

4654/TIV16/mod

4654/DEVSTRA/mod

4654/SP2/mod

4654/UF1/mod

**From:** Local Plan Review  
**Subject:** FW: Representation in respect of LP Proposed Mods consultation  
**Attachments:** Appendix 2\_Phase 1 red line.pdf; Appendix 3\_3025120 - APPEAL DECISION.pdf; Appendix 4\_2014 SHLAA.pdf; Appendix 5\_SHLAA panel minutes.pdf; Appendix 6 \_rural\_services\_in\_mid\_devon\_2014.pdf; Appendix 7\_Table of Rural Services.pdf; LP rep\_130217.pdf; Appendix 1\_Location Plan.pdf

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**From:** Neal Jillings [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 14 February 2017 14:42  
**To:** Local Plan Review  
**Subject:** Representation in respect of LP Proposed Mods consultation

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find the above made on behalf of Richard and Lucy Persey. Grateful for confirmation of receipt.

Regards

Neal

Neal Jillings  
Director  
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Planning Dept.  
Mid Devon District Council  
Phoenix House  
Phoenix Lane  
Tiverton  
EX16 6PP

13<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

**Local Plan Proposed Submission (incorporating proposed modifications) Consultation - Land to the west of Uffculme**

Jillings Heynes Planning is instructed by Richard and Lucy Persey in respect of the land shown outlined in red on the attached plan (Appendix 1). Comments within this representation are limited to and focussed on the proposed modifications only. Comments are guided by text in paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy framework which sets out the four tests of soundness that a Local Plan must meet prior to submission for examination. These are set out in full below.

- Positively prepared – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- Justified – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
- Effective – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
- Consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

Our comments primarily relate to the second test, specifically whether the proposed modifications represent the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives. In summary, our conclusion, in relation to the distribution of housing is that the proposed modifications fail this test of soundness. It is unclear on how the increased housing requirement of an extra 660 dwellings over the plan period has resulted in an allocation at TIV16 and at land to the west of Sampford Peverall.

Taking each in turn, the Local Plan shows TIV16 on land to the north of Blundells School to be primarily floodplain (previously allocated as AL/TIV/9 in the Local Plan Part 2 and discounted as *“the site is not considered deliverable”*). We query the LPA’s logic in reinstating this allocation.

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We have no particular objection relating to the land at Sampford Peverall, but question the thought process and evidence base that determined that this site should be allocated for residential development above other rural sites. The LPA is required to assess all reasonable alternatives, using a proportionate evidence base. In this instance, the SHLAA forms an important part of that evidence base and it is our opinion that, in allocating the Sampford Peverall site, seemingly arbitrarily, the LPA did not assess reasonable alternatives adequately. If they had done so, the land shown in Appendix 1 is a suitable, available and deliverable site, as evidenced by the appeal decision in Appendix 3 and also in the 2014 SHLAA assessment in Appendix 4.

The site at Uffculme was assessed in the 2013 and 2014 SHLAA Reports. A much larger area was put forward in 2013 (MDDC ref. Site 7) along with land to the east forming part of the existing residential property known as Harvesters (MDDC ref. Site 1). The 2014 SHLAA assessed part of site 7 to the south of the B3440 along with Site 1 as one entity (see attached) and was assessed as forming part of an 'Initial Preferred Sites Working List'. The area of the site was reduced to what the LPA determined was 'as scale appropriate for a village location' (reduced to 32 dwellings as a 'preferred site'). The SHLAA Panel meeting minutes concluded that a site yielding 97 dwellings was achievable (Appendix 5). One must question why a site that is achievable in the eyes of the appointed SHLAA Panel, has been subject to an appeal decision allowing development on the site and is clearly available has not been assessed as a reasonable alternative.

Paragraph 1.2 of the Report to the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016 Cabinet meeting states that *"the Council, at its meeting of 22 September 2016, also resolved to allocate land at Junction 27 of the M5 motorway for leisure, retail and tourism together with associated additional housing sites at Blundells Road, Tiverton and Higher Town, Sampford Peverell"*. It seems apparent that the location of the site at Sampford Peverall was deemed necessary due to it being 'associated' to the proposed allocation at J27. If the test of necessity of a new allocation in a rural settlement is that it should be associated with the new proposed allocation at J27, we assume that proximity forms a key plank of that association. If that assumption is correct, and we think it safe to consider that the LPA's thinking did not go much further than this, then we would expect that land to the north of Willand, for instance, or land to the west of Uffculme (given that its suitability and availability has already been determined by reference to the 2014 SHLAA Report and the recent appeal decision) would have a much stronger association. If proximity is the key factor in determining 'association' then reasonable alternatives have clearly not been assessed. If other factors are at play, we would welcome clarification.

It is also clear that Uffculme has a good level of services in comparison to other rural settlements. This is set out in the MDDC document 'Rural Services in Mid Devon 2014' (see Appendix 6). Using the information provided in the MDDC publication, we have prepared a table (Appendix 7) setting out how the defined villages compare in terms of the level of facilities. It is apparent that Uffculme performs the best out of all of the various defined settlements. Where facilities are present, the table shows a green box; where the facilities are present, but less than optimum, the table shows an amber box; where the facility is not present, the table shows a red box. Uffculme is the only defined village with no red or amber boxes. On the basis that the LPA accepts that some of the defined villages are sustainable settlements and can therefore be allocated specific growth, it is logical to assume that Uffculme, using the measure of the level of facilities, performs better by any measure. If the LPA had

assessed all reasonable alternatives, the Rural Services document forms part of the proportionate evidence base.

Outwith consideration of reasonable alternatives, we note the proposed changes relating to land supply as set out in Table 6: Housing forecast 2013 – 2033. We query if the Local Plan meets the third and fourth tests of soundness in that it is unlikely to deliver the housing required and therefore does not accord with national policy as set out in the NPPF. A shortfall of 255 accumulated during the first three years of the plan period does not bode well for future delivery. Mid Devon District Council actually manages to buck the trend of economic recovery and increased housing delivery seen elsewhere, with delivery reducing year on year, with completions significantly under the strategic housing requirement of 393 dpa. Delivery was 320 dwellings in the monitoring year 2013/14, 316 in 2014/15 and 288 in 2015/16. It is of note that two of the proposed modifications to the Local Plan relate to an acknowledgement that the housing delivery assumptions for 2014/15 and 2015/16 (456 and 476) were unachievable. This is despite the following supporting text stating that the Council is confident that there will be delivery of sufficient housing to meet the identified requirements. This confidence is misplaced, as undershooting by 140 dwellings in 2014/15 and by 188 dwellings in 2015/16 demonstrates. The assumed delivery for the next five years (assuming a April 2016 start date) is, 488, 474, 714, 607 and 373. All available evidence points towards the LPA's assumptions being hopelessly optimistic and unrealistic.

In summary, we support the allocation of additional deliverable land to meet the ever-increasing housing requirement, including land at Sampford Peverall. We do not consider that the process by which it has been allocated is sufficiently transparent and fails the relevant test of soundness. Our case is that if reasonable alternatives had been assessed, the site shown in Appendix 1 would have been considered suitable for allocation in addition to, or instead of, land at Sampford Peverall. It can be concluded as a more suitable given its proximity to the J27 allocation, as set out above. Furthermore, we continue to have grave doubts about the LPA's ability to plan adequately to meet the strategic housing requirement, which is increased by the proposed modifications.

We maintain our intention to appear at the eventual examination to support these, and previously made, representations.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Neal Jillings. To the left of the box, there are blue ink scribbles, possibly remnants of a signature or initials.







Neal Jillings  
Director

For and on behalf of Jillings Heynes Planning







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 EXISTING COPPICE
- 
 EXISTING TREES / ECOLOGICAL VALUE
- 
 BAT CIRCULATION ROUTES (RELATIVELY LOW ECOLOGICAL VALUE)
- 
 FLOOD PLAIN
- 
 B3440 UFFOULME ROAD
- 
 RED LINE PLANNING BOUNDARY



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## Appeal Decision

Inquiry held between 2 February and 5 February 2016

Site visit made on 5 February 2016

**by Robert Parker BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 11 April 2016**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Y1138/W/15/3025120**  
**Uffculme Road, Uffculme, Devon**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Messrs Persey and Harding against the decision of Mid Devon District Council.
  - The application Ref 15/00108/MOUT, dated 24 January 2015, was refused by notice dated 23 April 2015.
  - The development proposed is outline application for up to 60 dwellings with access onto Uffculme Road, with all other matters reserved for future consideration.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for outline application for up to 60 dwellings with access onto Uffculme Road, with all other matters reserved for future consideration at Land West of Harvesters, Uffculme Road, Uffculme, Devon in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 15/00108/MOUT, dated 24 January 2015, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

### Procedural Matters

2. The application was submitted in outline, with only the means of access to be determined at this stage. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis, treating the layout plan as illustrative.
3. The above site address is taken from the application form. However, a more precise description would be Land West of Harvesters, Uffculme Road, Uffculme, Devon. This is the address I have used in my formal decision.
4. A draft agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (S106) was submitted in advance of the Inquiry and its terms were discussed during proceedings. An executed copy of the S106 was supplied after the event closed<sup>1</sup>. The deed includes obligations relating to affordable housing, education contributions, a Travel Plan and the provision and maintenance of public open space and a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) within the appeal site.
5. Prior to the Inquiry the Council confirmed that it was retracting parts of its evidence relating to the walking distance/route to services in the village and the impact of the proposal on the rural character of the area. My decision takes account of this altered stance.

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<sup>1</sup> S106 dated 18 February 2016

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## **Main Issue**

6. The main issue in this case is whether, having regard to the development plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, the housing land supply of the Council and the scale/location of the development, the appeal scheme would constitute a sustainable form of development.

## **Reasons**

7. The appeal site is situated on the western fringes of Uffculme. It measures some 3.49 hectares and comprises an agricultural field together with part of the rear garden belonging to the property known as Harvesters. The field has a frontage onto Uffculme Road from which access would be taken. The southern boundary is demarcated by the River Culme, the flood plain for which extends across part of the site.

### *Development plan*

8. The starting point for any assessment must be the development plan. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
9. The development plan in Mid Devon comprises three documents: Core Strategy 2026 (adopted 2007) (CS), Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (AIDPD) (adopted 2010) and the Local Plan Part 3: Development management policies (adopted 2013).
10. The appeal site is located outside of the settlement limits identified for Uffculme. It therefore lies in the countryside for the purposes of interpreting planning policy. Policy COR 18 of the CS states that development outside the settlements will be strictly controlled, enhancing the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. The proposal would not fall into any of the categories of development which the Policy finds to be permissible in the countryside.
11. Policy COR 17 of the CS identifies Uffculme as a settlement with some local facilities and employment and access to public transport. According to the policy, residential development will be limited to minor proposals within the defined settlement limits and to allocations for affordable housing meeting a local need.
12. It is common ground that the proposal would conflict with Policies COR 17 and COR 18. The parties further agree that those policies are relevant to the supply of housing. The case for the appellants is based on the premise that the policies are out-of-date and also that the local planning authority is unable to identify a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The Council contends that it is able to demonstrate the requisite supply and argues that the proposal should be rejected on the grounds that it conflicts with the CS and would, in any event, be unsustainable due to its location and scale.

### *The housing requirement*

13. The CS and AIDPD were both adopted prior to publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Paragraph 215 of the latter states that due weight must be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the Framework.

14. Paragraph 47 of the Framework makes clear that local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs (FOAN) for market and affordable housing in the housing market area (HMA) as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the Framework.
15. A housing requirement for Mid Devon is set out in Policy COR 3 of the CS. This makes provision for approximately 6800 dwellings between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2026. The policy states that delivery will be phased as follows: 390 dwellings per year over the period 2006–2016 and 290 dwellings per year between 2016 and 2026.
16. The Planning Practice Guidance<sup>2</sup> (PPG) advises that housing requirement figures in up-to-date adopted Local Plans should be used as the starting point for calculating five-year housing supply. It confirms that considerable weight should be given to the housing requirement figures in adopted Local Plans, which have successfully passed through the examination process, unless significant new evidence comes to light. However, the guidance warns that evidence which dates back several years, such as that drawn from revoked regional strategies, may not adequately reflect current needs.
17. It seems to me that this scenario is directly relevant here. Notwithstanding their existence as part of an adopted development plan, the housing requirement figures within Policy COR 3 are outdated. They have been formulated using a 20 year old evidence base and have been influenced by policy factors. As such, they do not equate to the FOAN in the HMA as required by the Framework. Neither can the figures be used as a proxy pending the outcome of the emerging Local Plan process. This has been made clear by the courts<sup>3</sup>.
18. In my opinion, Policy COR 3 is inconsistent with paragraph 47 of the Framework and its objective to boost significantly the supply of housing. I therefore attach limited weight to the policy.
19. The PPG<sup>4</sup> advises that where evidence in Local Plans has become outdated and policies in emerging plans are not yet capable of carrying sufficient weight, information provided in the latest full assessment of housing needs should be considered. But the weight given to these assessments should take account of the fact they have not been tested or moderated against relevant constraints.
20. The Council is in the process of carrying out a Local Plan Review (LPR). This is proposing a housing delivery rate of 360 dwellings per annum over the period 2013-2033. However, the document has not yet been submitted for examination and there remain significant unresolved objections in relation to key housing issues. For this reason, the emerging plan carries very limited weight.
21. Part of the evidence base for the LPR includes a Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>5</sup> (SHMA) which has been prepared for the Exeter HMA. This sets out figures for objectively assessed need, expressed as ranges, for the constituent local authorities over the period 2013-2033. For Mid Devon the housing need is estimated at between 359 and 381 dwellings per annum, with a mid-point of 370.

