

## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
22 JANUARY 2013**

### **EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED SUBMISSION PLANNING DOCUMENT**

#### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To formulate a response to the 'Proposed Submission' document that is being published by East Devon District Council.

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Members will recall that East Devon District Council consulted on a Consultation Draft Local Plan early last year. Executive approved a response to that document in February. East Devon has since taken an amended version of that document forward and approved their Local Plan 2006 - 2026 for submission to the Secretary of State for public examination.
- 2.2 East Devon had made some significant changes in preparation of the Consultation Draft Local Plan. 7,400 houses were proposed for the West End; a significant reduction from the 11,500 that the draft Regional Spatial Strategy's evidence base deemed necessary to support the prosperity of the sub-region.
- 2.3 Exeter City Council's response to the Consultation Draft Local Plan expressed concern over the reduction in the scale of growth and urged that growth should be maximised in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. It also pointed to the need for key infrastructure investments and the relative importance of enabling development (eg. land north of Blackhorse facilitating the Tithebarn Lane Link Road).
- 2.4 This paper concentrates on proposals for growth at East Devon's West End (shown on the map at Appendix 1). The economic prosperity of the sub region is inextricably linked to the growth of the City. Such growth is now, and will be increasingly in the future, dependent upon policies adopted in adjoining authorities, particularly East Devon.

#### **3 SCALE OF HOUSING GROWTH**

- 3.1 Through their Proposed Submission document, East Devon intend to carry forward the housing proposals that were set out in the earlier Consultation Draft. This means 7,400 new houses in the West End to 2026 as follows:
- Cranbrook: 6,000  
North of Blackhorse: 600  
North of Pinhoe: 800
- 3.2 Beyond allocations and planning permissions at Cranbrook for 6,000 houses to 2026 the Proposed Submission document does now indicate provision for an additional 1,500 houses beyond the plan period (7,500 in total). These are envisaged to be delivered on the South West side of the new settlement towards Exeter between 2026 and 2031.

- 3.3 However, other expansion options have been discounted. Previous proposals for a new settlement of up to 4,000 dwellings along the A3052 (Sidmouth bound) are considered undeliverable because of prohibitive infrastructure costs (principally highways and transport links). This justification appears reasonable and the District Council do commit to keep options for development in this area under review.
- 3.4 More significantly, earlier 'Preferred Options' consultation stage proposals for 2,200 homes north of Blackhorse have also been diluted. In that area the Proposed Submission Local Plan now shows only 600 dwellings, which have been brought forward through the recent 'Tithebarn Green' planning application. The application was supported by Exeter City Council Planning committee in December and East Devon resolved to approve it this month.
- 3.5 Whilst the Proposed Submission Local Plan does maintain significant levels of proposed West End growth in the face of substantial opposition to such development, it will be important that there is sufficient capacity to meet the sub-region's growth potential. Identifying additional development locations (including land north of Blackhorse) as 'reserve' sites would help spread the risk of under-delivery at Cranbrook and would mean that additional housing could be brought forward should a shortfall arise.

#### **4 EMPLOYMENT PROVISION**

- 4.1 The scale of new employment land proposed for the West End remains consistent with previous iterations of the plan. It includes provision for 85ha as follows:
- Cranbrook: 15ha  
Exeter Science Park: 25ha  
Skypark: 40ha  
Airport Business Park: 5ha
- 4.2 This scale of proposed development broadly accords with evidence prepared jointly on behalf of Exeter City Council and East Devon District Council.

#### **5 TIMELY INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION**

- 5.1 The Proposed Submission East Devon Local Plan incorporates a firm commitment to securing investment in the new infrastructure that will be critical to sustainable delivery of growth in the West End. A strong track record of delivery has already been established through early on site projects like the energy centre adjacent to Cranbrook and other enabling infrastructure including the M5 J29 improvement works.
- 5.2 The Plan incorporates a commitment to key infrastructure. This includes the 'Phase 3 Tithebarn Lane Link Road'; strategic green infrastructure such as the Clyst Valley Regional Park and strategic cycle routes, both of which will connect to facilities within Exeter.
- 5.3 Such commitments are strong but detail that will be set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan has yet to be finalised. It will be important to continue working with East Devon and other service providers towards a Delivery Plan that helps to secure good development within both administrative areas. Alongside this, clear funding arrangements will need to be agreed in maximising the early provision of essential infrastructure.

5.4 Away from the West End, joint infrastructure planning work should include further investigation of opportunities for a new transport interchange that serves the northern corridor into the city from Crediton. This is something that the Exeter City IDP already identifies.

## **6 RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 Executive is recommended to agree that the City Council's response to East Devon District Council is based upon the following four principles. This approach was supported by Planning Member Working Group on 8 January 2013:

- i) Support for the overall development strategy and the commitment to development growth east of Exeter, particularly the provisions for economic development;
- ii) Welcoming the commitment to large scale housing development in the West End but seeking additional 'reserve' provision north of Blackhorse on land that has previously been identified as deliverable;
- iii) The City Council's commitment to ongoing joint working and cooperation between the authorities and other service providers to deliver comprehensively planned sustainable communities that help to fully realise the sub-region's growth potential;
- iv) A commitment to work closely with East Devon and other service providers on respective infrastructure delivery plans; identifying and agreeing funding arrangements that seek to maximise the early provision of essential infrastructure.

**RICHARD SHORT**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CITY DEVELOPMENT**

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

None

# APPENDIX 1; EAST DEVON WEST END PROPOSALS

