**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL’S “RELOCATION PROJECT”**

**> STATEMENT OF OBJECTION**

East Devon District Council intends to relocate from its current premises at Knowle, Sidmouth which they have occupied for over 40 years[[1]](#footnote-1) to purpose-built offices in Honiton and to a refurbished Exmouth Town Hall, asserting that their existing buildings are “not fit for purpose” and cost too much to run – and that the savings in running costs over 20 years will pay for the excess cost of the new buildings.[[2]](#footnote-2)

After an unsuccessful attempt in 2012 to plan and market the development project themselves**[[3]](#footnote-3)**, EDDC tendered it to developers whose planning application was also rejected**[[4]](#footnote-4)** – and yet PegasusLife have just won a controversial planning Appeal to build retirement flats at Knowle, which will in turn provide most of the funds to build new headquarters for EDDC[[5]](#footnote-5) and the associated costs of relocation.[[6]](#footnote-6)

There are obvious conflicts of interest, in that EDDC stands to make financial gain from this Appeal: it had earlier made it quite clear that its “commitment” to sell Knowle for relocation had been “stymied” by the decision of its nominally independent planning committee to refuse planning permission;[[7]](#footnote-7) and it chose to give an extremely weak and ineffective defence of this decision at the Appeal.[[8]](#footnote-8)

This is but one of several serious flaws in a process which has continued for the best part of a decade[[9]](#footnote-9) – and which this paper will now consider.

**FINANCIAL PROFLIGACY**

EDDC has chosen to divert funds it does not have to the building of new headquarters [[10]](#footnote-10) – as indeed have other councils, to their cost[[11]](#footnote-11). As such, EDDC’s commitment to spending well over £10million[[12]](#footnote-12) can only be described “as a ‘milestone’ for debt – taken on by council tax payers in East Devon. No matter how you spin this project, it is not residents who will benefit. And few if any of the councillors making these decisions will be around in 20 years when the true costs and ‘savings’ are known.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

There has been a huge lack of confidence in these figures throughout the project.[[14]](#footnote-14) The campaign group Save Our Sidmouth has opposed the move, believing “that EDDC has not done its sums correctly, has not properly assessed the cost of renovations to part of the existing Knowle buildings and that the risk in building a new office – borrowing up to £4.8 m and paying for the ‘savings’ over a 20 year period – is far too risky in the current economic climate”.[[15]](#footnote-15)

**Cost-neutral:** From the beginning of its relocation project, EDDC claimed it would be ‘cost neutral’[[16]](#footnote-16) – but after vacillating between the options over several years, the costs have now escalated.[[17]](#footnote-17) And yet these principal reasons for relocation have been proven time and again to be totally spurious[[18]](#footnote-18), if not hopelessly under-estimated. [[19]](#footnote-19)

**Borrowing:** EDDC is taking out substantial loans to finance this project: at its own admission “the 2016/17 borrowing requirement is made up as follows: £5,990,000 Office Relocation”[[20]](#footnote-20) – although these figures seem to change as and when.[[21]](#footnote-21)

**Staffing:** EDDC continues to promote the notion that its ‘Worksmart’ project “is set to save the Council £6m over the next 20 years”.[[22]](#footnote-22) And yet the figures for staff numbers subsequent to the move continue to be unclear, casting doubt on these “savings”[[23]](#footnote-23) – with EDDC refusing to provide full details of their ‘hot-desking’ arrangements.[[24]](#footnote-24)

**Energy use:** As for their initial promises of large energy savings, EDDC claim they will save £5.55m over 20 years by moving from Knowle[[25]](#footnote-25); again, these figures have been proven to be wildly inaccurate[[26]](#footnote-26) and so extremely contentious.[[27]](#footnote-27) Moreover, EDDC has refused to provide detailed energy figures to verify their cost calculations[[28]](#footnote-28); they will not countenance considering alternative costings, such as remaining at Knowle[[29]](#footnote-29); and they have ignored their own scrutiny committee’s instruction to allow the commissioning of an independent survey on the state of Knowle.[[30]](#footnote-30)