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<sup>2</sup> Reference ID: 3-030-20140306

<sup>3</sup> Hunston Properties Ltd v St Albans CDC and SoS CLG [2013] EWCA

<sup>4</sup> Reference ID: 3-030-20140306

<sup>5</sup> Final Report 2014/15

22. It was put to me that the latter figure “sense checks” the CS and validates its housing requirement. However, I am not persuaded by this argument. The figures have not been derived in the same manner and they serve different purposes. As such they are not directly comparable. It was not the objective of the SHMA to analyse the housing requirement between 2006 and 2013. Moreover, its mid-point figure is 80 dwellings per annum higher than that identified in Policy COR 3 for the period beyond 2016. This is a significant difference.
23. I note that the SHMA was accepted by the examining Inspector for the New East Devon Local Plan. However, it has not been formally tested in the Mid Devon context and therefore its figures must be treated with some caution. Nevertheless, it is more up-to-date than the development plan and in my judgement it is the best available evidence for the purposes of this appeal. For this reason I consider that it could be an appropriate basis for informing the FOAN from 2013 onwards.
24. At this point in time, it is feasible that the housing need for the next five year period may be in the region of 1850 dwellings to which must be added any shortfall and a buffer.

*The shortfall*

25. The Council considers that any shortfall in the delivery of dwellings since the beginning of the plan period should be calculated by comparing completions over that period against a housing requirement calculated using the annual average across the whole plan period – a figure of 340 dwellings per annum. It argues that this would be consistent with the AIDPD, the SHLAA<sup>6</sup> Panel approach and its own monitoring practices.
26. The interpretation of policy is an objective issue and in my view the meaning of Policy COR 3 is clear. The policy is unequivocal in splitting housing provision over the plan period into two discrete phases with a different rate of delivery for each.
27. The local planning authority pursued the argument that there is conflict between Policy COR 3 of the CS and Policy AL/DE/1 of the AIDPD and that this should be resolved in favour of the latter policy, having regard to Section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004<sup>7</sup>. However, it seems to me that Policy AL/DE/1 is serving an altogether different purpose to Policy COR 3. It is essentially a monitoring policy which defines trigger levels for action, by reference to dwelling completion numbers. The policy does not seek to redefine the housing requirement or alter the phasing of delivery. In my judgement therefore, there is no conflict between policies.
28. I accept that there are references to the 340 figure within Policy COR 12 of the CS and also within supporting text. However, these are expressed as annual averages and in my view they do not alter in any way the explicit phasing provision set out within Policy COR 3.
29. Having regard to my conclusions above, I consider that, for the purposes of calculating the shortfall, the housing requirement for the period 1st April 2006 to

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<sup>6</sup> Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

<sup>7</sup> This states that if to any extent a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document.

31st March 2015 should comprise seven years at 390 dwellings per annum, followed by two years at 370 dwellings per annum. This equates to 3470 units.

30. There is no dispute that completions over this period equate to 2942. The shortfall is therefore 528 dwellings. The parties are agreed that any shortfall should be spread across the next five year period using the Sedgefield method. I concur on the basis that this approach would be consistent with advice set out in the PPG and the objective of the Framework to boost significantly the supply of housing.

#### *The buffer*

31. The Framework states that local planning authorities should add a buffer of 5% to the land needed to meet the five year housing requirement. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing the buffer should be increased to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply. The buffer is not in addition to the housing requirement but rather moves it forward from later in the plan period to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.
32. The PPG advises that the approach to identifying whether there has been a persistent under delivery of housing involves questions of judgement. This is likely to be more robust if a longer term view is taken, since it is likely to take into account peaks and troughs of the housing market cycle.
33. The Council has supplied historic completion figures going back several decades. These can be compared against the development plan requirements which were prevailing at the time<sup>8</sup>. The evidence indicates that since 1995/96, completions have exceeded the relevant policy requirement on only five occasions.
34. The 20 year average of 356 units per annum further illustrates the extent to which the authority has failed to deliver the level of housing required to meet its development plan targets – figures which as I have already found are policy constrained and therefore a potential under-estimate of the actual housing need.
35. I accept that the recent dip in completions is a likely result of economic recession, and this reflects the position nationally. I also acknowledge the delays in bringing forward urban extensions for Tiverton and Cullompton and the pro-active approach to housing supply now being taken by the Council. However, I must make a judgement informed by past delivery rates.
36. For the above reasons I consider that a 20% buffer should be applied. The parties agree that the buffer should also be applied to any shortfall. This seems logical and I have no reason to adopt a different approach.

#### *Supply contribution from sites*

37. It is common ground that the five year land supply should be calculated using a base date of 1st April 2015. The written evidence on behalf of the local planning authority originally projected a five year delivery of 2198 dwellings. However, this figure was increased following a cabinet decision to release the

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<sup>8</sup> Devon Structure Plan First Review 1995-2011 – 450 dwellings per annum over the period 1995–2001  
Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016: 'A Sustainable Strategy for Devon' – 390 dwellings per annum over the period 2001–2016.

Pedlars Pool contingency site<sup>9</sup> and a number of other sites which are proposed for allocation in the emerging Local Plan. Together, these are projected to deliver 151 dwellings within the next five years.

38. During the Inquiry the Council provided a spreadsheet summarising the latest supply position. This took account of site specific information from agents/ developers for some sites. It also included a further batch of proposed allocations (estimated to deliver 110 units) from the emerging Local Plan. These would bring the overall supply figure to 2540 dwellings – as compared to the appellants' figure of 2032.
39. The respective land supply positions were explored by means of a round table discussion. The Council has adopted build-out rates taken from the SHLAA Methodology. The appellants raised no objections to this approach and I agree that they are a reasonable basis on which to make an assessment.
40. The largest individual sites in dispute are the urban extensions for Tiverton East and North West Cullompton. The Council considers that these sites can deliver 399 dwellings within the five year period, whereas the appellants predict 300.
41. Starting with East Tiverton, an outline planning permission exists for 330 dwellings and I was told that adoption of a Design Guide for this area is imminent. Another part of the site has a committee resolution to grant permission for 700 dwellings subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement. A signed agreement was expected before the end of March 2016.
42. That said, there is some evidence to suggest that the developer for the 330 unit scheme is yet to acquire the site, notwithstanding the agreement in principle for Mid Devon District Council to buy the affordable element. There is a need to obtain reserved matters approval and discharge conditions on the outline permission. Significantly, this includes a condition regarding design principles, which could impact on the timescale for submission of reserved matters. The 700 dwelling scheme will have similar issues. Accordingly, there is doubt in my mind over the ability of this site to begin delivering as early as predicted. In my judgement, the trajectory for this site should be pushed back by 12 months.
43. The North West Cullompton site is further behind. The Master Plan is due for adoption shortly and the first planning applications are expected in the spring, with delivery projected towards the end of the 2017/18 monitoring year. I heard that two of the three parcels of land have been put forward by promoters and therefore commencement of development will be dependent upon disposal of those sites to a developer. This could affect delivery timescales. However, the Council has adopted a suitably cautious approach in relation to the number of units within the five year supply and on balance I am inclined to accept the trajectory put forward.
44. One of the key differences between the parties is in relation to the inclusion of sites which are proposed for allocation in the emerging Local Plan. The Council's view is that these sites should be included on the basis of the lack of objection. The appellants, on the other hand, contend that there is no certainty regarding delivery and therefore the sites should not count towards the supply figure.

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<sup>9</sup> Identified for potential release within Policy AL/DE/1 of the AIDPD.



45. I was told that there have already been pre-application discussions regarding several of the sites<sup>10</sup>. However, this is no certainty of planning permission being granted, particularly in view of the viability issues identified in respect of at least two of the schemes. These sites (totalling 58 units) should be deducted from the supply.
46. As regards Barn Park, Crediton, no decision has yet been made by Devon County Council in respect of whether to apply for planning permission or dispose of the site to a developer. There is an in-built assumption here that the local authority will be keen to secure the capital receipts from land sale having put forward the site within the SHLAA. However, there can be no reasonable certainty that the site will deliver 20 dwellings within the five year period.
47. I understand that Court Orchard, Newton St Cyres has a resolution to grant planning permission for 25 units subject to completion of a Section 106 agreement. From what I heard, the legal agreement is well advanced and there is a reasonable likelihood that the development will go ahead. However, it will be dependent upon the construction of a new primary school and there is no compelling evidence to give me confidence that the projected completion date of spring/summer 2017 will be met. This leads me to question the timing of the housing element.
48. The remainder of sites identified (referred to at the Inquiry as the '110 sites') are predominantly 'greenfield'. The Council explained that they were the subject of a varying number of objections. In its view, these objections are unlikely to preclude the sites from coming forward and on this basis it considers that they should be included within the supply. Notwithstanding this, it has applied a discount to reflect the uncertainty involved. Only 110 out a total of 253 dwellings are being included within the figures for deliverable supply.
49. The appellants expressed significant concern regarding this approach and I concur. The absence of objection to individual site allocations does not prevent an examining Inspector from raising wider issues relating to, for example, the development strategy or site selection methodology. For this reason, these sites cannot be relied upon to deliver housing within the five year period.
50. A footnote to paragraph 47 of the Framework explains that to be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. In my judgement it is questionable whether these criteria are met in relation to sites which lack planning permission and which also fail to comply with an adopted development plan. Therefore, these sites should be discounted from the supply figures.
51. The appellants have sought to challenge the Council's methodology in relation to windfall sites. However, it seems to me that the allowance made for such sites is reasonable, having regard to evidence of past trends. Whilst I acknowledge the concern that future windfalls may not come forward at the same rate, the assumptions included in the Council's figures are conservative. I am therefore content for the allowance of 158 dwellings to remain.

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<sup>10</sup> Old Abattoir, Copplestone; Hunters Hill, Culmstock; South of Broadlands, Thorverton; and Linhay Close, Culmstock

*Conclusions on housing land supply*

52. Based on the above, I consider that the Council's latest predicted five year housing supply figure is overstated. However, I have also found some of the appellants' views to be unduly pessimistic. To my mind a more realistic supply will lie somewhere in the middle. Taking a figure of around 2300 dwellings, which follows from my findings above, this would give rise to a deliverable supply of approximately 4 years. Even using the Council's preferred figure the supply would increase to only 4.5 years.
53. Using the housing figures set out in Policy COR 3 would yield a total five year requirement for 1550 units<sup>11</sup> and a backlog of 568. With the 20% buffer applied the overall requirement would be 2542 dwellings. Assuming a realistic supply figure of around 2300 units, the deliverable supply would be in the region of 4.5 years. Therefore even in this scenario the Council would fall short of the requisite five-years.
54. It therefore follows that, even if I revert to the development plan policy figures, a five-year supply of deliverable housing land cannot be demonstrated. This is clearly a snapshot of the current situation based upon the evidence presented for this particular appeal.

*Considerations of scale/location*

55. I have found that Policy COR 3 is inconsistent with paragraph 47 of the Framework on the basis that it fails to identify, and plan for, the FOAN. In addition, the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, either measured against the CS or the SHMA. Paragraph 49 of the Framework states that in such circumstances, relevant development plan policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date. Thus, Policies COR 3, COR 17 and COR 18 of the CS are all out of-date. I therefore attach these policies, and the settlement limits upon which they rely, limited weight.
56. Consequently, paragraph 14 of the Framework is engaged. This states that where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.
57. At the heart of the Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are three dimensions to this: economic, social and environmental. The roles are mutually dependent and should be jointly sought to achieve sustainable development.
58. The proposal is for development on a greenfield site at the edge of the village. This in itself is not necessarily harmful. The District is reliant upon such sites to meet its housing needs and there must be an acceptance that this will result in the loss of some agricultural land on the fringes of settlements. In this instance, the Council has not raised any substantive concerns in relation to countryside encroachment or the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area. Moreover, it has not identified any

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<sup>11</sup> Comprising one year at 390 dwellings and four years at 290 dwellings.

environmental harm that cannot be mitigated by planning condition. Based on the information before me and my observations during the site visit I have no reason to take a different view.

