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From: Wright, Catherine
Sent: 07 April 2015 12:55
To: Local Plan Review
Subject: Local Plan Review
Attachments: Local Plan Review - Letter from Pené Prior Petroc.pdf

Dear Sir or Madam

Please find attached letter, from Pené Prior, Head of College Mid Devon Campus – Petroc, for your consideration.

With kind regards.

Catherine Wright

PA to Pené Prior, Deputy Principal, Director for Quality and Performance and Head of College – Petroc Mid Devon

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7 April 2015

Dear Sir or Madam



Re: Local Plan Review

I have noticed that there is non-inclusion of the Junction 27 proposed developments in the Local Plan and I was curious to understand the reasons for this.

We know that a very high percentage of our young people and our graduates leave Mid Devon in order to pursue their educational, research and career ambitions and that on the whole those who stay must accept lower-than-average wages; in a district that is rich with youthful talent and natural assets, providing sufficient work experience or career opportunities for our younger population so that they can remain locally to work and raise their families should be high on the agenda.

Petroc plays an important role in attracting and supporting major businesses and infrastructure providers, enabling them to improve the District's economic prospects. For example, the college has received funding from the European Social Fund to work with EDF Group in helping small and medium employers to re-skill and upskill their workforce in preparation for the Hinkley Point C development. As well as working with EDF to create apprentice and training opportunities, Petroc is also a partner college of Plymouth University, providing Foundation Degree Award courses in the subjects of business, computing, engineering and science.

The Hinkley project will likely run for 10 years, after which Mid Devon will be faced with a two-fold dilemma: how to simultaneously support graduating students and Hinkley project workers returning to their home district to seek new contracts and employment.

I have heard that that a major investor - AXA has joined up with a renowned visionary and educator - Sir Tim Smit of The Eden Project, and that they are investing time in shaping a potential major development at Junction 27; I think that this should be viewed positively.

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I am familiar with Eden's educational involvement and ambition, and would very much welcome the opportunity to meet the Westwood/Eden team, to discuss a similar collaboration on both apprenticeships and educational provision through their networks.

Specifically, I am interested in the prospect of what educational and apprenticeship schemes we could collectively develop at the 'Regional Celebration Hub' proposed by the Westwood/Eden team. We know that the team which has delivered The Lost Gardens of Heligan and The Eden Project has the vision and ability to deliver and has the potential to help us position Mid Devon as a centre of educational excellence in the STEM subjects such as environmental sciences, agri-tech and food technology, etcetera.

This, in conjunction with the impact of the Met Office's relocation to Devon, and the subsequent interest by science-based organisations in Devon's M5 corridor, indicates that we have an opportunity with the Westwood/Eden project to attract additional forward-thinking businesses to Mid Devon – with all the attendant positive effects they would have on the job and training opportunities for all our district's residents.

It is also worth adding that the tourist and leisure elements proposed by the Westwood team would be a very welcome healthy option for our young people. There is, at present, too little to occupy many of them in this District.

For these reasons, and with the future of our young people in mind, I would ask that the allocation of the land at Junction 27 is reconsidered within the Local Plan.

Yours faithfully

Pené Prior
Head of College, Petroc – Mid Devon