**Asset value:** EDDC has just sold Knowle site for £7.5million[[31]](#footnote-31), a sale which had by no means been guaranteed.[[32]](#footnote-32) They will be spending the same amount to build new headquarters at the Heathpark industrial estate in Honiton[[33]](#footnote-33) – at a site which had been earlier rejected by buyers for £3million.[[34]](#footnote-34) EDDC admit that the value of the new Honiton building is far less than the cost of construction.[[35]](#footnote-35)

There appears to have been much more thorough consideration of the importance and worth of key assets at Westminster: “When thinking about the asset value of the Houses of Parliament compared to the Knowle, one should take into consideration the beautiful park setting, garden terraces and natural habitat as well as the Victorian building and its furnishings. Such a heritage asset is steadily increasing in value, while say a new HQ shed on a remote industrial estate would rapidly decrease with a very poor sale return.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

In effect, therefore, EDDC are choosing to squander the asset value of their head office,[[37]](#footnote-37) moving from parkland in the centre of one town to the industrial outskirts of another.[[38]](#footnote-38) A much more prudent move would be to value already-existing assets, rather than either squandering them[[39]](#footnote-39) or being “desperate to sell” them.[[40]](#footnote-40)

“What a downfall for civic status in the District, moving from the splendid park surroundings with good transport links to a remote industrial estate with a burger van for a cafeteria. Clearly, the philistine EDDC cabinet care little for the morale and wellbeing of their staff or visitors and even less for civic pride and public access." [[41]](#footnote-41)

**Unitarisation:** In parallel to EDDC, the WDDC in Dorset has also chosen to spend £10million on new headquarters[[42]](#footnote-42) - and yet the county has decided to take on a form of unitary authority, thereby actually undermining the entire justification for such a costly investment in the first place.[[43]](#footnote-43)

The move to unitarisation is clearly a growing trend, as noted by the Secretary of State recently: “60% of English people are served by unitary authorities, and I expect the number to be higher in five years’ time, given the views of many local people about unitary authorities and our commitment to consider unitarisation whenever requested.”[[44]](#footnote-44) This understanding is currently supported by growing calls to “replace the various tiers – district and county councils – with unitary authorities.”[[45]](#footnote-45) Indeed, the former chair of EDDC himself had called for the adoption of Lord Heseltine’s 2013 recommendations for unitarisation in his ‘No Stone Unturned’ report – again questioning the point of EDDC’s relocation project.[[46]](#footnote-46)

**Devolution:** Moreover, the devolution deal for Devon and Somerset seriously questions the continued viability of smaller district councils[[47]](#footnote-47), whilst plans for Greater Exeter show that district councils can work together, which further puts into doubt the future role of an independent EDDC [[48]](#footnote-48). Despite these uncertainties, EDDC is still determined to press ahead with the most financially-unsound decision since it was founded[[49]](#footnote-49) –to be left, finally, with an expensive white elephant.[[50]](#footnote-50)

**CONTENTIOUS PLANNING DECISIONS**

**12/1847/MOUT[[51]](#footnote-51)**: It has taken many years of planning applications for EDDC to reach this stage, the first in 2012 actually being its own application, approved by its planning officers but rejected by its planning committee[[52]](#footnote-52). The objections had not only been overwhelming[[53]](#footnote-53), but East Devon’s MP felt compelled to ask for the application to be called in.[[54]](#footnote-54)

