



Standing Up For Our Devon Countryside

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For the attn. Chairman of the Council, District Councillors, Members of Parliament and Devon Officials.

CPRE Mid Devon Submission on Minor Modifications to the Proposed Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033

CPRE was founded in 1926 by architect, Sir John Abercrombie, the creator of the 1946 Greater London Plan and was instrumental in the establishment of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act to limit urban sprawl.

CPRE Mid Devon wish to raise the following issues regarding the proposed minor modifications to the new MD Local Plan 2013- 2033, with the Council, local Members of Parliament, local authorities and officials prior to our formal reply within the public consultation period which ends on 14th February 2017.

CPRE strongly objects to M5 Junction 27 proposed 71 hectare of leisure and retail development on agricultural land for the following reasons.

1. Use of land

The NPPF states that all housing and developments should be on brownfield sites where possible. Less than 2% of the proposed development is on brown field sites and the rest is mostly on good grade 3a arable and grass land. We are facing Brexit and less cheap food from abroad. Brexit will therefore dictate the need for more home production of food. Taking land out of production is not the way to do this and is not sustainable.

Junction 27 is within a Natural England's Devon Redland priority area.

2. Impact on local towns

A retail unit proposed on junction 27 would inevitably lead to a loss of business in Cullompton Tiverton and Crediton as well as nearby villages. We are already aware of local retail outlets enquiring about relocating to Junction 27 from town centres. This would inevitably hasten the demise of our town centres as has been seen in Cheshire and Kent. The impact on local towns and

villages therefore is not sustainable socially. The Local Plan Policy states quite clearly (para 6.5) that market towns should be key outlets for selling locally produced food and have a range of things for people to do. A large development at junction 27 would therefore have a negative effect on these market towns. It could also have a negative impact on Wellington, Taunton and Exeter.

3. Traffic

Junction 27 is a congested round-about and especially at weekends. The M5 is the major route into the South West for holiday traffic and is full to capacity at certain times. There are frequent traffic jams at peak times on the M5 and especially at junction 27. There are occasions when Tiverton Parkway Railway Station is difficult to access as it entails using Junction 27 round-about both ways. Any major development there would exacerbate the problem unless there is considerable re-modelling of the junction and the motorway. Access from the local towns and villages to the facilities would entail using a vehicle therefore an additional journey using fossil fuels which is not environmentally acceptable in these times.

4. Tourism

Mid Devon is a rural district where the main industry is farming with ancillary small manufacturers and businesses serving agricultural interests. It is typified by rolling hills arable and grass land with ancient hedgerows, narrow roads with woodland and small villages. There are no major industrial sites in the district. It is bounded by National Parks Exmoor and Dartmoor and the Blackdown Hills which is AONB. Tourism plays a major part in the economy.

Tourists come here to appreciate the peace and tranquillity of this beautiful landscape. To have a major development at the gateway to this area would have a negative effect on peoples' perception of the area. There are many places where tourists can walk, ride and fish to enjoy this landscape. A major development and retail outlet at Junction 27 will do nothing to enhance this enjoyment that people come here for. Quite the opposite in fact.

5. Housing

It is planned that the development would require 391 houses to cover job requirement for the development. There are already massive housing developments of some 7860 new homes proposed in Cullompton, Tiverton and Crediton making Mid Devon one of the fastest growing housing areas in the Country. The 391 houses include 60 in Sampford Peverell on a greenfield site. It cannot be dictated where the occupants of these houses are going to work, especially the 60 new homes proposed in the Sampford Peverell development. Any additional houses and jobs at the junction only increases the horrific traffic problem there. There are also further hazards to be considered with heavy goods deliveries servicing the development. The proposed housing development at Sampford Peverell should certainly be removed from the Local Plan as the proposed houses are in the wrong place.

6. There is already a service station on the M5 at Cullompton Junction 28 which is 5 miles away. There is no need for another so close. It is suggested that there will also be a lorry park at junction 27 with probability of warehousing too. The M5 corridor through Somerset has several such industrial sites whereas Junction 27 is the gateway to a county where agriculture and tourism are the main industries and should not be contaminated by such developments.

We ask you to withdraw Junction 27 from the Local Plan.

Michael Scott
Mid Devon CPRE