59. The Council's principal concern is in relation to the scale of the development. It considers the number of dwellings being proposed to be excessive and contrary to its overarching strategy, and that of the Framework, to direct development to the most sustainable locations.
60. Uffculme has a wide range of facilities, including two shops (one of which contains a Post Office), a pair of public houses, hot food takeaway, doctor's surgery, community hall and playing fields, pre-school and primary school. Comparatively speaking, it is better served than the other villages listed in Policy COR 17 and is the only one to have its own secondary school and dedicated library<sup>12</sup>.
61. In my view, the appeal site is within an acceptable and safe walking distance of those services and facilities. There are some employment opportunities within the village itself and a number of business parks<sup>13</sup> within a short cycle or drive. Two of those business parks are in the process of expanding.
62. It would be unrealistic to expect the village to achieve self-containment. Nevertheless, in relative terms and in a rural context, this is a sustainable location for development. Residents may choose to travel further afield for leisure, shopping or commuting purposes. However, there are opportunities to use sustainable transport modes and villagers have a real choice about how they travel. There are bus services to Tiverton, Cullompton, Taunton and Exeter and the timings of these would be suitable for the daily journey to work. Moreover, the Langlands and Mid Devon Business Parks are both on bus routes. To encourage public transport use, the development would provide new bus stops immediately outside the appeal site.
63. Tiverton Parkway station provides access to the mainline rail service and this is within cycling range along a recognised cycle route. A proportion of residents will almost certainly prefer to drive, but even in that scenario the journey would be reasonably short. I noted that Uffculme is closer to Tiverton Parkway station than Tiverton itself so comparatively it is no less sustainable insofar as distance to the rail network is concerned.
64. The appellants did not seek to argue that the development would be 'minor' in the context of Policy COR 17. Self evidently, it would be of a more significant scale. Nevertheless, in my view the proposal would not be disproportionate to the size of Uffculme. The village contains an estimated 1043 households and a scheme of 60 dwellings would represent a relatively modest 6% increase on top of this.
65. Paragraph 55 of the Framework states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. The PPG<sup>14</sup> advises that a thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends, in part, on retaining local services and community facilities. Rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities.

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<sup>12</sup> Other settlements listed within Policy COR 17 have a mobile library service

<sup>13</sup> Langlands Business Park, Hitchcocks Business Park and Mid Devon Business Park

<sup>14</sup> Reference ID: 50-001-20140306

66. Having regard to the above, I am not persuaded that the proposal would be inherently unsustainable, either by virtue of its scale or location. It would bring social benefits in terms of delivering much needed housing against a background of historic undersupply and an absence of a five-year supply of deliverable sites. This carries considerable weight in the overall planning balance.
67. The proposal would also deliver up to 21 affordable dwellings which equates to 35% of the total number of units. Given the level of need for affordable housing in the District, this would constitute another significant social benefit of granting planning permission. I give weight to the fact that policy requirements alone will not be sufficient to meet the identified level of need<sup>15</sup>.
68. The Framework places great emphasis on the need for economic growth. The proposal would create or sustain employment during the construction phase and there would be further benefits through increased spending in local business arising from additional residents in the village.
69. Drawing matters together on this issue, neither the scale nor location of the development would render the scheme unacceptable. The proposal would bring forward a number of social and economic benefits with no demonstrable environmental harm.

### **Other Matters**

70. I am referred to the fact that the site has been 'rejected' for development as part of the LPR. However, for the reasons explained above, the emerging plan can be attached very limited weight at this stage.
71. Local residents have raised concerns regarding highway safety and the impact of traffic generated by the development. However, in my view the scheme would not generate a significant level of additional traffic in comparison with the status quo. The new access would provide satisfactory visibility and the 30mph limit would be extended across the site frontage.
72. I am told that there has been at least one fatality on this section of road. I do not know the causal factors leading to this incident. Nevertheless, there is no compelling evidence before me to clearly demonstrate that the scheme would result in highway safety issues or congestion from increased traffic volumes. Accordingly, I have no reason to disagree with the assessment of the Highway Authority that the proposal would be acceptable.
73. Concerns have also been raised about flooding. The southern part of the site lies within the floodplain for the River Culm. However, the illustrative layout plan demonstrates that development can be confined to Flood Zone 1 (Low Risk). The Environment Agency does not object to the development and nothing in the evidence before me persuades me to take a different view.
74. There is no firm evidence to support the assertion that the doctor's surgery would be unable to cope with the extra population. The Education Authority has confirmed that the primary school has capacity and the development would make a financial contribution to mitigate its effect upon the secondary school. As such, there are no grounds to dismiss the appeal for reasons relating to the impact upon local facilities.

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<sup>15</sup> Paragraph 11.1.14, SHMA

75. At the Inquiry I heard from one local resident who had a particular concern about the loss of agricultural land. This is a factor to which I have had regard, but it is not one which I can give great weight in this instance. The Council did not seek to argue that the proposal would compromise the best and most versatile agricultural land and, as I have already mentioned, the District is reliant upon the release of 'greenfield' sites in order to meet its need for housing. The delivery of new homes is a key policy objective and this would outweigh any limited harm arising from the development of farmland in this case.
76. Whilst I have no doubt that adjacent residents will experience some disturbance during the construction phase, the effects would be temporary and there is no reason to believe that they would be particularly severe in this case. Effects can be mitigated by imposing a condition to require the submission of a Construction Management Plan. There is no substantive evidence to suggest that neighbours would experience unacceptable levels of noise once the dwellings are occupied. The layout of the scheme would be a reserved matter in any event.
77. I can see no reason why foul drainage to the mains sewer would cause contamination or pollution. South West Water has raised no objection to the proposal and a condition can be used to ensure that no dwelling is occupied until it has been demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity in the public foul sewage network.
78. No substantive evidence has been put forward to support the concerns regarding the effect on wildlife. Surveys have identified the presence of bats but activity levels were low and the proposal would retain existing linear hedgebank features and in-field trees. Furthermore, the watercourse and pond corridor would provide a buffer to the development and planting would present the opportunity for ecological enhancement. Landscaping would be addressed at the reserved matters stage.
79. I am aware that land within the curtilage of Harvesters has been the subject of a previous appeal in relation to a proposal for two dwellings. The Inspector in that case commented that woodland provides an important and attractive natural feature defining the end of the village and functioning as an appropriate settlement boundary. Whilst I have no reason to disagree with that observation, it was made in a different context. In the current appeal, the Council is not contending that there would be material harm to the character or appearance of the area and I agree.
80. Concerns are raised regarding the linear 'ribbon' nature of development and the erosion of the rural setting between the villages of Uffculme and Willand. However, the development would not materially close the gap between the settlements and they would each retain their individual identity.
81. My attention is drawn to other refusals of planning permission locally. However, I have not been provided with details of those cases and therefore I cannot determine whether there are any parallels with the appeal proposal. I have therefore determined the case on its own merits.

### **Planning Obligations**

82. The affordable housing obligations respond to identified needs within the District and are supported by Policy AL/DE/3 of the AIDPD which applies a target of 35% affordable housing on relevant sites. The scheme would make

this level of provision and as such it would be policy compliant. The S106 gives the Council control over the size and tenure mix to ensure that the affordable housing meets local needs.

83. The education contributions are also justified given the fact that Uffculme School is over capacity. The monies would be used to provide secondary school facilities required as a result of the development. This would accord with Policy AL/IN/5 of the AIDPD and the methodology contained within the Devon County Council publication 'Education Section 106 Infrastructure Approach' (2013). The Council has confirmed that the contribution would be compliant with the pooling restrictions introduced under Regulation 123(3) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.
84. The requirement for an on-site open space scheme responds to Policy AL/IN/3 of the AIDPD which requires new housing development to provide at least 60 square metres of equipped and landscaped public open space per market dwelling or an off-site contribution. I concur with the Council's assessment that on-site provision would be preferable in this instance.
85. There is also a planning obligation to secure the ongoing management and maintenance of the public open space. This would extend to the SUDS. In my view, such provisions are justified and would ensure that the areas remain fit for purpose.
86. In addition, the S106 would require the implementation, monitoring and review of a Travel Plan to be first agreed with the County Council. This would accord with the sustainability objectives of the Framework and as such it is a benefit which I have weighed in the balance.
87. Overall, the obligations within the S106 are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Therefore, they meet the tests within CIL Regulation 122. I have taken them into account in the decision. I consider that the conditionality provisions set out in Paragraph 2.5 of the agreement are satisfied and that the obligations should become effective.

## **Conditions**

88. Suggested planning conditions were set out in the statement of common ground. However, the Council included a separate list within its statement of case. The conditions were discussed in a round table session and amendments were subsequently agreed between the parties. I have considered the revised list having regard to paragraphs 203 and 206 of the Framework and advice contained in the PPG. Where necessary I have adjusted the wording to improve precision and enforceability.
89. Given the outline nature of the application, conditions are necessary relating to commencement and the submission of the reserved matters. This will comply with the requirements of planning legislation<sup>16</sup>. Conditions are also needed to control the maximum number of dwellings and to specify the plans to which the permission shall relate. This will provide certainty and ensure that the new access onto Uffculme Road is constructed in accordance with the approved details.

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<sup>16</sup> Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended

90. The Council has requested a condition requiring details of materials, boundary treatments, finished floor levels, existing and proposed site levels and proposed road and footpath levels to be included within the reserved matters. I agree that such a condition would be reasonable to ensure that the development has a satisfactory appearance and to address flood risk.
91. In the interests of highway and pedestrian safety, a condition is necessary to ensure that the vehicular access and the footway linking the site to the village are constructed prior to any other part of the development going ahead. The same condition would secure the provision of a site compound and car park, to discourage parking on the public highway during the construction phase.
92. I agree that a condition should be used to require the submission of a Construction Management Plan. This will ensure that the development is carried out responsibly and with minimal disruption to local residents.
93. A condition is also needed to ensure the provision of the new bus stops on Uffculme Road, in the interests of ensuring that occupiers have a choice of transport mode. For reasons of highway safety, the same condition would require that the internal roads, parking areas and footways within the site are provided prior to occupation of the dwellings. To make sure that they are adequate in functional terms, are safe and have a satisfactory appearance, detailed drawings of the highway infrastructure are required before construction begins.
94. The site lies within an area known to contain evidence of prehistoric activity and therefore I have attached a condition to secure a scheme of archaeological work with the aim of recording of any features of heritage interest.
95. A condition is also necessary to require the submission of an arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan. This will ensure the retention of existing trees in the interests of public amenity and the character and appearance of the area.
96. A condition is necessary to ensure that the site is properly drained. To this end, I agree that a surface water drainage scheme is required for the Council's approval and that this should be based on SUDS principles. Foul drainage is proposed to the mains sewer. However, a condition is required to ensure that dwellings are not occupied until sufficient capacity exists within the public sewerage network.
97. A phasing condition is included within the Council's list of suggested conditions. However, this was not pursued at the Inquiry and I do not consider that such a condition can be justified in this instance, having regard to the scale of the scheme. Likewise, a condition to require a management plan for areas within the site is unnecessary as this objective is secured via the S106.

## **Conclusion**

98. To conclude, the proposal would be in conflict with Policies COR 17 and COR 18 of the CS. However, the development plan is inconsistent with the policies of the Framework by reason of its failure to properly identify, and plan for, the full objectively assessed need for housing in the District. Moreover, the Council has been unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In such circumstances, paragraph 49 of the Framework deems that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date. I have

therefore attached limited weight to the policies upon which the Council has sought to rely in refusing planning permission.

99. The proposal would bring important social benefits in terms of delivering market and affordable housing and it would also promote economic activity. I attach considerable weight to these matters, in light of the Council's current housing land supply position and the need for economic growth. No environmental harm has been identified which is not capable of being mitigated through the use of planning conditions and the submitted S106.
100. Accordingly, it is my view that there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. There are no specific Framework policies indicating that development should be restricted. I therefore consider that the proposed development should be regarded as sustainable. This is a significant material consideration sufficient to outweigh the development plan conflict.
101. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters before me, including the various court judgments which were drawn to my attention during the Inquiry, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and that outline planning permission should be granted.