**16/0872/MFUL[[55]](#footnote-55)**: Some four years later and an almost identical application was brought to the planning committee – and again rejected, on similar grounds.[[56]](#footnote-56) And once again, the objections were extensive.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Specifically, there are parallels between both applications. Firstly, building on the Knowle parkland would entail building on an area of public open space – of which there is no ‘surplus’ in Sidmouth.[[58]](#footnote-58) Secondly, development at Knowle “would have a significant detrimental impact on the economy of Sidmouth”.[[59]](#footnote-59) Thirdly, the visual impact of both developments on landscape and character of Sidmouth would have been overwhelming.[[60]](#footnote-60) And finally, both applications at Knowle “would have a harmful impact on the setting of a listed building”.[[61]](#footnote-61)

**Affordable housing:** The most contentious issue with the latest application has been the classification of the development: as C2 (residential care) or C3 (housing).[[62]](#footnote-62)

The senior planning officer stated in a letter to the developer at the time that “the scheme constitutes a C3 use and the level of affordable housing sought will come as a disappointment but we can assure you that these issues have undergone a very detailed consideration by Officers with appropriate independent legal opinion… Concerning the issue of affordable housing, the policy of the Local Plan sets out a target of 50% affordable housing for residential development in Sidmouth. The presumption is that such affordable housing should be provided on site. As a result we will be seeking on-site provision of affordable housing in this case.”[[63]](#footnote-63)

**CIL and overage:** However, later on in the application process, the planning officers changed their minds, with their final recommendation concluding that “no affordable housing or CIL charge would be payable”.[[64]](#footnote-64) Furthermore, it is extremely unlikely that there will be any overage payments.[[65]](#footnote-65) All of which lends weight to the widespread view that developers are “gaming the system”.[[66]](#footnote-66)

**Local Plan:** Fundamentally, though, it is clear that the latest planning application contravenes several key policies in the Local Plan.[[67]](#footnote-67) Even before it was finally ratified, there were concerns that “a retirement community would contravene rules set out in the emerging East Devon Local Plan.” [[68]](#footnote-68)

**Balanced communities:** One of those key ‘rules’, especially for Sidmouth, is that of fostering ‘balanced communities’, as laid out in Strategy 34 of the Local Plan,[[69]](#footnote-69) and as highlighted in other key planning documents: “Sidmouth has a far higher over-85 population than the rest of the country, let alone Devon. Assisted living accommodation on this site will do nothing to redress the existing imbalance.”[[70]](#footnote-70)

The development at Knowle will exacerbate an already serious issue, as demonstrated in a devastating critique of EDDC’s 'Care Housing Needs Assessment' commissioned by the developers.[[71]](#footnote-71) More troubling is that “there is not sufficient capacity in the home care services” in the Sid Valley, further casting doubt on the adequacy of provision for the residents at Knowle, all of whom will require care[[72]](#footnote-72) – a condition of purchase being that occupants will pay for two hours of care, but with no explanation given as to how this will be provided.[[73]](#footnote-73)

Sidmouth clearly faces a ‘demographic time bomb’[[74]](#footnote-74) and yet even EDDC itself recognises that the “influx of new residents”[[75]](#footnote-75) will be made up entirely of the elderly – most of whom will be from outside the District.[[76]](#footnote-76)

**Neighbourhood Plan:** Significantly, a key finding during the unprecedented public consultation for the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan has been the demand for more ‘balanced communities’.[[77]](#footnote-77)

This was seriously undermined during the recent Appeal, where Council for the developer chose to dismiss the provisions of the Plan, as it “had not emerged” at the time of the hearing – even though the Neighbourhood Plan has clearly demonstrated that “there is no evidence of local housing need of the type Pegasus Life proposes”.[[78]](#footnote-78) Moreover, as confirmed at the Appeal, in terms of planning regulations, “an emerging plan carries statutory weight: we contend that if this appeal by Pegasus Life is supported, the result would be to undermine and prejudice the preparation of the final Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan.”[[79]](#footnote-79)

The full Neighbourhood Plan provides further context, with references to housing, economic resilience and young people, all of which call for a ‘balanced community’.[[80]](#footnote-80) As the ‘vision statement’ makes clear, “To meet the needs of our community the Sid Valley requires carefully balanced development providing suitable affordable housing for residents both young and old.”[[81]](#footnote-81)

