

## REPRESENTATIONS

### LDF – MDDC - DPD SOUNDNESS Q & A

Relating to

**Mid Devon District Council DPD (Bampton)**

by

**BAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL**

#### LEGAL COMPLIANCE

1. **Has the DPD been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme (LDS)?**

**Yes**

2. **Does the DPD's listing and description in the LDS match the document?**

**Yes**

3. **Have the timescales set out in the LDS been met?**

**No**

4. **Has the DPD had regard to any Sustainable Community Strategy for the area (i.e., County and District).**

**Yes**

5. **Has the DPD been subject to sustainability appraisal?**

**Yes**

6. **Has the LPA provided a final report of the findings of the appraisal?**

**Yes. Approved by MDDC August 2009.**

7. **Does the DPD contain any policies or proposals which are not in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and if so, is there local justification?**

*In General Conformity*

8. **Has the LPA got confirmation from the Regional Planning Body about the general conformity of the DPD with the RSS?**

**Yes**

9. **Does the DPD comply with the 2004 regulations?**

**Yes**

10. **If the DPD is not a core strategy, is it in conformity with the Core Strategy?**

**Yes**

**SOUNDNESS**

11. **Is the document ready for submission?**

**Yes**

*Justified*

12. **Is the DPD founded on a robust and credible evidence base involving evidence of participation of the local community and others having a stake in the area?**

*No. The shared view of the current Bampton Town Council and its people is that following initial contact from Mid Devon District Council's Forward Planning Officers, they had little interest in considering the views of Bampton's people. Representations made appeared to disappear into a black hole and a number of local residents who attempted to trace their representations were told that these had been 'misaid'. The current Bampton Town Council was offered little assistance with the DPD process and was not notified of the August 2009 meeting of the Development Control Department when the DPD went for final approval of Mid Devon Councillors. Bampton notified a formal objection to Mid Devon District Council about its various failures through the consultation process and observed that there had been no 'real' consultation, rather a box-ticking exercise undertaken by Mid Devon Council 'because it had to'. The*

*Bampton Town Council specifically requested that its letter be forwarded to the Inspector considering the Plan. It received no response to this request and only later learnt that this would not happen. Many Bampton people feel entirely disenfranchised by the whole process. We are not alone as other Parish Councils have been similarly failed. Cllr David Nation, Chair of Mid Devon District Council Scrutiny Committee has assured those Parish Council's that have brought their complaints that he will ensure that the Committee investigates the matter thoroughly. Sadly, in the event, it may be too late for many.*

13. **Is the DPD founded upon robust research/fact-finding and are the choices made backed up by facts.**

*No. See response above. Knowledge of local issues and local views have been ignored or disregarded in the consultation process. The choices made on behalf of Bampton are therefore not those informed by the people who will live with them.*

14. **Is the strategy the most appropriate when considered against reasonable alternatives?**

*No. The most appropriate strategy would be in line with the 'Changes' set out in the Town Council's Representation at 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.*

15. **Is there a clear audit trail showing how and why the preferred strategy/approach was arrived at. Is it clear why these decisions were taken?**

*No. The current Town Council feels that it has not been permitted to participate effectively in the current consultation process. Participation would have allowed it to have a proper input to the process.*

17. Does the sustainability appraisal show how the different options perform and is it clear that sustainability considerations informed the content of the DPD from the start.

*The sustainability appraisal identifies both sites AL/BA/2 and (deleted) NS5. In terms of sustainability there is nothing between the sites.*

18. Does the DPD adequately expand upon regional guidance rather than simply duplicate it? Does the strategy take forward the regional context reflecting local issues and objectives.

*Regional Planning guidance recognizes a sense of place and distinguishes between those towns with a high level requirement for employment land to ensure economic prosperity. Bampton's local economy in a largely rural community relies primarily upon country and leisure pursuits and tourism. Hence, whilst of course it is accepted that there will be some requirement in the town for 'true' employment floorspace (B1, B2, B8), it will not necessarily be at the level arbitrarily applied. The Town Council's concerns are that Allocation AL/BA/2 is identified quite simply because it can deliver the identified employment provision in one 'lump'. If it is needed it should be delivered. However, there is little point in building sheds that no one wishes to use. This is particularly the case when here in Bampton we have a high level of unoccupied employment provision.*

*Deliverability*

19. Has the DPD clearly identified what the issues are that the DPD is seeking to address? Have priorities been set so that it is clear what the DPD is seeking to achieve?

*Yes.*

20. Does the DPD contain clear objectives?

*Yes.*

21. **Are the objectives specific to the place. Is there a direct relationship between the identified issues and the objectives?**

*No. Please see responses above.*

22. **Are there realistic time-scales related to the objectives.**

*Yes*

23. **Is it clear who is going to deliver the required infrastructure and does the timing of the provision compliment the timescale of the strategies/policies.**

*Yes*

24. **Is there evidence that the necessary commitment from the relevant organizations to the implementation of the policies.**

*N/A*

25. **Does the DPD reflect the concept of spatial planning?**

*No. See responses above. The approach is too broad brush and takes no account of the specific requirements of Bampton or the input of the people who must live with the outcomes.*

*Flexibility*

26. **Does the DPD take into account matters, which may be imposed by circumstances notwithstanding the LPA's view on the matter.**

*No. We have observed that the employment provision must be built-out before the last 20 houses can be built. Who will build the employment provision if no one wants it and there is existing provision built and available in the heart of the town? The risk is that, as the requirement is only for a serviced site to be provided, an access and utilities supplies will be built, the site owner will complete the final 20 houses and then seek to demonstrate that there is no demand for the employment and have the land reallocated for residential use.*

27. **Is the DPD flexible enough to respond to a variety of unexpected changes in circumstances.**

**No**

28. **Does the DPD include the remedial actions that will be taken if the strategies are failing?**

**No**

29. **Is the DPD compliant with National Planning Policy?**

**No. It fails to consider the immediate gain of development, fails to have enough regard for protection of the countryside and sense of place and fails to 'facilitate'. Instead it forces a provision that is not necessarily required, PPS1, PPS3.**

#### **MONITORING**

30. **Does the DPD contain targets and milestones, which relate to the delivery of the policies including housing trajectories where the DPD contains housing allocations?**

**Yes.**