*Robert Parker*

INSPECTOR

Attached – Schedule of Conditions



## **APPEARANCES**

### **FOR THE APPELLANT:**

Mr Giles Cannock MA LLM (Cantab) of Counsel	Instructed by Neal Jillings
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He called

Mr Neal Jillings BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI	Jillings Heynes Planning Ltd
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### **FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:**

Mr Gary Grant of Counsel	Instructed by Simon Johnson, Solicitor with the Council
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He called

Mr Dean Titchener BSc (Hons) MSc	Principal Forward Planning Officer
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Ms Tina Maryan BSc (Hons) MA T&CP MRTPI	Area Planning Officer
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### **INTERESTED PERSONS:**

Mr A Samuels	Local resident
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Councillor R Evans	Ward Member
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## **DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT THE INQUIRY**

1. Opening remarks on behalf of the LPA
2. Opening submission of the appellant
3. Adopted Mid Devon Core Strategy 2026 (2007)
4. Adopted Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (2010)
5. Local Plan Review Options Consultation (January 2014)
6. Local Plan Review Options Consultation (extract: pages 94-96)
7. Local Plan Review 2013-2033 – Proposed Submission (February 2015)
8. Policy H1 of the Devon Structure Plan First Review 1995-2011
9. Policy DM9 of Local Plan Part 3: Development management policies (2013)
10. Ivan Crane v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Harborough District Council [2015] EWHC 425 (Admin)
11. Extract from Planning Practice Guidance (Reference ID: 50-001-20140306)
12. Extract from Planning Practice Guidance (Reference ID: 2a-019-20140306)
13. Exeter Housing Market Area SHLAA Methodology (Adopted September 2013) (extract: pages 6-8)
14. Exeter Housing Market Area Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (extract: pages 85-108)
15. Housing Supply Schedule (referenced at Inquiry as Document ID1)
16. Email from Dean Titchener dated 27 January 2016 (@ 16:41) re. updated supply information – with spreadsheet attachment
17. Email from Dean Titchener dated 28 January 2016 (@ 09:25) re. updated supply information
18. Email from Dean Titchener dated 28 January 2016 (@ 17:15) re. updated supply information – with sites evidence attachment
19. Email from Katie Furner dated 6 January 2016 (@ 16:33) regarding Housing Need figures on Devon Home Choice for Uffculme
20. Five year land supply calculation (340 requirement to 2013, 370 thereafter)
21. Definition of 'Designated Persons' in the context of affordable housing
22. Consultation response from Education Authority dated 3 February 2015
23. List of suggested conditions (taken from Council's Statement of Case)
24. Closing on behalf of the LPA
25. Closing submissions of the appellant

### **SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS**

- 1) The site hereby approved for development shall be as shown on the submitted location plan (1913. SK01. Rev. A) and site access arrangements plan (0172. PHL/002 Rev. A).
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be limited to a maximum of 60 dwellings.
- 3) Details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (herein after called the "reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development begins and the development shall be carried out as approved.
- 4) The detailed drawings required to be submitted by condition 3 shall include the following additional information: boundary treatments, existing and proposed site levels, proposed road and footpath levels, finished floor levels, materials and sustainable urban drainage system.
- 5) Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and the development shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this permission or not later than 2 years from the approval of the last "reserved matters" to be approved.
- 6) No development shall commence on site until a surface water drainage scheme based upon sustainable urban drainage principles (including a full drainage masterplan and associated drainage calculations) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may be agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- 7) No development shall commence on site, other than in relation to a, b, c & d of this condition, until:
  - a) the access road has been laid out, kerbed, drained and constructed up to base course level for the first 20 metres back from its junction with the public highway;
  - b) the ironwork has been set to base course level and the visibility splays required by this permission laid out;
  - c) the footway on the public highway frontage linking the estate to the existing footway network to the east of the site has been constructed up to base course level; and
  - d) a site compound and car park have been constructed in accordance with details to be first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.
- 8) No development shall commence on site until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan shall include, but shall not necessarily be limited to, details of the following:
  - a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors;

- b) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- c) storage of plant and materials;
- d) programme of works (including working hours and measures for traffic management);
- e) provision of any hoarding or temporary fencing; and
- f) measures to control construction noise, the emission of dust and the deposit of materials on the public highway.

The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan.

- 9) No development shall commence on site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.
- 10) No development shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, based on the submitted Tree Constraints Appraisal dated 7 October 2014 Devon Tree Services, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.
- 11) No development shall commence on site until details of the following pieces of highway infrastructure have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority: the estate road, cycleways, footways, footpaths, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, services routes, surface water outfall, road maintenance/vehicle overhang margins, embankments, visibility splays, accesses, car parking and street furniture. The information submitted pursuant to this condition shall include scale plans and sections indicating, as appropriate, the design, layout, levels, gradients, materials and method of construction. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.
- 12) No dwelling shall be occupied until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority evidence to demonstrate that sufficient capacity exists in the public foul sewerage network to accommodate the foul sewerage discharge from the development.
- 13) No dwelling shall be occupied until the following works have been carried out to the written satisfaction of the local planning authority:
  - a) The spine road and cul-de-sac carriageway including the vehicle turning head within that phase shall have been laid out, kerbed, drained and constructed up to and including base course level, the ironwork set to base course level and the sewers, manholes and service crossings completed;
  - b) The spine road and cul-de-sac footways and footpaths which provide that dwelling with direct pedestrian routes to an existing highway maintainable at public expense have been constructed up to and including base course level;

- c) The cul-de-sac visibility splays have been laid out to their final level;
- d) The street lighting for the spine road and cul-de-sac and footpaths has been erected and is operational;
- e) The car parking and any other vehicular access facility required for the dwelling has/have been completed;
- f) The verge and service margin and vehicle crossing on the road frontage of the dwelling have been completed with the highway boundary properly defined;
- g) The street nameplates for the spine road and cul-de-sac have been provided and erected;
- h) The footway on the public highway frontage linking the estate to the existing footway network to the east of the site has been completed; and
- i) The bus stops and the pedestrian links to the bus stops shown on the site access arrangements plan (0172. PHL/002 Rev. A) have been provided.

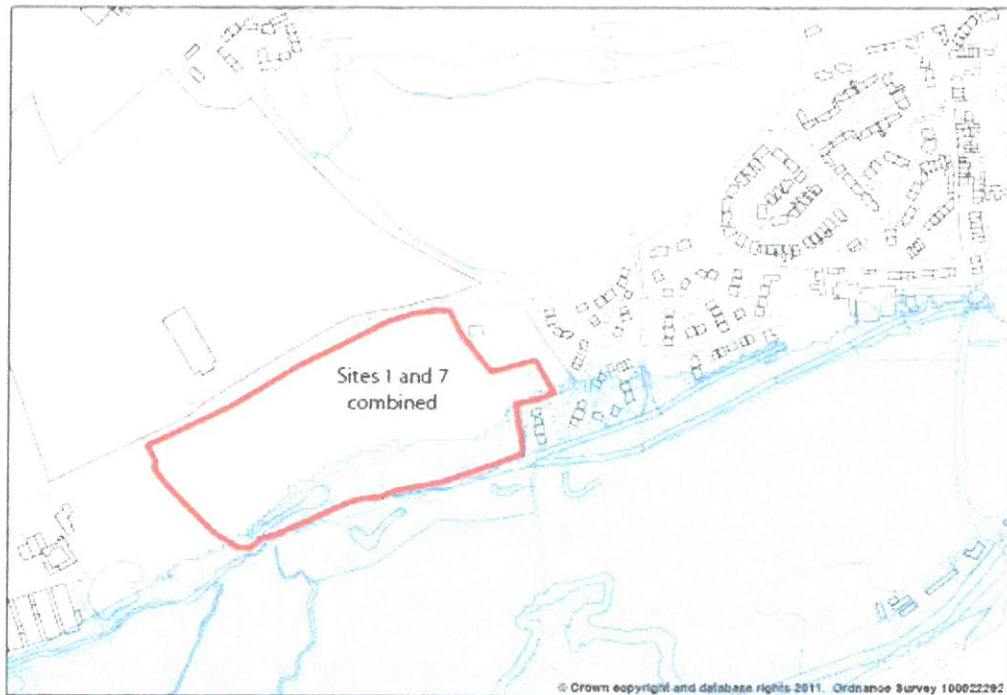
# **Mid Devon SHLAA 2014**

## **New Sites/Larger Sites/Reconsidered Sites**

**Settlement: Uffculme**

**Site Reference & Name: Sites 1 & 7 (combined), Harvesters & Land West of Uffculme**

**Allocation Reference: N/a**



**Parish: Halberton / Uffculme**

**Site Area: 5.2ha**

**Max yield: 121 (having excluded land within flood zones 2 & 3)**

**Min yield: 73 (having excluded land within flood zones 2 & 3)**

***Note:** This was formerly two sites assessed by the panel in 2013. Site 1, 'Harvesters', the most easterly of the two sites was considered unachievable on highway grounds. The site has been resubmitted, with the landowner now cooperating with the landowner to the west who will provide access to the site.*

### **Site description**

The site is located on the western edge of the settlement of Uffculme. The site is comprised of an agricultural field and part of a garden at the rear of the property of 'Harvesters'. The site is adjacent to the main road which runs through the village. The field is bounded by hedging and mature trees. The field is relatively flat (being in close proximity to the flood plain of the River Culm to the south). There is a copse of protected trees immediately adjacent to the east boundary of the site.

### **Site Suitability**

#### **Stage A**

#### **Strategic Policy**

Outside, though adjacent to existing settlement limit.

### **Biodiversity and Heritage**

The nationally important historic park and garden of Bridwell Park lies to the north of the site on the other side of the B3440. No European wildlife sites or SSSI designations.

### **Flood Risk**

Flood zone 1                      4.04ha

Flood zone 2 and 3   1.16ha (along the southern boundary of the site).

Flood Zone 2 and 3 are within the site boundary. The National Planning Policy Framework must be adhered and the sequential and exception tests used where necessary. Any planning application must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment. Some historic flooding has occurred within the southern edge of the site boundary. Any historic flooding information should be used in conjunction with development proposals and any flood risk assessment. A Main River is within the site boundary. Any alterations or works within the river must be discussed with the Environment Agency and Flood Defence Consent requested and approved where necessary. The Flood Map for Surface Water shows a high/medium risk of flooding from surface water in southern areas of the site. Any development must be accompanied by a suitable drainage strategy to deal with existing surface water flows and any potential increase in surface runoff. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be encouraged where possible. Please refer to Devon County Council's SuDS Guidance for more information.



## **Stage B**

### **Impact on Historic, Cultural and Built Environment**

DCC Archaeology - This site occupies a substantial area where prehistoric activity is recorded in the wider landscape. Archaeological mitigation in the form of a programme of archaeological work undertaken through the application of a standard worded archaeological condition on any consent granted may be required.

MDDC Conservation - Uffculme Sites 1 and 7 whilst close to Bridwell Registered Park and Garden in my view there will be no significant adverse impact on the setting. There is little intervisibility between the site and the nearest boundary points. There is an intervening parcel of land and there is screening by hedgebanks and trees along the boundaries of this intervening land. Any impact on the setting would be less than existing modern development to the east.

### **Impact on Biodiversity**

The site is close to an area classified as a Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat and a Woodpasture and Parkland Priority Habitat, in the north east. To the south is coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. Protected trees are to the east.

### **Impact on Landscape Character**

The site falls on the boundary of two landscape character areas. The majority of the site falls within the 'Lowland plains' character area, which is typified as having an open, low lying flat agricultural landscape. The southern part of the site and stretching away further south following the floodplain is the character area 'sparsely settled farmed valley floors'. This area is typified by the presence of rivers or streams and related flat or gently sloping valley bottoms within the low lying areas of the district. The field is open to wide and distant views from the south, with therefore, the potential for landscape impacts.

### **Minerals Resources**

None.

### **Air Quality**

None.

### **Access to Public Transport**

Located on a bus route having an hourly or greater service.

### **Access to services/facilities**

The site lies 1 km from the centre of Uffculme which has two education facilities, shop, pub, daily transport service, doctors, mobile library, village hall and post office.

### **Land Status**

Greenfield	Grade 3	2.7 ha (northern element running east-west)
	Grade 4	2.5 ha (southern element, closer to floodplain)

**Constraints to Delivery**

There are a number of mature trees adjacent to the site.

**Source Protection Zone**

Not applicable.

**Open Space and Recreation**

No loss.

**Loss of Employment Land**

No loss.

**Infrastructure Capacity**

No issues

**Highway Access**

Across the site frontages Uffculme Road is subject only to the national speed limit. Any development would require the extension of the 30 mph limit.

Access to the north section of the site is achievable from Bridwell Lane which would require widening over the site frontage.

**Pedestrian and Cycle Links**

The existing footway would need to be extended to any site access, with the footway at Culm Valley way being extended to the site.

**Compatibility**

Housing adjacent to the site is low density, mainly bungalows and detached houses and semi-detached houses. A mixture of densities would be more appropriate for this site, as it would reflect the adjacent densities.