**Benefits/Disbenefits:** The Inspector at the Appeal chose to ignore these oft-repeated objections and preferred to uphold the case set by EDDC officers and the developer’s QC.[[82]](#footnote-82) He chose to accept as given “the many benefits that will come to Sidmouth as a result of the proposals put forward by Pegasus”.[[83]](#footnote-83) And yet time and again, the exact nature of these ‘benefits’ has been shown to be a complete sham: the general response is that the town has been very hard done by [[84]](#footnote-84) and that “Sidmouth is to become simply a ghetto for the super-rich and a cash-cow for the Council”.[[85]](#footnote-85)

**Parallel cases:** There have been planning Appeals in East Devon which correspond exactly to the Knowle case. In Sidford, the Inspector objected to the lack of affordable housing and overage provision as part of an application for sheltered housing.[[86]](#footnote-86) In Ottery St Mary, an application for housing for the over-55s was rejected, on the grounds that it was contrary to 'District Wide Affordable Housing Provision'.[[87]](#footnote-87) In both cases, EDDC had opposed the applications on exactly the same grounds.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Several other PegasusLife developments have been rejected around the country,[[89]](#footnote-89) including in Epping Forest where the council turned down a PegasusLife application because it constituted “an insufficient contribution towards the provision of off-site affordable housing” ;[[90]](#footnote-90) in North Somerset where the council have been very firm in their arguments with PegasusLife over the differences between C2 and C3 housing;[[91]](#footnote-91) and in Dawlish, South Devon, where PegasusLife’s proposals were rejected by the council “on the grounds of overdevelopment”. [[92]](#footnote-92)

**Over-development:** Finally, in all the cases referred to above, as well as the two planning applications at Knowle itself, the issue of excessive development has been a constant area of concern.[[93]](#footnote-93)  Clearly the relocation project represents the heavy-handed approach typical of EDDC[[94]](#footnote-94)  – and yet, as challenged by a former chair of EDDC, “it is not necessary to do much at all” to such a “prestigious building”.[[95]](#footnote-95)

It was rather different in the 1960s, when the District Council sought a more modest proposal in purchasing the Knowle hotel: “It is the intention that part of the building should be used for housing (the major part of the purchase price is for this purpose) and the remainder for improved council accommodation...”[[96]](#footnote-96)

However, today, EDDC refuses to consider alternative options to relocation.[[97]](#footnote-97) In fact, it has been proven that its declared wish to reduce its office-space[[98]](#footnote-98) could easily be accommodated if it retrenched to the purpose-built 1970s offices, thereby leaving a saleable asset in the original Knowle (once again suitable for conversion back to flats) to cover their refurbishment costs.[[99]](#footnote-99)

On the other hand, the latest application clearly constitutes over-development, whether with regard to flooding, [[100]](#footnote-100) landscape[[101]](#footnote-101) or appropriation of public open space.[[102]](#footnote-102) In particular, there has been alarm at “the overbearing nature of the proposals”[[103]](#footnote-103) – that the scale, massing and bulking of the buildings are just too much,[[104]](#footnote-104) that on several counts it is “a far more imposing development than assumed”[[105]](#footnote-105) and that there has been cleardisregard of the perspective drawings.[[106]](#footnote-106)

Indeed, the demolition of the Victorian building represents a considerable act of vandalism, to be replaced by a brutish edifice which rudely impacts on the setting. [[107]](#footnote-107)

To conclude, “a recent Government directive on planning appeals says that Inspectors should only refuse appeals if there is ‘fairly substantial harm’ to the community or environment.”[[108]](#footnote-108) The above analysis demonstrates that the harm which would be done to Sidmouth would indeed be ‘substantial’.[[109]](#footnote-109)

