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Major Developments Team,
South Hams District Council,
Follaton House,
Totnes,
Devon
TQ9 5NE

Our ref: DC/2004/003497/16
Your ref: PTyler
Date: 10 October 2006

Dear Mr Tyler,

**South Hams Local Development Framework
Sherford Area Action Plan (Submission Stage)
Alternative Sites Consultation**

Thank you for your letters and enclosures dated 25 and 29 August 2006 regarding the above.

The Environment Agency considers that any development at Sherford should be carried out in the most sustainable way possible, with all matters, including water (quality and quantity), waste, energy, biodiversity, and climate change, being addressed appropriately.

We have been involved throughout the planning process which has resulted in the proposed new community at Sherford. We welcomed the opportunity to be so involved in order to help ensure that the most sustainable development, providing the greatest benefits to the environment, is delivered.

One of my principal concerns throughout the consideration of development at Sherford has been to ensure that the watercourses crossing the site, together with their associated floodplains, remain undeveloped and undisturbed green corridors. This is particularly relevant to the Ford Brook which runs through the Sherford Valley.

In the absence of any evidence base it is difficult to assess and comment upon this alternative site proposal. However, from the mapped information that is available it seems that this will not be achievable. The school site shown at East Sherford appears to encroach into the floodplain, as does the employment site shown at West Sherford. Similarly a watercourse runs through the employment site shown at the

south west corner of the site.

The 'Primary distributor and guided busway' crosses the Ford Brook and its floodplain twice, as does a 'Secondary distributor'. Each of these crossings will need to span the entire floodplain width, including an allowance for climate change. These crossings will need to be carefully designed to ensure flood levels are not increased.

A primary concern is the area shown as 'Town Centre' and 'Health Centre'. Development, and the future use of the site, will have to be managed extremely well to ensure that the Ford Brook and its floodplain, which is over 50 metres wide, remain undeveloped and undisturbed. (These comments are based on the current indicative flood zone maps, produced by this Agency, which do not incorporate an allowance for climate change.)

In conclusion, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, currently the Environment Agency is likely to object to certain aspects of the alternative site proposal, as it does not seem possible for the development to proceed as shown on the plan, whilst ensuring that watercourses and floodplains remain undeveloped and undisturbed green corridors.

Yours sincerely,

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