

General Council & Non Seaton Issues

**Cabinet Appointment**

At the recent annual council I was awarded with a new portfolio of Sustainable Homes & Communities. I will now head up the Council's housing programme, poverty agenda and housing task force to name just a few.

**Former Alderman Cllr John Humphreys**

An independent report will be coming to Cabinet after Council passed the following motion

“That the Council commissions an independent report by the Local Government Association or the Centre for Public Scrutiny or another appropriate independent body to be expeditiously brought to Cabinet to provide a clear understanding how John Humphreys, despite his arrest in May 2016 continued to serve as a Councillor until May 2019, retained his position as ‘Lead Member for Exmouth’ and went on to be bestowed the honour of an alderman by this Council in December 2019.”

**Cranbrook Expansion Areas & Cranbrook Town Centre**

Finally, after years of work, Cranbrook town centre has been signed off with millions of pounds of infrastructure due to start in the next couple of months. This will include a new supermarket, town square, skate board park, childrens day nursery, light industrial units and £5.5m secured through the Exeter and East Devon Enterprise zone for further town centre expansion. Further to the above, East Devon cabinet recently agreed a further £40m to be used as a revolving infrastructure fund that will ensure vital infrastructure such as school and transport links are delivered ahead of time and ahead of mass housing delivery across the expansion zones.

**Code of Conduct**

A new Code of Conduct has now been agreed by the District Council. I imagine our Town Clerk will be bringing a revised version to our Council imminently.

**Heat Network Investment Programme (HNIP) Funding**

EDDC have been successful in generating £11m in funding for their Heat Network programme in and around Cranbrook. This will serve the expansion areas of Cranbrook, the wider west end area as well as hooking up Cranbrook to the Energy from Waste hub that will be installed near Hill Barton.

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

The details of the fund has now been announced with EDDC receiving just shy of £1.8m. This fund is the successor of the European Structural Funds. Every place in the UK has been allocated a share of Fund and funding is confirmed for three financial years. This starts at a 90:10 revenue to capital split in 2022/3 which changes to 80:20 by 2024/25. For the full report, please click [here](#)

Seaton Issues

**Seaton Wetlands**

Further to the last news story regarding Seaton Wetlands providing a home for endangered species, click [here](#) for more. I spoke with James Chubb from the Countryside team and Alison Hayward from the Place and Prosperity team. It is hoped after long delays due to COVID that the Sheep's Marsh development will begin this summer. This is a brand new additional wetland area next to the Seaton Marshes. The final works to bore holes for the tidal current to pass under the tramway will have to be done outside of season and it is hoped that this will be completed in January ready for visitors to view. The wider Wetlands link project produced and agreed at Cabinet in 2019 will most likely now have to

be revised following the closure of Seaton Jurassic. A paper will come to Cabinet on this in due course on next steps.

### **Axe Valley Levelling Up Bid**

Cabinet received a report on the levelling up bid at its last meeting. The following was recommended to officers:

1. Confirm that Option 2 of the Funding Package options as set out in paragraph 3.7 for a Round 2 Levelling Up Bid should be pursued.
2. Approve the inclusion of the Moridunum site within the Option 2 of the Funding Package for the Axe Valley Project (including seafront regeneration) and instruct our retained consultant to draw up plans for a redevelopment of the Moridunum site, including public realm improvements, and to undertake, as a matter of urgency, a topographical survey of the site to determine what can realistically and aesthetically be delivered on that site.
3. Approve a contribution of up to a minimum 10% match funding via use of the PWLB will be offered within the LUF Funding Bid which would be recovered through future investment income from the employment sites package.
4. Agree to accept a further report with a final recommendation on the proposals to be included in any bid for LUF.

For Clarity, Option 2 was originally the following:

An Axe Valley package, which would include all 3 employment sites and only phase 1 of the Seafront Enhancement site and a public realm improvement project for Axminster town centre. The inclusion of the public realm project would enable Axminster to have both town centre and economic/employment benefits, making this a potentially more rounded stronger package to sit alongside Seaton's seafront and economic/employment benefits package.

### **Blue Flag**

Seaton has now joined Exmouth and Sidmouth in being awarded a Blue Flag. On top of this, all three towns have been awarded a Seaside Award. This put Seaton's Beach amongst the best in the UK

### **Summersby Close & Culvert**

Following many conversations with EDDC, I have managed to ensure that the culvert at Summersby Close is now fully clear. This had blocked after the recent flooding and could of exacerbated future flooding issue if not fully clear. The extensive works to the exterior balconies are almost complete here as well. I am working with members of the housing team to try to push for a tenant social value event in the Seaton area like the one recently held at Lymeborne in Sidmouth.

### **Seaton Football Club**

I met with Seaton Football Club to discuss their current plans. They are looking for more security on their current lease. This is dependant on whether new facilities come forward in the not too distant future. We await the decision of the Strategic Planning Committee at EDDC on whether certain sites are put forward in the call for sites make it as allocations in the new Local Plan.

### **Devon Place Board**

Devon County Council's Team Devon Recovery Group (Devon Place Board) have commenced work on a Coastal and Market towns project. This work is aimed at tackling the long-term and immediate decline in some of Devon's underperforming towns. It identified 8 towns that would form part of a pilot project for future investment and both Axminster and Seaton are included within these. East Devon have a draft terms of reference coming to our next cabinet meeting. The report can be read [here](#)

### **Call for sites**

EDDC recently completed another call for sites as part of its local plan process to identify developable housing and employment site in the East Devon area. This received around another 150 more sites than previously put forward. The process now also includes assets under EDDC's ownership as well as possible housing/garage sites ready for social housing redevelopment. These new sites now have to go through officer recommendation as well as Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) before being brought before committee.