**Conflicts of interest:** Perhaps the most serious charge, however, is that EDDC will profit directly from its granting of any planning applications at Knowle.[[110]](#footnote-110) Furthermore, EDDC has a clear incentive to flout its own Local Plan’s demands for affordable housing provision: analysis of ‘alternative schemes’ for Knowle shows that there would be a substantial difference in value of the site – of between £3.2 and £6.8 million – depending on the affordable housing requirement. [[111]](#footnote-111)

**TRANSPARENCY OF PROCESS**

It has been a matter of course during the relocation project that EDDC has been extremely unwilling to provide documentation or to operate in a transparent and open manner [[112]](#footnote-112) – and continues to do so, despite confrontations with the ICO.[[113]](#footnote-113)

**Information Commission and Tribunal:** The first planning application was involved in a lengthy case taken up by the ICO which was brought to the First Tier Tribunal.[[114]](#footnote-114) In his final decision, the judge criticised EDDC as “discourteous and unhelpful” after he rejected its appeal for confidential documents relating to its controversial relocation project to remain private; what is more, the judge took the “unusual and unfortunate” step of criticising EDDC’s conduct during the process.[[115]](#footnote-115)

**Access to key contracts:** The second planning application also involved EDDC refusing to comply with FOI requests which were later deemed by the ICO as “breaching sections of the FOI Act”.[[116]](#footnote-116) This resulted in EDDC being required to publish the full unredacted contracts with its preferred developer, as well as the complete bid evaluation document.[[117]](#footnote-117) The ICO also directed EDDC to provide information on its energy usage at Knowle – which had been the original justification to relocate, based on the notion that the buildings were ‘too expensive to heat’.[[118]](#footnote-118)

**REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE**

These clashes with the ICO have brought EDDC into sharp focus, with serious questions raised nationally about its trustworthiness and transparency of process.[[119]](#footnote-119) Its heavy-handed disregard of both local opinion and local distinctiveness has brought further censure in the national press: “EDDC could not care about Sidmouth, but the rest of us do, for the town is a national treasure.”[[120]](#footnote-120)

**Heritage:** It has been recently made clear that Local Authorities should maximize “the benefits of the heritage in their local area and respond to the needs of local communities.”[[121]](#footnote-121) And yet, EDDC’s disregard for its heritage[[122]](#footnote-122) has alarmed national bodies, with proposals for Knowle seen as “a shocking case of a council seeking to destroy its own heritage.”[[123]](#footnote-123) Moreover, although an application for Grade II Listing has failed, English Heritage recognises that the Victorian house and gardens are “evidently highly-valued by the local community.”[[124]](#footnote-124)

One “important part of Sidmouth’s heritage”is the parkland and trees of Knowle.[[125]](#footnote-125) The imminent loss of much of the gardens and destruction of arboreal heritage has been objected to by both the Sidmouth Arboretum[[126]](#footnote-126) and national and county bodies.[[127]](#footnote-127) As part of a national campaign, the status of Asset of Community Value was sought for the gardens, but this was rejected under controversial circumstances by EDDC. [[128]](#footnote-128)

Finally, whilst in the 1960s “a principal reason for the acquisition of Knowle [by the council] was to preserve the gardens and field as an amenity,” [[129]](#footnote-129) it now seems that “building over the terraces will destroy this historic Arcadian vista.”[[130]](#footnote-130)

**Legacy of disrepute:** All the above litany of negative responses to EDDC’s relocation project have built up within the wider context of the council having accrued quite a name for itself well beyond the issue of Knowle.