**Site Availability**

<b>Is the site immediately available for development?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Soonest date available (if currently unavailable):</b>	<b>N/a</b>
<b>Is the site currently being marketed?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Landowners estimated development time:</b>	<b>5 years</b>



# **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

**Sites for consideration by the Panel**

**Initial Preferred Sites Working List**

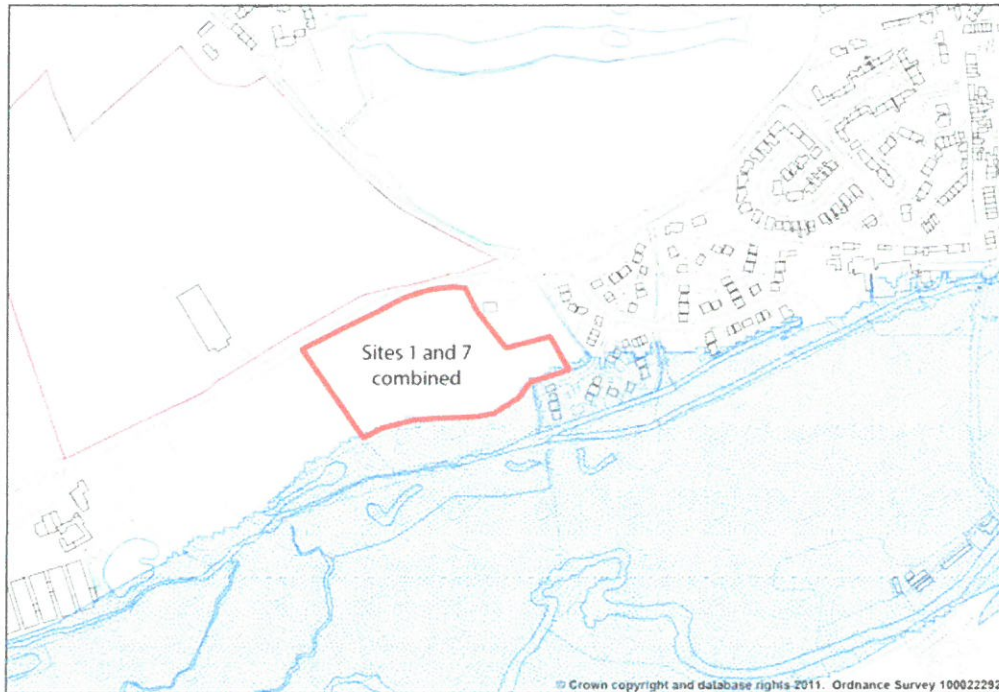
**(Rural sites)**

**June 2014**

**Settlement: Uffculme**

**Site Reference & Name: Sites 1 & 7 (combined), Harvesters & Land West of Uffculme**

**Allocation Reference: N/a**



## **2014 Proposed Site Allocation – Potential Policy Criteria**

- **2.3ha site area**
- **32 dwellings**
- **30% affordable housing**
- **Archaeological investigation and appropriate mitigation**
- **Extension of footpath along site frontage**
- **Mitigation of any biodiversity impact including protection of trees**

Notes: This site is formed of parts of two sites previously assessed by the panel in 2013. The joint site was reconsidered by the panel in 2014 and was deemed to be deliverable with a year 3 start. A reduced site area is proposed, a scale appropriate for a village location.

**Parish: Halberton / Uffculme**

**Site Area: 5.2ha**

**Max yield: 121 (having excluded land within flood zones 2 & 3)**

**Min yield: 73 (having excluded land within flood zones 2 & 3)**

***Note:** This was formerly two sites assessed by the panel in 2013. Site 1, 'Harvesters', the most easterly of the two sites was considered unachievable on highway grounds. The site has been resubmitted, with the landowner now cooperating with the landowner to the west who will provide access to the site.*

### **Site description**

The site is located on the western edge of the settlement of Uffculme. The site is comprised of an agricultural field and part of a garden at the rear of the property of 'Harvesters'. The site is adjacent to the main road which runs through the village. The field is bounded by hedging and mature trees. The field is relatively flat (being in close proximity to the flood plain of the River Culm to the south. There is a copse of protected trees immediately adjacent to the east boundary of the site.

### **Site Suitability**

#### **Stage A**

#### **Strategic Policy**

Outside, though adjacent to existing settlement limit.

### **Biodiversity and Heritage**

The nationally important historic park and garden of Bridwell Park lies to the north of the site on the other side of the B3440. No European wildlife sites or SSSI designations.

### **Flood Risk**

Flood zone 1            4.04ha

Flood zone 2 and 3   1.16ha (along the southern boundary of the site).



## **Stage B**

### **Impact on Historic, Cultural and Built Environment**

DCC Archaeology - This site occupies a substantial area where prehistoric activity is recorded in the wider landscape. Archaeological mitigation in the form of a programme of archaeological work undertaken through the application of a standard worded archaeological condition on any consent granted may be required.

MDDC Conservation - Uffculme Sites 1 and 7 whilst close to Bridwell Registered Park and Garden in my view there will be no significant adverse impact on the setting. There is little intervisibility between the site and the nearest boundary points. There is an intervening parcel of land and there is screening by hedgebanks and trees along the boundaries of this intervening land. Any impact on the setting would be less than existing modern development to the east.

### **Impact on Biodiversity**

The site is close to an area classified as a Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat and a Woodpasture and Parkland Priority Habitat, in the north east. To the south is coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. Protected trees are to the east.

### **Impact on Landscape Character**

The site falls on the boundary of two landscape character areas. The majority of the site falls within the 'Lowland plains' character area, which is typified as having an open, low lying flat agricultural landscape. The southern part of the site and stretching away further south following the floodplain is the character area 'sparsely settled farmed valley floors'. This area is typified by the presence of rivers or streams and related flat or gently sloping valley bottoms within the low lying areas of the district. The field is open to wide and distant views from the south, with therefore, the potential for landscape impacts.

### **Minerals Resources**

None.

### **Air Quality**

None.

### **Access to Public Transport**

Located on a bus route having an hourly or greater service.

### **Access to services/facilities**

The site lies 1 km from the centre of Uffculme which has two education facilities, shop, pub, daily transport service, doctors, mobile library, village hall and post office.

### **Land Status**

Greenfield	Grade 3	2.7 ha (northern element running east-west)
	Grade 4	2.5 ha (southern element, closer to floodplain)

### **Constraints to Delivery**

There are a number of mature trees adjacent to the site.

**Source Protection Zone**

Not applicable.

**Open Space and Recreation**

No loss.

**Loss of Employment Land**

No loss.

**Infrastructure Capacity**

No issues

**Highway Access**

Across the site frontages Uffculme Road is subject only to the national speed limit. Any development would require the extension of the 30 mph limit. Access to the north section of the site is achievable from Bridwell Lane which would require widening over the site frontage.

**Pedestrian and Cycle Links**

The existing footway would need to be extended to any site access, with the footway at Culm Valley way being extended to the site.

**Compatibility**

Housing adjacent to the site is low density, mainly bungalows and detached houses and semi-detached houses. A mixture of densities would be more appropriate for this site, as it would reflect the adjacent densities.

**Site Availability**

<b>Is the site immediately available for development?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Soonest date available (if currently unavailable):</b>	<b>N/a</b>
<b>Is the site currently being marketed?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Landowners estimated development time:</b>	<b>5 years</b>

**SHLAA Panel Meeting**  
**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014, 9.30am**  
**Council Chamber, Phoenix House**

**Attendees:**

Alex Hugo, Barratt Homes  
Steve Russell, Devonshire Homes  
Iestyn John, Bell Cornwell  
Sally Parish, Highways Agency  
Mike Bailey, Stevens Homes  
Philip Kerr, Harcourt Kerr  
Tim Smith, Greendale Investments Ltd  
Ian Sorenson, Devon County Council  
Joanne Fox, Sovereign Housing Association  
Robin Leivers, Environment Agency  
Matthew Seaman, Persimmon Homes SW  
Cllr Richard Chesterton, Mid Devon District Council  
Katharine Smith, Exeter City Council  
Chloe Nielson, Dartmoor National Park Authority  
Liz Pickering, Mid Devon District Council  
Dean Titchener, Mid Devon District Council  
Isabel French, Mid Devon District Council

**Apologies:**

Cllr Polly Colthorpe, Mid Devon District Council  
Rob Finch, Devon and Cornwall Housing Association  
Ralph Farleigh, KF Farleigh Ltd

**1. Welcome and apologies**

Dean Titchener welcomed the attendees, and gave details of the apologies.

**2. Local Plan update**

Liz Pickering gave an update to the panel on the progress of developing the Local Plan. The consultation on the Local Plan Review ended on 24<sup>th</sup> March. Over 1000 responses have been received. The Council is currently reviewing the representations received. It has also recently commissioned a number of evidence documents which will underpin the plan. The Council anticipates that the publication version of the plan will be made publicly available in



the autumn for potentially a 6-8 week consultation prior to submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

### **3. Revisions to methodology**

Katharine Smith and Liz Pickering provided an update to the panel regarding a number of proposed changes to the methodology. The Government had recently brought out the National Planning Policy Guidance which contains updated information on how to assess housing and economic land availability. This new guidance supersedes the previous SHLAA guidance from 2007. The new guidance now stipulates that student accommodation and housing for older people can be counted towards the housing supply by local planning authorities.

Katharine Smith stated that there has been no existing approach for calculating the contribution of student accommodation. Discussions with Exeter University had taken place but had not resulted in any standard approach. In order to agree an approach for the inclusion of student accommodation it was agreed that 6 bedroom cluster flats will count as the equivalent of one house. This could always be revised in future if other information came to light.

Similarly, there is no standard approach for how to include housing for older people. It was noted that people do not always move permanently into a care home, and may return to their original dwelling – therefore resulting in a property not always being released. Katharine Smith stated that the only survey work she had been able to find had 72% of people in nursing homes as having previously lived alone. Following this study, an approach of 1.4 beds in a nursing home being equivalent to one house would be the outcome. However, this dated to 1992 and was considered unlikely to be accurate given it is now over 20 years old. An approach using the floorspace of a home was suggested. Katharine agreed to look into this further, and circulate via email. **ACTION**

Liz Pickering discussed a further proposal to the methodology proposing to return to the standard conditions model. The market conditions model has been used almost since the SHLAA panel approach was instigated to reflect the recession and associated downturn in the housing market. Figures from Mid Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge were provided indicating an increase in completions over and above previous year's figures. It was also noted that the Inspector for the Teignbridge Local Plan had not objected to the use of the standard conditions model. The panel felt that despite these figures there were not universal signs of a return to 'normal' conditions, with variations between the districts. It was felt that much of the market was being propped up by 'Help to Buy', which could be withdrawn by the Government. The panel agreed not to revert to the standard conditions at this time.

### **4. Sites discussion**

Dean Titchener gave a presentation which gave a brief summary of the characteristics of each site and factors likely to affect viability. The panel then discussed each site and determined whether each site was achievable and whether the yield and commencement rate set out by the methodology was appropriate. The presentation was broken down into two sections. First, a small number of sites which had been considered in 2013 were asked to be reconsidered by the panel. Second, new sites, submitted during the recent Local Plan consultation were also considered.

The following decisions were made per site:

#### **Reconsidered sites**

<b>Site</b>	<b>Rationale/comments</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Bow Site 4, East Langford Farm	Site previously limited to 25 off Iler Park. Alternative access off Station Road acceptable subject to Transport Assessment. Leave yield at 25 at present.	Achievable
Crediton, Site 2 (larger area), Cromwells Meadow	Larger area submitted. Mid point yield of 89 ok but subject to Transport Assessment.	Achievable
Morchard Bishop Site 1 (larger area), Greenway	Larger area submitted. Would require widening of road, inclusion of footway and removal of Devon bank however. Mid yield of 58.	Achievable
Sampford Peverell Site 2 (larger area) Land off Whitnage Road	Larger area submitted. Previously considered achievable. Apply min yield of 154 given extent of buffering needed from A361. Subject to Transport Assessment of junction of Whitnage Road and Lower Town.	Achievable
Sampford Peverell Sites 3 & 4 (combined), Morrells Farm	Sites resubmitted. Previously considered landlocked but promoter has clarified access arrangements. Traffic impact on Halberton would be required. May need to result in total removal of farm from site. Achievable. Dean Titchener to confirm flood zones not included within net area <b>ACTION. Update:</b> Have amended site area accordingly to 2.5ha. New mid point yield of 60.	Achievable
Thorverton Site 1a (larger area and split from 1b), Paddock and allotments	Different area submitted. Landowner able to offer alternative site for allotments. Yield of 37.	Achievable
Uffculme Sites 1 & 7	Sites combined with access via Site 1. Yield of 97.	Achievable.

