

District Report.

A recent victory in Ottery St Mary has shown the power of the neighbourhood plan when pitted against the current pressure from government to build, build, build. The reasoning is interesting, and should help parishes and town councils, faced with an avalanche of planning applications, try and bat these off. The presence of a robust housing allocation complying with the NPPF, was a key factor that the inspector commented on. Landscape impact was also a factor. A link to the report will follow.

At a recent council briefing, officers outlined the latest from government over the devolution plan. It's fair to say it did not go down well. There was little new information except that certain responsibility currently covered by EDDC might be heading towards parishes and town councils, without an appropriate rise in the precept. It was even apparently suggested at a DCC meeting that councillors should use their 'powers of persuasion' as nothing is so far from forthcoming from government. Frankly, this all looks like a rapidly unravelling mess, and with a change of heads at government in the offing, I fear this is only going to get worse. Setting aside the cost so far incurred by this idea, it would be better to pull the plug now.

Report ends