Several, further discreditable scenarios have accumulated over recent time: a senior Councillor with considerable influence over the allocation of housing numbers has had to resign over allegations of corruption;[[131]](#footnote-131) EDDC has faced demonstrators in their thousands over plans to sell off its own land for redevelopment and to despoil AONB land;[[132]](#footnote-132) an analysis of official dealings in the district has shown that “there seems to be a certain culture in East Devon's whole operation and democratic process”;[[133]](#footnote-133) and, finally, its reputation on planning has been described as “an absolute disaster area”.[[134]](#footnote-134)

Indeed, the ‘disasters’ in planning are manifold, whether in Sidmouth[[135]](#footnote-135), Exmouth[[136]](#footnote-136) or Seaton[[137]](#footnote-137) where in each case, demonstrations, campaigns and outrage at EDDC awarding itself planning applications have been widespread.[[138]](#footnote-138)

**Political fallout:** Such is the alarm over the direction and intentions of the EDDC – following on from the initial dismay emerging over its handling of the relocation project – that the majority party has seen its hold over the council threatened with the upsurge of support for the East Devon Alliance,[[139]](#footnote-139) notably in the Sid Valley. [[140]](#footnote-140)

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The lack of integrity, transparency and respect for democratic process is clearly evident in EDDC’s relocation project.[[141]](#footnote-141) The issues can be summarised as follows:

* There is a fundamental conflict of interest in EDDC selling a site and benefitting directly from granting planning permission to develop it.[[142]](#footnote-142)
* The savings in running costs are pure conjecture and will never be proved;[[143]](#footnote-143) whilst the hope of a ‘cost-neutral’ project can now be discounted beyond doubt. [[144]](#footnote-144)
* EDDC has worked with PegasusLife to overcome the crucial issueof how to classify the development[[145]](#footnote-145) with a technicality (2 hours a week assisted living)[[146]](#footnote-146) – which has enabled the developer to avoid its legal contributions, including CIL payments, overage and affordable housing [[147]](#footnote-147) This is despite securing a very attractive contract as far as PegasusLife is concerned, [[148]](#footnote-148) one which will earn them an estimated £15m. [[149]](#footnote-149)

Fundamentally, however, this project undermines the notion of ‘localism’, [[150]](#footnote-150) and yet the report from the Commission on the Future of Localism has just “called for localism to be reinvigorated”,[[151]](#footnote-151) whilst the Chancellor has recently provided a clear example of how that might be achieved, by declaring that “local homes should be provided by small local companies with a real stake in their community”.[[152]](#footnote-152)

It seem, though, that the promises of the Localism Act for giving communities a say over how they shape their built and natural environment has been sorely tested by the vagaries of EDDC and its relocation project: the development at Knowle will not be built by a company with an interest[[153]](#footnote-153) let alone a stake[[154]](#footnote-154) in the local community; all through this process, EDDC has consistently flouted the concerns of local people;[[155]](#footnote-155) it has steamrollered over unanimous opposition from the Town Council over the scale and massing of the proposals;[[156]](#footnote-156) its culture of secrecy has kept its own councillors in the dark throughout; [[157]](#footnote-157) and it has dismissed the decisions of its own planning committee, which has twice rejected planning applications.[[158]](#footnote-158)

“Namely, if communities decide to reject development proposals in their back yard, they’re not allowed to. It has led to a community backlash from people expecting the promise of greater democracy, with the process becoming tainted because a development agenda had already been set.” [[159]](#footnote-159)