(combined) Harvesters and Land West of Uffculme		
Willand Sites 4 & 5 (combined & larger area) Land east of M5 and rear of service station	Returned with larger area and alternative access arrangements. Acceptable access can be achieved, but would need to consider capacities of J27 & J28. Min yield of 248 applies given need for noise buffering. Caveat: some land may be needed for slip roads or other motorway mitigation dependent on transport solutions to J27/J28 new settlement options. As stand-alone site is deliverable however.	Achievable
Cullompton, Site 18, East Cullompton Urban Extension	Smaller site area as 38ha now not available. Reduced site area of 160ha approx., can still deliver mid point yield of 3528. Year 11 start date agreed to still apply. Further info to be provided as and when available at future panels.	Achievable

#### New Sites

Site	Rationale/comments	Decision
Cheriton Fitzpaine, New Site 1, Poole Barton	Historic environment and access limitations. Access road via doctors will limit available land. Yield reduced to 10. Would need to be subject to flood risk assessment to assess full extent of flood zone and potential impact.	Achievable
Crediton, New Site 1, Land off Barn Park	Accessed via long private drive, also public right of way. Max 3 off private drive. Therefore below threshold and excluded from process.	Below site threshold
Cullompton, New Site 1, Part OS Enclosure 7031 Colebrooke	Divorced from settlement. Unsuitable/unsustainable location.	Unsuitable
Cullompton, New Site 2, Park Padbrook Hill	Topography very challenging. Difficult to get estate road into site. Considered financially unachievable.	Unachievable
Cullompton, New Site 3, 'Emmett Land'	Adjacent NW Cullompton site, potential extension to site. Would need to be subject to same masterplanning process. Same start date as other potential extension to NW Cullompton (Growen	Achievable

	Farm – i.e. year 6). Mid yield of 379. Would need to consider impact on J28.	
Cullompton, New Site 4, Acklands	Potential extension to Knowle Lane allocation. Access either from allocated site or from south with associated widening of lane. Mid point yield of 45.	Achievable.
Culmstock, New Site 1, The Croft	Yield considered too high. Min yield of 40 more appropriate, subject to Transport Assessment.	Achievable.
Hemyock, New Site 1, Land adj cemetery	Likely to require off-site highway works. Min yield (80), but landscape impacts to be considered.	Achievable.
Hemyock, New Site 2, Depot	Infill site – may be too tight to get in estate road. Limited to min yield of 13.	Achievable.
Hemyock, New Site 3, Churchills Farm (west)	Narrow road with no footpath. Unachievable on highway grounds.	Unachievable
Hemyock, New Site 4, Churchills Farm (east)	Access difficulty given height differentials between road and site as well as traffic limitations of High Street act against viability. <b>ACTION:</b> Ian Sorenson to check planning history and traffic assessment of Churchills Rise development. <b>UPDATE:</b> Previous development was traffic neutral or less than significant. No change to panel decision as a result.	Unachievable.
Kennerleigh, New Site 1, Land north of Old Rectory	Min yield considered too high. Location considered unsustainable. Likely numbers to be below site threshold. Other means by which site can come forward (i.e. planning application approach for cross subsidy scheme)	Below site threshold; unsuitable
Kennerleigh, New Site 2, Land adj Woodbere House	Location considered unsustainable. Can come forward via others means as per NS1	Unsuitable.
Lapford New Site 1, Land south of Sandhurst	Junction to west has limitations. However considered achievable for mid yield of 30 but must include provision of footpath link through site joining housing to west and linking to school	Achievable.
Morchard Road, New Site 1, Car park	Considered borderline of site threshold (five on site seems unlikely). Concerns over displacement of parking and effect on highway. Collectively therefore considered unachievable.	Unachievable
Rackenfords, New Site 1, Higher North	Remote/unsustainable location.	Unsuitable.

Coombe Farm		
Sandford, New Site 1, Land at Sandford (west)	Likely to be costly site given topography. Small cul-de-sac possible. Yield reduced to 20 maximum given constraints.	Achievable
Sandford, New Site 2, Land at Sandford (east)	Challenging topography, divorced from settlement.	Unsuitable; unachievable
Tiverton, New Site 1, Westfield	Within flood zones 2 & 3. EA advice would fail sequential test. Other non-housing uses more appropriate in location.	Unachievable
Uffculme, New Site 1, Land at Hillhead Farm	Divorced from settlement. Considered unsustainable.	Unsuitable
Wembworthy, New Site 1, Land opp Coronation Villas	Technically achievable but location unsustainable. Can come forward via other means (i.e. exceptions approach)	Unsuitable
Wembworthy, New Site 2, The Farm	Divorced from settlement, remote/unsustainable location.	Unsuitable
Willand, New Site 1, Land NE of Four Crosses Roundabout	Achievable for mid yield of 224 but subject to consideration of impacts on J27 and J28	Achievable
Halberton, New Site 1	Would need to consider potential impact on J27. Existing shared surface road limits numbers. Max yield 10.	Achievable.
Morchard Bishop, New Site 1, Canns Meadow	Access width limited. Max three off private drive. Excluded as therefore below threshold.	Below site threshold.
Sampford Peverell, New Site 1, Former Tiverton Parkway Hotel	Potential for site to deliver housing and doctor's surgery. Mid yield of 14.	Achievable.
Westleigh	Location considered unsustainable. Exception site proposed which can come forward via other route.	Unsuitable.

## 5. Any other business

Dean Titchener updated the panel regarding the next meeting which is due to take place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 9.30am, in the Exe Room, Phoenix House. A lunch will be provided for all attendees which will take place at 12.30pm. The meeting closed at 11.30am.



A photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a green field. In the middle ground, there are trees and a fence. In the background, a hill rises with a church tower and other buildings. The sky is overcast.

# Rural Services in Mid Devon 2014



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# Introduction

- 1.1 Mid Devon is a sparsely populated rural district with only three sizeable market towns and a large number of small villages and hamlets. The 2011 Census ranks Mid Devon the 44th most sparsely populated area out of 406 council areas in the United Kingdom. It is one of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and support thriving rural communities within it.
- 1.2 The sparse population experiences poor access to services. In the 2010 Indices of Deprivation Mid Devon had the second highest number of areas in Devon that fell into the most deprived decile for the barriers to Housing and Services category.
- 1.3 The NPPF requires local plans to promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. To do this, it is important to have up-to-date information about what rural services are currently in place. The Council reviews the availability of local services and facilities on an annual basis, as far as resources permit.

# Method

- 2.1 The Core Strategy (adopted 2007) designated 21 villages with some local facilities as being acceptable locations for minor development. All other rural settlements were not designated, based on the low level of services/facilities available. For the purposes of this Rural Services Survey, these are referred to as 'designated' villages and 'non-designated' villages.
- 2.2 In total 47 settlements were selected. In previous years 55 settlements were selected. From this year Brushford, Cadbury, Clayhanger, Loxbeare, Stockleigh English, Upton Hellions, Washford Pyne and Woolfardisworthy are no longer monitored due to the lack of services within them.

## **21 designated villages:**

Bow, Bradninch, Burlescombe (including Westleigh), Chawleigh, Cheriton Bishop, Cheriton Fitzpaine, Copplestone, Culmstock, Halberton, Hemyock, Kentisbeare, Lapford, Morchard Bishop, Newton St Cyres, Sampford Peverell, Sandford, Silverton, Thorverton, Uffculme, Willand and Yeoford

## **26 non-designated villages/hamlets:**

Bickleigh, Butterleigh, Cadeleigh, Clayhidon, Coldridge, Colebrooke, Cruwys Morchard, Down St Mary, Hittisleigh, Hockworthy, Holcombe Rogus, Huntsham, Kennerleigh, Morebath, Nymet Rowland, Oakford, Poughill, Puddington, Shobrooke, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Stoodleigh, Templeton, Uplowman, Washfield, Wembworthy, Zeal Monachorum.

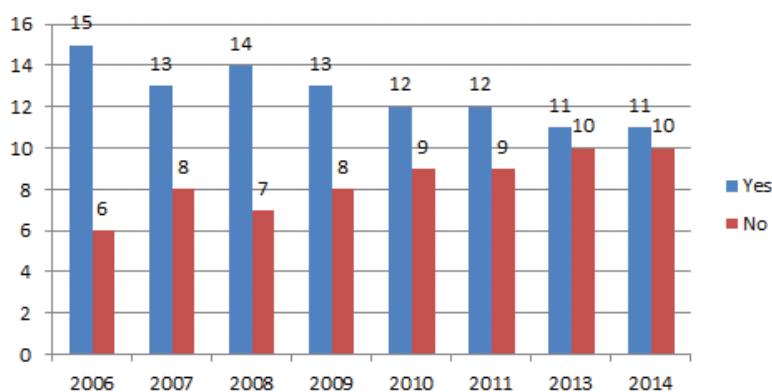
- 2.3 A range of services and facilities was drawn up to check the level of provision of all settlements above. These included Doctor, library, school, pre-schools and nurseries, shop, pub, hall, Post Office and bus service. Previously petrol stations were checked but as there are so few these are no longer monitored. From this year Pre-schools and nurseries are now being monitored.
- 2.4 The results were achieved through a combination of site inspections and of desk-based assessment of official websites e.g. Devon County Council, NHS, Post Office.
- 2.5 Each service or facility was analysed pictorially as a whole for all settlements. Any changes have been noted otherwise services or facilities remain the same as the previous year.

# Doctor

3.1 The NHS was set up to provide healthcare for all citizens, based on need. It can be seen below that many communities in rural areas do not have comprehensive provision.



**Doctor in designated villages**



3.2 Eleven of the 21 designated villages have access to a doctor within the village. Four of the eleven villages that had a doctor had a “branch surgery”, offering limited surgery times and services. A branch surgery is very often a subsidiary service to a main surgery, based in a particular location e.g. village hall or a mobile service. Since 2011 Halberton has lost its surgery. None of the non-designated settlements have a doctors’ surgery.

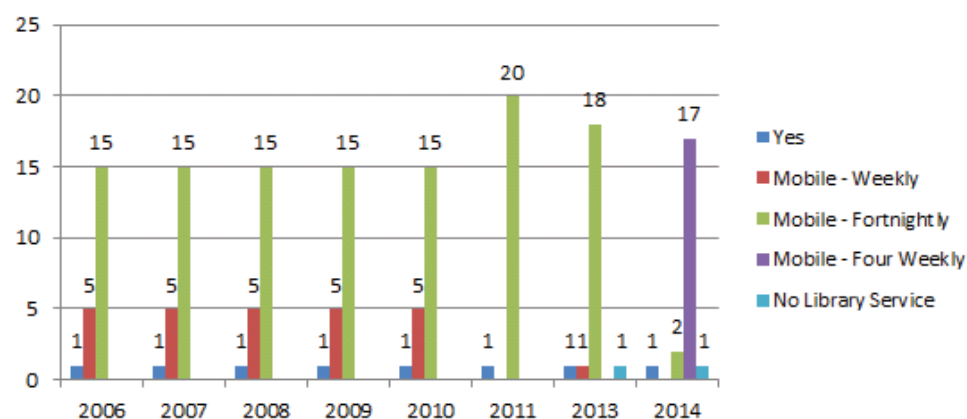
3.3 Over time the strain on NHS budgets has resulted in reduced provision of healthcare services to small communities. It means that certain groups within rural communities e.g. the elderly or young people can find it difficult to access the healthcare that they need. When looking at rural healthcare provision it needs to be remembered that there are differences from healthcare in more urban areas. For example a doctor in a rural area will often need a larger range of clinical skills and may experience difficulties associated with distance and travel.

# Library

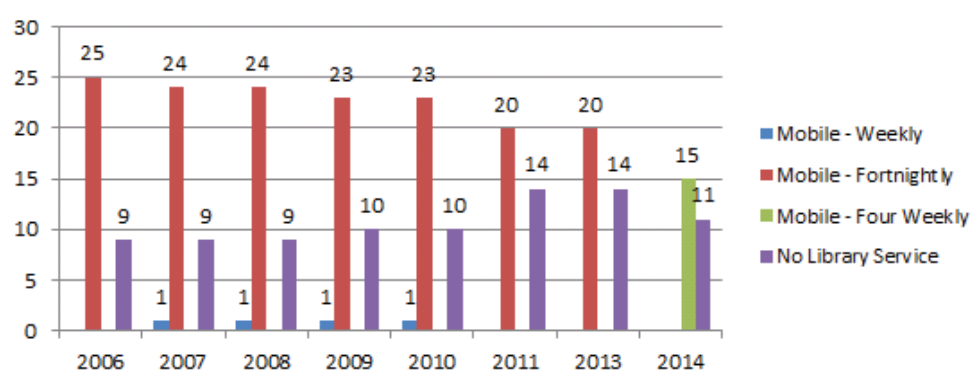
4.1 The public library is a unique institution, which aims to meet the information needs of the public, stimulate and enrich people's experience of imaginative and creative work and support people's formal and informal educational requirements.

4.2 A mobile library service brings a town service to isolated rural settlements and communities and very often the library van visits hard to reach places, where there is not even a bus service e.g. Butterleigh and Clayhidon. In many places the mobile library visit is the only remaining public service and in being so it is able to enrich rural life and help to overcome isolation by providing library and information services in new and imaginative ways.

**Library service in designated villages**



**Library service in non-designated villages/hamlets**



4.3 Uffculme is the only one of the settlements selected to have a permanent library, while most of the other settlements are served by some sort of mobile library service. 12 settlements have no service at all. Following a revamp of the library service effective from April 2014 Bow which previously had no library service, now has a four weekly service. However, Culmstock, Poughill and Shobrooke no longer have a service. All services previously fortnightly are now four weekly except Bradninch and Hemyock which remain fortnightly.

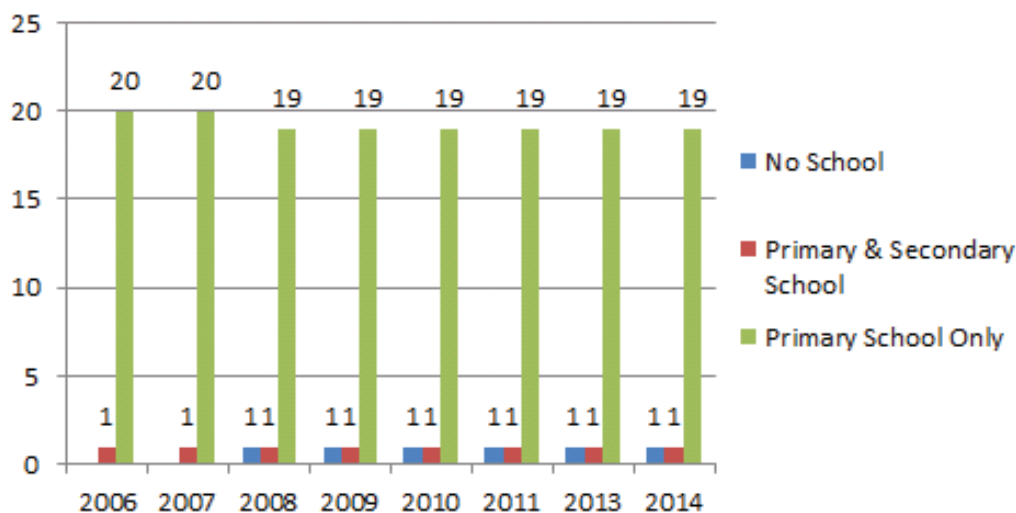
# Educational facilities

5.1 Educational facilities include schools, pre-schools and nurseries. From this year, pre-schools and nurseries are also checked in addition to schools.

