



STOW-ON-THE-WOLD TOWN COUNCIL

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Dear Philippa

Principal Justifications for STC to Challenge CDC's (Kevin Field) 'NO' to implementing an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on the Bovis (Oddington Road) application (Ref: 13/00855/SCR)

1) EU LEGISLATION: SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)

SEA is a legally enforced assessment procedure required by Directive 2001/42/EC (Known as the SEA Directive). The SEA Directive aims at introducing systematic assessment of the environmental effects of strategic land use related plans and programs. It typically applies to regional and local, development, waste and transport plans, within the European Union. Some plans, such as finance and budget plans or civil defense plans are exempt from the SEA Directive, it also only applies to plans that are required by law, which interestingly excludes national government's *plans and programs, as their plans are 'voluntary', whereas local and regional governments are usually required to prepare theirs. (*N.B. Mm : The NPPF is a 'Policy Framework' technically SEA law therefore applies to local planning applications nationwide).

United Kingdom ('Sustainability' intertwined with (1) EU EIA = SEA)

SEA within the UK is complicated by different Regulations, guidance and practice between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In particular the SEA Legislation in Scotland contains an expectation that SEA will apply to strategies as well as plans and programs.

In the UK, SEA is inseparable from the term '**sustainability**', and an SEA is expected to be carried out as part of a wider **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**, which was already a requirement for ****many types of plan** before the SEA

Directive and includes **social**, and **economic** factors **in addition to environmental**. Essentially an SA is intended to better inform decision makers on the sustainability aspects of the plan and ensure the full impact of the plan on sustainability is understood. (***N.B. Mm : Local Plans are not specified here + SEA was adopted into UK law in 2004 prior to the implementation of NPPF (= a 'Framework') in 2012 and can therefore claim 'historic precedence' over the NPPF's professed dependency on Local Plans)*)

The United Kingdom in its strategy for sustainable development, *A Better Quality of Life* (May 1999), explained sustainable development in terms of four objectives, i.e.:.....

- * **social progress** which recognises the needs of everyone
- * **effective protection of the environment**
- * prudent use of natural resources
- * **maintenance** of high and stable levels of ***economic growth** and employment.

These 4 headline objectives are usually used and applied to **local situations** in order to **asses the impact** of the plan or program.

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The 4 objectives also run alongside the **Cotswold Conservation Board's** related Objectives which include:-

- 1) **Landscape**: Conserve and enhance landscapes of the AONB.
- 5) **Heritage**: Conserve buildings, archaeological sites and their settings
(*N.B. Mm : i.e. Stow as a Hill Top settlement, not an urban conurbation*)
- 11) **Sustainable Tourism**: Encourage sustainable tourism (*N.B. Mm : Stow's mainstay for sustaining *"high and stable levels of economic growth"*)

2) "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT" RULINGS

Since 'Sustainability' also applies to 'Sustainable Development' and deemed inseparable from SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) in the UK, the UN General Assembly's Resolution 24/87 is a valid consideration. This Resolution defined "Sustainable development" as follows:-

'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* set out five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: As these have been incorporated into the NPPFs definition of "Sustainable Development".

- * **living within the planet's environmental limits**; *An insufficient and easily accessible public transport network to Railway stations (Moreton & Kingham), surrounding employment centres, etc., necessitating increased dependency levels on cars = higher carbon emissions/pollution.*
- * **ensuring a strong, healthy and just society**; *To date, the seeming lack*

of due consideration being paid to the local community's valid and genuine concerns = a potential ignorance of this "guiding principle"

/.....

* **achieving a sustainable economy;** *An additional increase in the existing over crowding, traffic jams, insufficient existing parking facilities = a further deterrent to visitors and tourists alike choosing to come to Stow, thus causing terminal damage to the future of Stow's essential tourism industry. The result will be a failure to 'achieve a sustainable economy' for Stow particularly if the vital draw of the region's village nature and unique landscape within the Cotswolds AONB is summarily discounted/ignored by planning decision makers.*

* **promoting good governance;** *The impending failure to take account of the cumulative impact of multiple housing developments upon small towns such as Stow + adhere to the Acts governing the AONB = 'bad governance'*

The additional failure to pay serious attention to the injurious long term impact of non-existent/insufficient infrastructure's (roads, parking, public transport, health facilities, GP's, hospitals, Schools, waste management, etc.,) essential components to support comparatively high volume density housing developments = even worse 'bad governance'.

To ignore a requirement for EIA/Sustainability Assessment (SA) of local social and housing 'need' for Stow's community = a dereliction of good governance.

Stow 'needs' small mixed use/live to work housing units for its essential key workers (support/care workers, nurses, teachers, skilled craftsmen, etc., etc.,) who are vital to the maintenance and future well-being of Stow. Such developments are advocated in the NPPF and should therefore have precedence over non-essential, over large, 'dormitory, commuter' developments.

* **using sound science responsibly.** *(Guideline too loose for valid inclusion).*

In addition - Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) are enshrined in UK Planning Law within which are set three roles for the planning system:

1. **Economic Role** - see above.
2. **Social Role** - see above.
3. **Environmental Role** - see above

CONCLUSION: When taking the above considerations into account the argument for challenging CDC's 'NO' to an 'EIA' due to its fusion with 'Sustainability (assessments)' within the UK SEA regime, is reasonable.

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Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council

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