

Feedback report on consultation on the draft East Devon Local Plan (Regulation 18) that was consulted on from 7 November 2022 to 15 January 2023



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Chapters 11 to 14

Pages 412-462

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Chapter 11 - Prioritising Sustainable travel and providing the transport and communications facilities we need

General matters raised in respect of this chapter included

- Despite the laudable policies relating to 20-minute neighbourhoods and high quality public transport, the Local Plan will still result in significant additional traffic leading to pollution and congestion, particularly in the western part of East Devon and in Exeter.
- The East Devon AONB team support the requirement for travel plans and assessments for proposals that “might generate substantive scale of additional vehicle movements” to take account of “proximity to environmental designations.”
- The Otter Valley Association would like to see more robust policies to reduce congestion and increase requirement for travel plans. If ‘back lane’ were closed to through traffic it would create safer spaces for walkers and cyclists.
- National Highways support the ambitions regarding sustainable transport and agree that the spatial strategy is fundamental to achieving modal shift, thus maintaining a safe and efficient transport network.
- National Highways suggest identifying the severance challenges caused by the M5 and A30 (as in the emerging Exeter Local Plan).
- Exeter City Council stress the importance of joint working with the City Council, Devon County Council and National Highways. This will need to ensure that appropriate transport provision is made to mitigate development impact and maintain the continued strategic functionality of the local and strategic highway networks. This will also help to ensure that Exeter can continue to play its vital role as the driver of growth for the wider area. They note that more strategic interventions may be required, particularly on the strategic road network. Ongoing discussions should feed into coordinated infrastructure planning and infrastructure delivery.
- New developments should be required to provide not just charging for electric cars but also secure and under-cover charging points (especially in multiple-occupancy dwellings) for electric bikes (not all electric bike batteries are removable).
- Clyst Hydon parish council is concerned that the EDDC local plan does not adequately address the issue of transport. The council specifically mentions that the plan does not:
 - Directly address the issue of commuting to work, particularly in more rural areas.
 - Make any plans for workspace development in more rural areas.
 - Discuss the rapidly changing work patterns, which are seeing more people working from home and part-time.
 - Address the needs of the ageing population, who are more likely to need peripatetic support for social, health, and domestic needs.

Policy 65 - Walking, cycling, and public transport

- Network Rail support the promotion of sustainable transport with the provision of safe and pleasant cycling and walking routes between services and facilities.
- Network Rail must be contacted if there is an increase in use or change to the environment of a level crossing – any increase in risk requires suitable mitigation.
- National Highways presume ‘20-minute neighbourhoods’ means an 800m walkable catchment, or a 10 minute walk to destination and 10 minutes back home – this could be made clearer.
- Devon County Council (DCC) suggest cross-referencing with net-zero policy and adding the need for easy interchange between active and shared transport modes by using mobility hubs.
- DCC note that 20-minute neighbourhoods align with the Devon Carbon Plan.
- DCC question the idea of a new community as it does not limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes.
- DCC state there should be more focus on sustainable travel in existing settlements.
- DCC is currently reviewing its policy on Park and Ride sites given the slow uptake of bus travel since the pandemic but support park and change sites on the edge of urban areas.
- DCC state supporting active travel and reducing unnecessary travel should be considered with regards to addressing the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility.
- The Devon Countryside Access Forum consider that prioritising walking and cycling links should be made clearer, and suggest wording to do so.
- Sidmouth Cycling Campaign support this policy which prioritises walking and cycling links in new development. However, this policy could be made more effective by defining the features of a “20-minute neighbourhood” that new development will have to incorporate. For instance, that community facilities, such as primary schools and shops, are within a 20 minute walk of all proposed housing.
- Clyst Honiton Parish Council warns that developers should not rely on public transport to justify their developments, as bus services are subject to change. The council recommends that developers assume that all new residents will use their cars.
- Need to include e-scooters and buggies in this policy.
- Cycle routes should link to train stations, so that train and bike journeys are possible.
- Our climate is not conducive to walking and cycling.
- Do not like 20-minute neighbourhoods as could lead to monitoring of people’s movements.
- Support policy, need to ensure it is delivered.