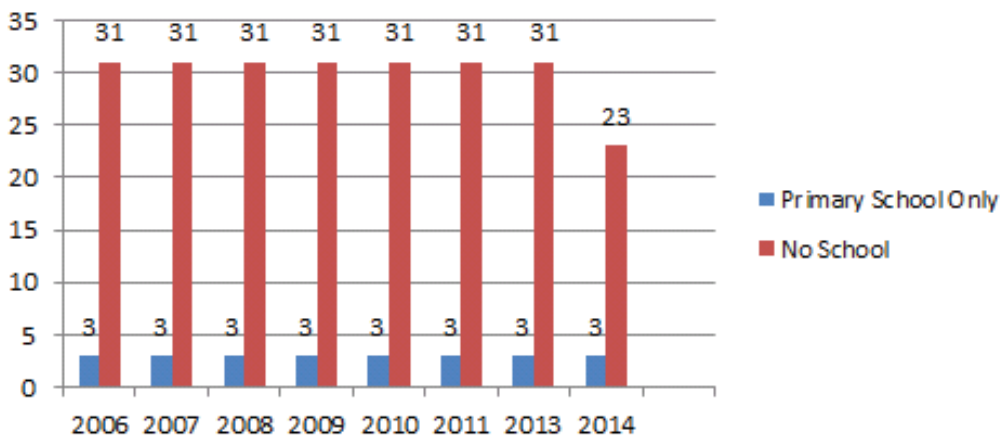
5.2 A school can be an important element of a thriving village.



**School in designated villages**



**School in non-designated villages/hamlets**





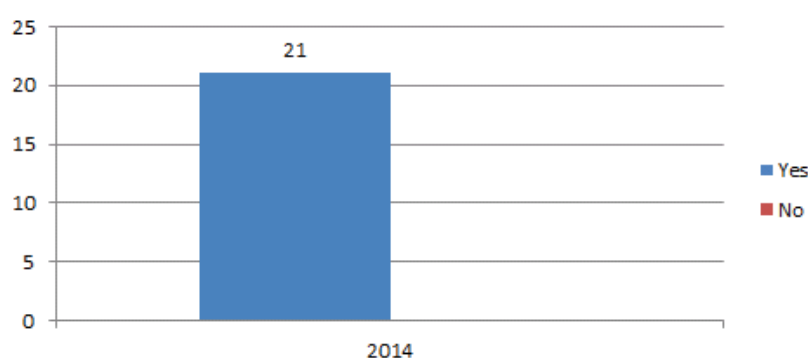
5.3 Unfortunately schools in rural areas are increasingly coming under more pressure because of falling pupil numbers. Within Mid Devon Chawleigh school officially closed at the end of August 2007, as the number of pupils had declined. Other village schools in Mid Devon may come under threat of closure if their number of pupils declines.

5.4 The above graph shows all of the designated villages had a primary school until Chawleigh school closed. Of the non-designated settlements only 3 have schools (Bickleigh, Holcombe Rogus and Uplowman). In addition, planning permission was granted in 2014 for the expansion and relocation of the primary school in Newton St Cyres, which allows the school to move to a more suitable site with modern facilities.

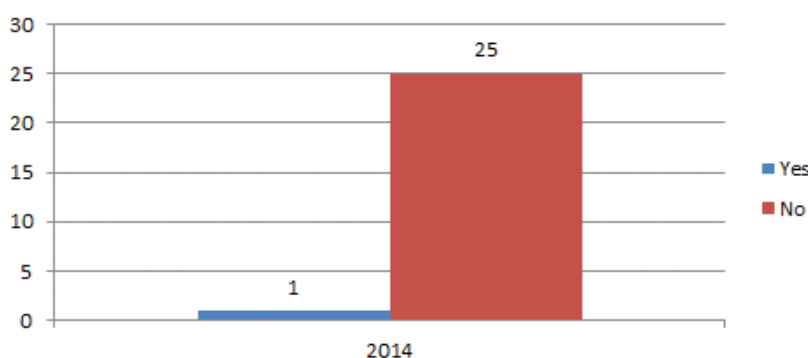
5.5 There are many benefits of rural schools. Children are educated closer to home and the curriculum can be directly related to the local environment. There is easy accessibility for parents and teachers alike. The rural village primary school may also play a key role in the social, as well as educational life of the community and it may provide a rich cultural resource for the village and be a focus for a range of activities. A balance has to be struck between the difficulties and increased costs of maintaining a very small school and the consequences of its closure for young children, particularly in terms of travelling times.

5.6 From this year pre-schools and nurseries are now being checked. All of the 21 designated villages have a pre-school/nursery within them. Of the 26 non-designated settlements only Bickleigh has one.

**Pre-school/nursery in designated villages**



**Pre-school/nursery in non-designated villages**

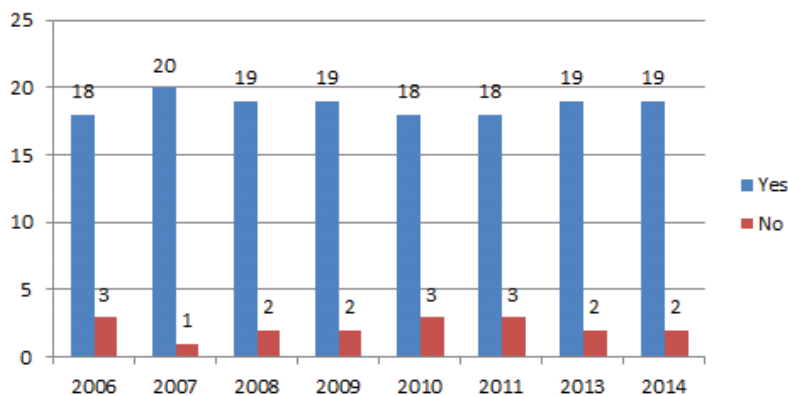


# Shop

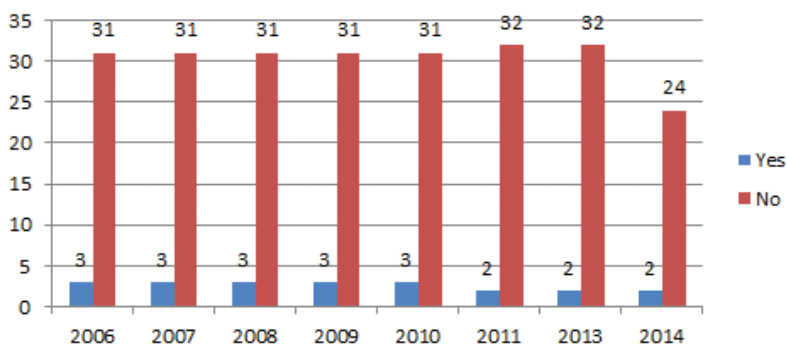
6.1 Village shops play a vital role in community social cohesion and as a local information centre.



**Shop in designated villages**



**Shop in non-designated villages/hamlets**



6.2 As can be seen above the majority of the designated villages have a shop and a lot of them are also combined with the Post Office. The majority of the non-designated settlements do not have one. Chawleigh had no Post Office or shop since 2009, but a new purpose-built shop has now opened.

6.3 It has been increasingly difficult for rural settlements to maintain their local shop services in the face of increasing trading pressures from larger supermarket chains and from the adverse impacts of wide ranging changes in the patterns of demographics, transport and lifestyles in rural communities. However, local planning policy prevents the change of community facilities to other uses where this would damage the settlement's ability to meet its own day-to-day needs or result in the total loss of such services to the community.



# Pub

7.1 The pub is often the main or only focus of community life in rural areas. It has been given royal approval as the heart of village life (see below).

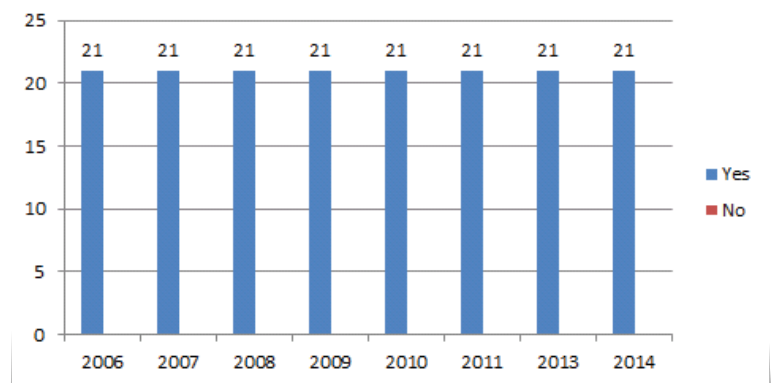
7.2 “Rural communities, and this country’s way of life, are facing unprecedented challenges ..... the country pub, which has been at the heart of village life for centuries, is disappearing in many areas. By providing new services from the pub, such as a post office or a shop, not only keeps an essential service in the village or brings one in, but increases the income of the pub itself, giving it a more secure future.” HRH Prince Charles.

7.3 Even the smallest places can have a pub, such as Butterleigh which has an estimated population of 130 people (source: Devon County Council, 2012 estimates). Some villages have more than one pub, such as Chawleigh and Silverton. Since the last survey Oakford’s pub has reopened and Stoodleigh now has a pub.

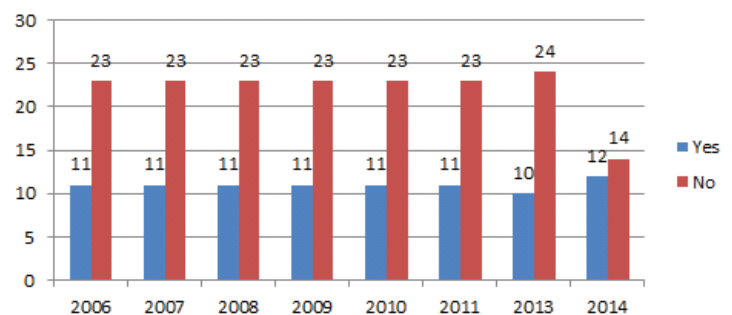
7.4 Over recent years many pubs have had to diversify, so they remain a viable and vital part of their rural communities. Post offices, grocery counters, pharmacy collection points, dry cleaners, delicatessens and internet cafes are some of the examples of businesses that have been introduced into pubs across Britain to help them remain at the hub of their community.



**Pub in designated villages**



**Pub in non-designated villages/hamlets**



# Hall

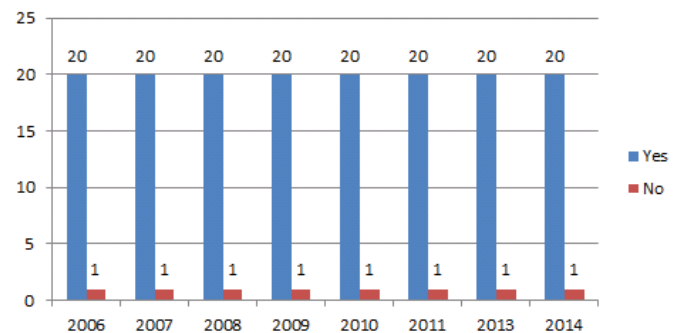
8.1 Village halls and other community buildings are the focus for people who live in rural communities and provide a vital local resource for the villages and parishes they serve.

8.2 Halls come in many different forms including memorial halls and halls belonging to churches. Only 1 out of the 47 surveyed settlements does not have a hall, which indicates the importance of them within the rural community. Village halls are no longer just a place to meet for social occasions such as parties, wedding receptions, guides and scouts clubs but often provide a venue for a range of other activities such as local health facilities, farmers' markets, lunch clubs for older people and IT facilities.

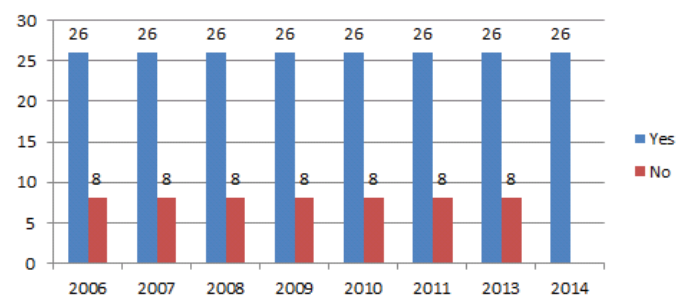
8.3 Many settlements have energetic and committed village hall committees, and many projects have stemmed from involving the community, tapping into their talents, time and skills.



