

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee



Date of Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## Summary of self-build monitoring report (31/10/19 – 30/10/20)

### Report summary:

A new self-build monitoring report has been produced that covers the period from 30/10/2019 until 31/10/2020. This shows that the demand for plots indicated on the self-build register was 23, with 13 on 'Part 1' of the register. We will need to permission enough serviced plots to meet the demand indicated on Part 1 (13 plots) between 31/10/2020 and 30/10/2023. Supply figures show that we gave consent for around 69 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/19 and 30/10/20 and that we have met our legal requirements to permission enough serviced plots to meet the demand shown on our self-build register up to 30/10/2019.

### Recommendation:

1. To note that 23 individuals were added to the self-build register during the latest monitoring period (31/10/19 to 30/10/20).
2. To note the need to permission 13 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/20 and 30/10/23 to meet the level of demand between 31/10/19 and 30/10/20 shown on Part 1 of the self-build register;
3. To note that the demand for self-build plots indicated on the register should be taken into account in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.

### Reason for recommendation:

The latest monitoring report shows that East Devon is meeting its statutory duty to provide a supply of suitable sites to meet the demand for self/custom build housing shown on the self-build register. The Council also has a duty to take account of the register when exercising its planning, regeneration, housing and estate management functions.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

## Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

## Legal implications:

The legal implications are as set out within both the committee report and monitoring report.

## Equalities impact Low Impact

## Climate change Low Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; The increased delivery of land for self-build and custom build purposes is a government priority and there is a duty to provide sufficient serviced plots to meet the demand shown on the register.

**Links to background information** [Self and Custom Build – East Devon; Self Build Monitoring Report 31/10/19 – 30/10/21](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#):**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

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## Report in full

1. Background to self-build register
  - 1.1 The Government is keen to encourage opportunities for people to build their own homes. It diversifies the supply of housing, gives individuals and groups the opportunity to tailor make their own home, can be cheaper than buying a 'standard' home from a house builder and can produce innovative designs with enhanced ecological credentials.
  - 1.2 Since March 2016 we have kept a register of people who are interested in building their own home in East Devon. Since October 2017 we have had a duty to ensure that enough serviced plots are 'permissioned' to meet the demand shown on the register. Our recently published fourth monitoring report on self-build shows the latest demand and supply figures and includes definitions of what constitutes self-build housing. We need to consider the results in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.
  - 1.3 In April 2017 we introduced a local connection test so that only those with a local connection are included on the part of the register that is used to gauge demand for the number of plots that need to be permissioned (Part 1). Last February this Committee decided to keep the local connection test and not to introduce a financial solvency test or a registration fee. It is not considered that circumstances have changed over the last year that would justify reconsideration of these issues.
2. Summary self-build monitoring report of latest
  - 2.1 The latest (fourth) self-build monitoring report (attached) shows that during the last monitoring period (31/10/2019 to 30/10/2020 – these dates are set by legislation) 23 individuals were added to our self-build register. Since April 2017 our register has been divided into two. Part 1 includes a local connection test: we have a legal duty to

permission enough serviced plots that are suitable for self-build to meet the level of demand shown on Part 1 of our register. Part 2 of the register is for those who do not meet the local connection test. Parts 1 and 2 together indicate the general level of demand for self-build and we must have regard to this in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions. The number of individuals added to Part 1 of our register in the latest monitoring period (which is referred to as a base period) was 13 and there is a cumulative total of 113.

- 2.2 We are required to show that we have permissioned enough serviced plots to meet the demand shown on Part 1 of the register within the three years following the end of each base period. There is some discretion for us to decide which permissions meet the requirement that they are 'suitable' for self-build. We have adopted the same approach as last year, but have provided additional details of which permissions are included in our potential supply, together with the applications for which an exemption from CIL has been granted on the basis that it is a self-build. Further details of the method we have used to calculate our supply of plots suitable for self-build are included in Appendix 1 of the monitoring report.
- 2.3 Our figures show that sufficient permissions have been granted to meet the demand shown for the first two base periods (the requirement for meeting this expired on 30/10/2019 and 30/10/2020 respectively). The requirement to meet the demand shown in the third base period does not expire until 30/10/2021, but our figures shown that we have already permissioned enough plots to meet the demand shown for both the third and fourth base periods.

### 3. Looking Ahead

- 3.1 Consideration will need to be given through the Local Plan to the role the Council plays in promoting and delivering self and custom build housing plots. Indeed one of the issues identified in the current issues and options consultation is:

“Encouraging more self and custom build housing so that people may be able to build their own home to meet their particular needs and aspirations.”

- 3.2 A paper was brought to Strategic Planning Committee meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 considering various options for promoting self and custom build including the following planning and corporate options:

#### Planning Options

- A refresh of the self-build register to include a specific Cranbrook register linked to the promotion of specific sites that emerge.
- Producing Supplementary Planning Guidance to clarify self-build requirements (as set out in our Local Development Scheme).
- Preparing self-build newsletters to supplement national sources of information about self-build in general such as the Self-Build Portal and the National Self Build and Renovation Centre.
- Establishing a self-build forum that could provide a good way for people to gain confidence in how to self-build and to share experiences with others.
- Reducing or deleting our pre-application advice charges for people wishing to build a single self-build dwelling.

### Corporate Options

- Carrying out an audit of Council owned land with a review of every area of land we own to establish whether it can be marketed for self-build housing (this could result in capital receipts as well as improve the supply of self-build plots);
- The appointment of a Self-build Lead Councillor/Members Champion to raise the profile of self-build and promote a positive attitude to self-build across the Council
- Working with parish councils and local community groups to promote self-build opportunities. For example parish councils may own parcels of land that may be suitable for self-build or they may wish to include policies in their neighbourhood plans.
- Direct provision of self-build plots through EDDC purchasing land suitable for self-building, servicing it and marketing it for self-build plots.

3.3 It was only this last option that Members were minded to pursue at that time with a budget of £1million ultimately being set aside for the purchase of a site for the direct delivery of self-build plots. Unfortunately since this budget was established in the 20/21 budget no suitable sites have been identified.