- This policy sounds great in theory but does not happen in practice as existing public transport networks are not adequate, unregulated bus system, uncertainty on CIL funding.
- Support the principle but the policy itself is vague for example, how does development incorporate a 20 minute neighbourhood, include greater permeability for walkers/cyclists, deliver national target of 50% active travel in urban areas.
- Housing industry organisation considers the 20-minute neighbourhood concept to be useful but also appropriate to consider the range and variety of development which could help a smaller settlement support more services. Policy is not sufficiently flexible.
- Also EDDC needs to work on making active travel and public transport quick, easy to use, well maintained, safe and available to all, and therefore more appealing than using a car.
- No reference to shared transport (i.e. on-street car club and bikes) which are already present in the west end.
- Support the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods and the recognition that this may not be achievable in rural areas.
- Cycling is challenging in East Devon due to its hilly nature.
- Need much better public transport links – bus routes have been cut, and trains are unreliable.
- A cycle path should be built between West Hill and Ottery.
- Would like high quality public transport in West Hill.
- Need to prioritise the availability of high quality public transport.
- Need to define the features of a 20-minute neighbourhood such as community facilities.
- Need off-street walking/cycling routes to connect existing settlements, not just where development is happening.
- Need a network of dedicated cycle and walking routes between all main developments and employment areas (Greendale, Hill Barton, Clyst Sy Mary, Science Park etc).
- Strengthen policy to allow all children to cycle off road to school.
- Need more emphasis on rail transport including linking with the Airport and the new town.
- It needs to be made clear that the policy is geared towards residential development, rather than all new development, otherwise there could be conflict with the location of large scale employment which may not deliver a 20-minute neighbourhood.
- Larger developments should consider ultra low emission streets where vehicle movement is restricted except for public transport, disabled vehicles, delivery vehicles, local residents.
- Residents of the proposed new town will not likely have a 20-minute neighbourhood for many years if Cranbrook's experience is repeated.

- Even high quality public transport will not provide a suitable alternative to the car if people are still required to commute to work, for example new housing along the Exe Estuary will be car dependent, concentrating employment land on the western side of the district.
- Site assessments have not applied the 20 minute neighbourhood as criteria on distance to services is 1,600m rather than 800m.
- There is no definition of “larger scale development” or “smaller scale development”.
- There is no definition of “rural” and “urban” areas.
- Walking and cycling routes should be clearly signed.
- Facilities for active travel should be in place before homes are occupied so that sustainable habits are encouraged from the start.
- Delivery of this policy is just as challenging in urban areas as rural areas.
- Remove the last sentence as it will allow developers to not deliver this policy.
- This policy is not deliverable in rural areas with limited job opportunities and facilities.
- Do not restrict car use as many older people rely on cars for their independence.
- This policy contradicts the Local Plan proposals at Hawkchurch, which only has one bus per week and therefore new residents will be reliant on the car to access facilities.
- Support no development at Cowley but would like a cycle route to link with Exeter city centre, the Exe Estuary Trail and elsewhere.
- Enabling walking and cycling will encourage tourists and support the economy.
- Promote the South West Coastal Path.
- Cyclists, pedestrians and cars should be segregated where possible, but this should not be at the expense of any of the three.
- It should be possible for people to live in town centres without needing a car, by improving town centres and/or providing good quality public transport.
- Bus and train services have been reduced following Covid, meaning the car is essential in many cases, so need a more robust approach.
- Losing all minor roads like Langaton Lane only makes some vehicle trips longer.
- Consideration should be given to links between towns, cycling plus increased tourism and traffic
- I believe that EDDC should be bold in its ambition. It should set out very strong DESIGN principles which actually demand that the policies in this plan are adhered to, by prospective applicants (developers), BEFORE the latter submit their applications for OUTLINE planning permission. