

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2013-2033: PROPOSED SUBMISSION by Mid Devon District Council (MDDC)

Representation by Sampford Peverell Parish Council

The parish of Sampford Peverell lies adjacent to the area proposed for development in the Local Plan (as revised) at Junction 27 of the M5 motorway. The revised Local Plan also proposes an additional 60 dwellings within the village of Sampford Peverell.

Sampford Peverell Parish Council is strongly opposed to the inclusion of Junction 27 in the revised Local Plan. It is also strongly opposed to the consequential inclusion in the revised Local Plan of 60 additional dwellings on a site on the western edge of the village of Sampford Peverell.

Sampford Peverell Parish Council wishes to register its wish to address the examination hearing in order to explain reasons for considering the Local Plan to be unsound in both of these allocations.

Development at Junction 27

The proposal to allocate a large greenfield site of 71 hectares for a massive retail and leisure development, in the revision of what was considered by Sampford Peverell Parish Council to be a perfectly acceptable Local Plan in its initial draft, appears to have been led by a single potential developer, rather than being a part of a development plan for Mid Devon. It would have a significant impact on local traders in the towns of Cullompton and Tiverton, as well as in nearby small villages, hastening the demise of these businesses and of the town centres themselves. It runs contrary to the stated policies (DM15 and DM17) of concentrating retail activity within the towns and the policy of avoiding out-of-town retail development. It totally contradicts the stated policy that market towns should provide the outlets for locally produced food. The revised Local Plan is thus unsound, being in conflict with Vision 1.15.

Junction 27 is already congested at times, despite recent attempts by the Highways Authority to improve traffic flow for traffic leaving the motorway there. The M5 and the A361 (the North Devon Link Road) are major holiday routes to South Devon and Cornwall and to North Devon respectively. These roads, which are particularly congested during the holiday season, meet at

Junction 27, adding dramatically to the existing congestion problems locally. Additional traffic generated by the proposed type of development would only exacerbate these problems, creating another motorway problem area like that at Cribbs Causeway, Bristol.

The traffic attracted to the site will add considerably to atmospheric and noise pollution. Light pollution from the proposed site will be a particular problem for Sampford Peverell, which overlooks the area, in conflict with Policy DM4. There already is a service area on the A38 a few hundred metres from Junction 27 and plans have been approved, with the support of Sampford Peverell Parish Council, for an up-grading of this site to provide a useful facility for south-bound motorway traffic. That approved development is considered adequate for the area.

The proposed allocation of a large green field site on good quality agricultural land for a development that will conflict with livelihoods of nearby towns and villages, add significantly to existing pollution problems, and be totally at odds with the character of the local countryside that so many tourists come here to enjoy, is strongly opposed. Sampford Peverell Parish Council asks that the Junction 27 allocation be withdrawn from the Local Plan.

Additional housing in Sampford Peverell

The original draft of the Local Plan identified a site (SP1) for an allocation of 10 dwellings. This is the site of the former Tiverton Parkway Hotel, originally granted planning permission for a care home that would have incorporated a GP surgery. The applicant is no longer able to proceed with this scheme: the site is thus available for housing. MDDC has suggested that the site should include a GP surgery as well as a proportion of affordable dwellings.

Sampford Peverell Parish Council has recently conducted a housing needs survey which indicated a need for some affordable housing for local family needs. The Parish Council thus supports the allocation of this site. Ten new houses would increase the number of dwellings in the village by 2%. Sampford Peverell is identified by MDDC as a rural settlement suitable for limited development. The Parish Council would support this development on SP1 provided that the need for some affordable housing is satisfied.

The revised Local Plan has identified a need for additional housing associated with the J27 proposals, with 60 of these new dwellings to be accommodated on site SP2 between Higher Town and Turnpike on the western edge of the village. Sampford Peverell Parish Council is strongly opposed to this allocation.

Adjacent to the Conservation Area, this site is in an elevated position: any development is going to be visible for miles around and be obtrusive on the skyline. The creation of road access to the site will require loss of extensive ancient hedges. There is no safe access to the village and its school for pedestrians. The single track called Higher Town to the north has no footways. Turnpike, the road to the south of the site, is the main road through the village and has no footway on the approach to the Canal bridge, where pedestrians have to cross the highway on a blind bend.

The site is thus considered totally unsuitable for housing development.

The ability of the village primary school to accommodate the children that a development of the proposed size would generate has been questioned. MDDC planning staff state that the school has 40 spare places. This is absolute nonsense. Children of families moving into the village in recent times have had to go elsewhere. The Parish Council has been told by a Governor of the school that there is space for 10 children, but of specific ages. The school is on a constrained site with no realistic scope for expansion.

An addition of 60 dwellings, with the 10 on SP1, would increase the number of dwellings in the village by nearly 15%, rather more than the present infrastructure could accommodate, and a level incompatible with the concept of limited development, in conflict with Policy S13 for rural settlements. It is too many, and in the wrong place. Sampford Peverell Parish Council urges the removal of the allocation on site SP2.

I have to add that Sampford Peverell Parish Council was not consulted by Mid Devon District Council regarding the inclusion of site SP2 in the revised Local Plan. There has thus been no opportunity for local input to the allocation process, other than by the land-owner who has agreed to make the land concerned available for development. This is in conflict with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. The Plan has not

been prepared with the participation of the local community, nor of its representative Parish Council.

In examining the revised Local Plan as presented by the Planning Authority to the community, local residents and their Parish Council representatives have been able to identify serious flaws with the SP2 allocation. No amount of “landscaping” of the site will reduce its prominence. Most worryingly, the safety of pedestrians accessing the village and its school has not been considered. And details of the school’s capacity are based on incorrect information.

This will be reflected, I am sure, in the representations made by parishioners, as well as in this document.

M J Aspray
Clerk to Sampford Peverell Parish Council
12 February 2017