Below for your ease of reference, I have added in the sites already assessed under HELAA and that have been presented to the Strategic planning committee. I also attach all the minutes from the presentations received.

Site assessments can be viewed here Page 30 – 33 [1c Site Assessment Principle and Main Centres.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

More detailed maps can be viewed here pages 26 – 35 [Microsoft Word - Individual site boundary maps \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

***Officers currently recommend the following in the draft local plan for Seaton. This is subject to change:***

“20. Strategic Policy – Seaton and its future development New development will continue to support the regeneration of Seaton, consistent with its status as a Main Centre and its suitability for development. Propose the following development allocations: I. Seat\_05 – Land east of Harepath Road and west of Colyford Road, for around 150 dwellings and 0.6 hectares of land for employment development. II. Seat\_02 – Land east of Barnards Hill Lane, for around 60 dwellings. III. Seat\_07 and Seat\_12 – Land east of Colyford Road, for around 47 dwellings. IV. Seat\_09 – Land at Clay Common, for around 7 dwellings.”

#### **Minutes from developer/agent presentations for Seaton**

The following presentations were presented to Members for Seaton.

Iestyn John representing Clinton Devon Estates

Land at Clay Common, Seaton (Seat\_09)

- The site is on the western edge of Seaton and sits in line with existing dwellings;
- It is in a small area of open land (paddock) with access via a properly laid road with wide visibility splays onto Beer Road;
- To the west is a former quarry and is marked by a very dense area of woodland;
- The site is visible from the surrounding area;
- Opportunity for five dwellings with use of the existing access which does not need to be altered;
- Existing trees and hedges to the north west of the site which can be retained;
- The distance between dwellings are sufficiently separate within the landscape.

Questions raised by Members:

- o Clarification sought on any constraints. In response Mr John confirmed the land does fit within the Coastal Preservation Area and does not meet any of the landscape objectives by its location. He advised it was not common land and was used as pasture;
- o Clarification sought on whether the land was considered back land development. In response Mr John advised the development would be an extension of the settlement;
- o Clarification sought about how the development would remain in keeping with the houses in Beer Road. Mr John acknowledged that the houses in Beer Road were very large with five + bedrooms and although they would look smaller in comparison they would have generous gardens;
- o Clarification sought about the large area bounded by houses on two sides. Mr John advised it was not a formal area for recreational use.

Alan Sydenham, Herridge Property representing landowners

Land at Barnards Hill Lane, Seaton (Seat\_02)

- The land joins the existing built up area boundary of the town approximately 1 mile from the seafront in a central area close to facilities, GP surgery and primary school;

- Proposal for approximately 60 dwellings with appropriate levels of affordable housing and public open space;
- Existing houses along the southern and eastern boundaries;
- The land slopes gently from north west to south east and is currently in agricultural use with established trees and hedges around the site which screen the site from adjoining houses;
- The site is available and deliverable within a suitable timeframe;
- Discussions undertaken about potential vehicle and pedestrian access with the possibility of a safe access onto Popular Tree Drive
- There are regular bus services available from the site to Sidmouth and Exeter;

Questions raised by Members:

- o Clarification sought on the current proposed access for the site. In response Mr Sydenham advised it was proposed to bring an access off the junction of Popular Tree Drive at the bottom southern corner of the site. There is an existing T junction with ample room to create a new access with appropriate visibility;
- o Clarification sought about mitigation measures for the flooding issue from rainwater coming down from adjacent fields. Mr Sydenham advised that it would be standard practice for any residential development to consider mitigation and could see no reason why the scheme could not be designed in a way to alleviate this.
- o Clarification sought about whether there were any access rights onto a public highway. Mr Sydenham advised the existing highway had been adopted and that all parties were working together to create an appropriate access.

Richard Ayre & Graham Hutton, Baker Estates Ltd

Land either side of Harepath Road, Seaton (Seat\_03 & Seat\_05)

- Proposal for approximately 130 houses to the east of Harepath Road;
- 50% houses and 50% bungalows with a good range of house types;
- Proposal to bring forward commercial area to attract a good range of mixed uses;
- Proposal for sports pitches on the western side of Harepath Road and open to suggestions to bring forward sports pitch enhancements. It was suggested this could be brought forward with the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money or other money available;
- There is also scope for development on the western parcel;
- The site is outside the flood zone;
- The main bat flight path goes to the north of the site with likely local bat movement from the north and south boundaries of the site;
- Mitigation for bats to include buffers and enhancements along the northern and southern boundaries with the opportunity of enhancements. Discussions needed with Natural England to adequately look after the bats;
- Seat\_03 proposed for residential;
- Seat\_05 proposed for commercial;
- Land in one ownership making planning and delivery much more straightforward;
- Landscaping at top of the hill to create a green backdrop;
- Both east and west of Harepath Road should be allocated and planned comprehensively.

Questions raised by Members:

- o Clarification sought about the mixed use for employment and housing and whether this would be on someone else's land. In response Mr Ayre advised they would look to facilitate the commercial land but it would not be in their control. He advised on land owned by Baker Estates they would look to deliver housing and recreational and environmental opportunities;
- o Clarification sought on the number of houses that would be delivered. It was advised between 200 – 220 in total on both sides;
- o Clarification sought on the Biodiversity Net Gain. Mr Ayre confirmed it would be achieved;
- o Clarification sought about the recreational space and whether there would be tree planting. Mr Ayre confirmed that trees would be planted to create the green backdrop. There would also be an opportunity for trees to be planted within streets as part of the development;
- o Clarification sought about what would happen to the green wedge if both allocations were to come forward. Mr Ayre understood that the green wedge was important and advised they would introduce planting and screening along the northern boundary which would also serve the bats.