amendments to the Plan to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the SRN (namely the M5, junctions 27 and 28) and ensure infrastructure requirements are appropriately covered and accurately reflected.

Highways England will be in attendance at the hearing sessions on 14th, 15th and 20th February to answer any further queries that you may have.

Yours faithfully,

Sally Parish

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