

Examination of the Cranbrook Local Plan

Examination Inspector - Janet Wilson BA BTP MRTPI DMS

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Mr James Brown
New Community Officer Cranbrook
East Devon District Council

By email via the Programme Officer

25 March 2022

Dear Mr Brown

Examination of Cranbrook Local Plan 2013 to 2031

**Written Ministerial Statement on Nutrient Levels in River Basin
Catchments – 16 March 2022**

DEFRA press release 16 March 2022

I am writing to draw your attention to the above Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) issued by the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. A link to the WMS and the DEFRA press release are provided at the bottom of this letter.

Amongst other things, this signals changes in the approach to the assessment of development proposals in river catchments where water bodies that are protected sites under the Habitats Regulations are in an unfavourable condition due to nutrient pollution.

I note that the HRA for the Cranbrook Plan, prepared in 2019, gave some consideration to soil nutrient levels however this was in relation to a specific matter. Consequently, the HRA may need to be revised/updated to address the effect of development at Cranbrook in relation to the areas of concern indicated by Natural England.

I expect the Council will be in contact with Natural England (NE) and seek their views before responding. It would assist me if the Council and NE could prepare a short Statement of Common Ground to deal with this matter. If it transpires that Natural England have no concerns with regard to nutrient levels in the Cranbrook Plan Area then it would be helpful to confirm that position.

Please let me know a timescale for your response.

In the meantime, I would be grateful to know whether the WMS has any further implications for proposals in the submitted Plan, particularly in respect of the delivery of housing and employment land, and, if any further mitigation is required, which may necessitate further work to be carried out and/or changes to be made to the Plan.

On receipt of this letter, please would the Council upload it to the Examination library and add a link to it on the Latest news and updates page.

I am not inviting a response from representors to this letter.

Yours sincerely

Janet Wilson

Examining Inspector

Link to WMS:

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-03-16/hcws688>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/delivering-on-the-environment-act-new-targets-announced-and-ambitious-plans-for-nature-recovery>