**Hall in designated villages**



**Hall in non-designated villages/hamlets**



# Post Office

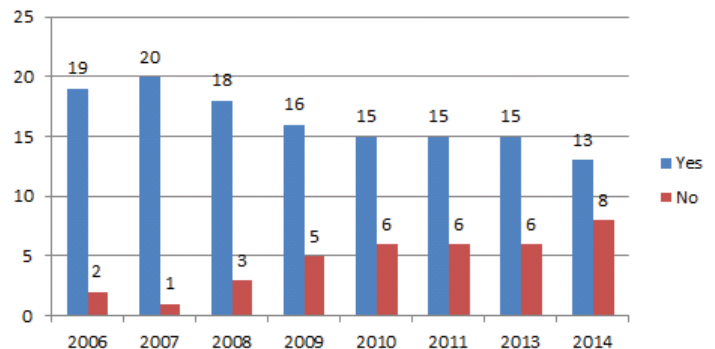
9.1 Post Offices are central to a vibrant and focused local community.

9.2 According to the Post Office almost all rural branches are loss-making, and this could be one of the reasons for not only the decline but the fact that a lot of Post Offices are now provided as part of a larger franchised business such as SPAR or Londis. Many rural Post Offices are linked to village stores. There seems to be no correlation between village/settlement size and whether there is a Post Office. For instance, Kennerleigh parish has a total population of 76 (Devon County Council 2012 estimate) yet it has a thriving Post Office, while the village of Shobrooke with a parish population of 542 does not have a Post Office.

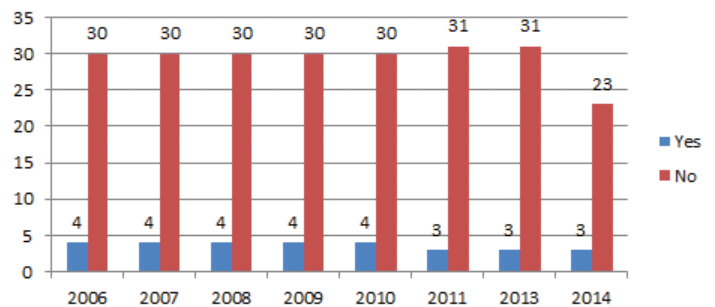
9.3 According to the Post Office, “94 percent of people live within a mile of a Post Office™ branch.” However, for the smaller settlements surveyed that do not have a Post Office most will fall within the 6% of the population that do not live within a mile, due to the rural nature of the district.

9.4 The Post Office has tried to address the issue of rural postal services and rural isolation by creating the “Postbus”. Postbuses pick up passengers as well as post, twice a day, so people in even the remotest towns and villages can get around and keep in touch. Unfortunately there is no such service in the South West.

**Post Office in designated villages**



**Post Office in non-designated villages/hamlets**



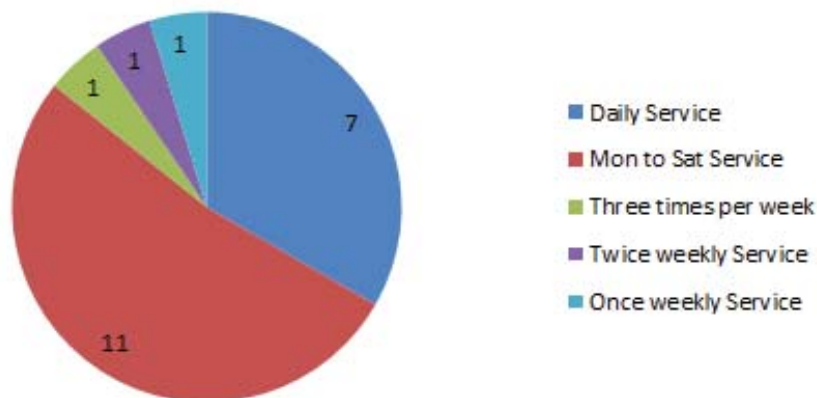
9.5 In recent years, Post Offices have closed at Crediton (Exeter Road), Bow, Chawleigh, Halberton, Lapford, Morchard Bishop and Yeoford.

# Bus Service

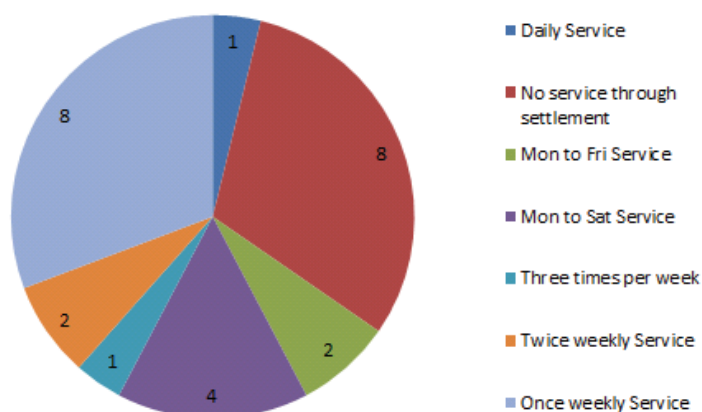
10.1 Having a bus service gives people in rural areas improved access to work, education, healthcare, shopping and recreational activities and by so doing assists in reducing their social isolation. It can also help rural economies provide access to jobs.



## Bus service from designated villages to market town or bigger settlement



## Bus service from non-designated villages/hamlets to market town or bigger settlement



10.2 In surveying service provision it was looked to see if there was a bus to one of the market towns (Tiverton, Cullompton or Crediton) or one of the larger settlements e.g. Exeter, Taunton and the frequency of any such service.

10.3 What can often happen is that even if there is a bus service, it is not used to its full potential, and this inevitably leads to its eventual decline.

10.4 There have been several initiatives within Devon as a whole to try and combat the issue of rural public transport.

10.5 The Devon Rural Transport Partnership (DRTP) was launched in 1999 to investigate and address rural transport issues in Devon. The Partnership is made up of over 30 voluntary, community and statutory agencies that all have an interest in improving access to services within the county.

10.6 A Community Bus Scheme involves the operation of a small bus by a community-based organisation, utilising volunteer drivers to provide regular, scheduled local bus services planned in response to local needs on a non-profit making basis. They have proved to be an invaluable asset to the more remote and isolated communities where conventional Public Transport cannot meet the identified need in a cost effective manner. There is such a scheme in Mid Devon – the Exe Valley Market Bus – which operates North of Tiverton.

10.7 Ring & Ride Schemes also operate within a number of towns and rural locations throughout Devon. They are the main initiative in the provision of public transport for disabled and frail elderly people and provide a local service into local towns to allow potentially house bound people the opportunity to shop and use local amenities.

10.8 Three of the designated villages (Lapford, Copplestone and Yeoford) are also served by a rail link to either Crediton or Exeter, Monday to Sunday.

10.9 Since the last survey Cruwys Morchard now has a Monday to Saturday bus service (previously a Monday to Friday service). Also Oakford now has a twice weekly service (Exe Valley Market & Community Bus).



# Summary

People living in the countryside do so for a number of reasons including the fresh air, wide-open spaces and slower pace of life. However, isolation can often come at a cost when it comes to access to services that can be taken for granted in towns and cities. Those that are likely to be disadvantaged are the less affluent, the elderly, those with young children and teenagers who are often at a disadvantage when it comes to something basic like getting to the shops or travelling to work. Demographic changes such as the outward migration of young people and the inward migration of older retired populations to rural settlements often increases the need for access to services in the places when provision is limited.

Service decline may not affect everyone within Mid Devon. However, in a district as sparsely populated as Mid Devon, a high proportion of residents live outside of the main towns and require adequate access to services and facilities to reduce the need for car travel and maintain a sense of community.

Within Mid Devon, the report highlights the limited range of facilities and services in many of the rural settlements. There have been some changes since 2012/13 both positive and negative. Post Office closures and reduced mobile library services reflect a longer term trend when such facilities are no longer financially viable to run. However, bus provision has increased, and two public houses have re-opened in the last year demonstrating that the overall trend is not exclusively one of decline.

# Contacts

If you have any questions about this survey please contact:

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# Annex – Data used in survey

All information was gathered through a combination of desk based investigation and site visits. Below are the 21 designated villages in alphabetical order followed by the remaining non-designated settlements showing services and facilities within them.

## Designated Villages

**Bow** – Doctor, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop (Co-Op at Burston), Pub, Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Bradninch** – Branch Doctors Surgery, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall, Post Office (Within Spar shop), and a daily Bus Service.

**Burlescombe** ( Includes Westleigh) – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Pub, Hall, Bus Service three times a week.

**Chawleigh** – Mobile Library, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall and a Monday to Saturday bus service.

**Cheriton Bishop** – Doctor, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall, Post Office (Within Mace store), and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Cheriton Fitzpaine** – Doctor, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop (Within Post Office), Pub, Hall, Post Office, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Copplestone** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, also a Farm Shop, Pub, Post Office (Within Nisa Local), a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Culmstock** – Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall, Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Halberton** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Farm shop, Pub, Hall, and a Daily Bus Service.

**Hemyock** – Doctor, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop (Spar), Pub, Hall, Post Office, a Monday To Saturday Bus Service.

**Kentisbeare** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop and Post Office combined, Pub, Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Lapford** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop within garage, Pub, Hall and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Morchart Bishop** – Branch Doctors Surgery, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Newton St Cyres** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop and Post Office combined, also a Farm Shop, Pub, Hall, and a Daily Bus Service.

**Sampford Peverell** – Doctor, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, also a Farm Shop, Post Office (within Spar), Pub, Hall, and a Daily Bus Service.

**Sandford** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop and Post Office combined, Pub, Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Silverton** – Doctor, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall, Post Office (within Spar) and a Daily Bus Service.

**Thorverton** – Branch Doctors Surgery, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop (Bus in Car Park), also a Farm Shop, Pub, Hall, Post Office (mobile unit in car park), and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Uffculme** – Doctor, Library, Primary and Secondary Schools, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall, Post Office (Within Premier Osmond stores), and a Daily Bus Service.

**Willand** – Branch Doctors Surgery, Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Shop, Pub, Hall, Post Office and a Daily Bus Service.

**Yeoford** – Mobile Library, Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Pub, Hall, and a twice weekly Bus Service.



## Non-designated villages/hamlets

**Bickleigh** – Primary School, Pre-School/Nursery, Pub, Hall, and a Daily Bus Service.

**Butterleigh** – Mobile Library, Pub, and Hall.

**Cadeleigh** – Pub, Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Clayhidon** – Mobile Library, Pub and a Hall.

**Coldridge** – Mobile Library, Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Colebrooke** – Mobile Library, Hall, and a twice weekly Bus Service.

**Cruwys Morchard** – Pub (in Pennymoor which is within Cruwys Morchard parish), Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Down St Mary** – Mobile Library, Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Hittisleigh** – Hall.

**Hockworthy** – Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Holcombe Rogus** – Mobile Library, School, Shop and Post Office combined (Within garage), Pub, Hall and a Three times a week Bus Service.

**Huntsham** – Mobile Library, Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Kennerleigh** – Mobile Library, Shop and Post Office combined, Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Morebath** – Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Nymet Rowland** – Mobile Library, Hall.

**Oakford** – Mobile Library, Pub, Hall and a twice weekly Bus Service.

**Poughill** – Hall, and a Monday to Friday Bus Service.

**Puddington** – Mobile Library, Hall, and a Monday to Friday Bus Service.

**Shobrooke** – Pub, Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Stockleigh Pomeroy** – Hall, and a Monday to Saturday Bus Service.

**Stoodleigh** – Mobile Library, Pub and a Hall.

**Templeton** – Hall.

**Uplozman** – School, Pub, Hall, Post Office, and a once weekly Bus Service.

**Washfield** – Mobile Library and a Hall.

**Wembworthy** – Mobile Library, Pub, and a Hall.

**Zeal Monachorum** – Mobile Library, Pub, Hall, and a once weekly Bus Service.

The above information are the findings as at 31st March 2014. Services are changing all the time. If they have changed please contact Janet Crook on the above contact details and future surveys will reflect the most up-to-date position.



	Doctor	Library	Primary School	Secondary	Pre-school	Shop	Pub	Hall	Bus service	Post Office
Bow	Y	Mobile	Y		Y	Nearby at Burston	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	
Bradninch	branch surgery	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Daily	Y
Burlescombe		Mobile	Y		Y		Y	Y	Three times a week	
Chawleigh		Mobile			Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	
Cheriton Bishop	Y	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Once weekly	Y
Cheriton Fitzpaine	Y	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	Y
Copplestone		Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	Y
Culmstock		Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y		Mon to Sat	
Halberton		Mobile	Y		Y	Farm shop	Y	Y	Daily	
Hemyock	Y	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	Y
Kentisbeare		Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	Y
Lapford		Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	
Morchard Bishop	branch surgery	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	
Newton St Cyres		Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Daily	Y
Sampford Peverall	Y	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Daily	Y
Sandford		Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	Y
Silverton	Y	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Daily	Y
Thorverton	branch surgery	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Mon to Sat	Y
Uffculme	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Daily	Y
Willand	branch surgery	Mobile	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Daily	Y
Yeoford		Mobile	Y		Y		Y	Y	Twice weekly	