1. [‘Knowle is part of our heritage’ | Latest Sidmouth and Ottery News - Sidmouth Herald](http://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/knowle-is-part-of-our-heritage-1-1533090) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Moving and Improving: all you need to know about the office relocation - East Devon](http://eastdevon.gov.uk/moving-and-improving/moving-and-improving-all-you-need-to-know-about-the-office-relocation/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [12/1847/MOUT | Outline application](https://planning.eastdevon.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=M95J5FGH01C00) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [16/0872/MFUL | planning application](https://planning.eastdevon.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=O5ICQCGH01C00) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [APPEAL DECISION 3177340.pdf](https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewDocument.aspx?fileid=25250325) and [23 January 2018 - Planning inspector gives go ahead for PegasusLife development of council’s Sidmouth HQ - East Devon](http://eastdevon.gov.uk/news/2018/01/planning-inspector-gives-go-ahead-for-pegasuslife-development-of-councils-sidmouth-hq/) and [Plans to turn East Devon's HQ at The Knowle in retirement community approved - Devon Live](https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/plans-turn-east-devons-hq-1106189) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [28 April 2017 - Council gives the green light to ‘Go Now’ option to build new Honiton HQ for East Devon - East Devon](http://eastdevon.gov.uk/news/2017/04/council-gives-the-green-light-to-go-now-option-to-build-new-honiton-hq-for-east-devon/) and [Another £225,000 demanded to fund £9 million relocation cost | East Devon Watch](https://eastdevonwatch.org/2017/04/01/another-225000-demanded-to-fund-9-million-relocation-cost/) and

   <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2057626/combinedcabagenda050417publicversion.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [Relocation update: “We have been stymied twice”, officer reports to EDDC Cabinet | Save Our Sidmouth](https://saveoursidmouth.com/2016/12/15/relocation-update-we-have-been-stymied-twice-officer-reports-to-eddc-cabinet/) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [District Council publishes 'proof of evidence' prepared by Cornwall Council planning officer](http://futuresforumvgs.blogspot.de/2017/11/knowle-relocation-project-district.html) and [EDDC will not cite loss of light at Knowle planning appeal - Sidmouth Herald](http://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/eddc-will-not-cite-loss-of-light-at-knowle-planning-appeal-1-5230521) and [Planning inquiry over the future of The Knowle - live updates - Devon Live](https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/planning-inquiry-over-future-knowle-842171) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [Knowle relocation project 2008: “We’ll be seriously looking at the future of us staying in this building for numerous reasons.” OR: "Given current market values and the likely cost of relocation, it would be a close run thing as to whether a move was viable.”](http://futuresforumvgs.blogspot.de/2017/08/knowle-relocation-project-2008-well-be.html) and [Knowle: plans to be considered over the next two weeks](http://futuresforumvgs.blogspot.de/2013/07/knowle-plans-to-be-considered-over-next.html) and [Knowle: moving and improving](http://futuresforumvgs.blogspot.de/2013/07/knowle-moving-and-improving.html) and [Knowle relocation project: moving to Skypark: reports](http://futuresforumvgs.blogspot.de/2014/02/knowle-relocation-project-moving-to_9.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [Knowle relocation project: spending £10m on an new HQ while other councils must downsize](http://futuresforumvgs.blogspot.de/2017/11/knowle-relocation-project-spending-10m.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [Struggling Northamptonshire County Council bans spending - BBC News](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-42920716) and  [Northamptonshire County Council considers selling new £53m headquarters - BBC News](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-42815376) and [Cash-strapped Northamptonshire Council to sell its new BDP-designed HQ | News | Architects Journal](https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/10028205.article?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AJ_EditorialNewsletters.Paid:%20Send%20-%20Daily%20bulletin&mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWkdObFpUWTFNRGxsWmpKayIsInQiOiJ6Sk81Vlc0Wm93ckFMS2xZcFRwdWRaSWljNFNjOVMwdWgwbjJ0djhqRTdvUVpHXC9yYUFrMFBhbXFodWVtSVVURVpSek9JMnl5aHZEdEFaOHFHYm1ybDNWVFdVcjk2ZXhGZHhvd3M0MWlSV1phM1g5eXFJWnRza2ZCMUdpSzhzeW8ifQ%3D%3D) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [Budget for EDDC’s relocation tops £10.3million |Sidmouth Herald](http://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/budget-for-eddc-s-relocation-tops-10-3million-1-4955207) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [EDDC relocation reaches ‘debt milestone’ - Sidmouth councillor | Sidmouth Herald](http://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/eddc-relocation-reaches-debt-milestone-sidmouth-councillor-1-5002574) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
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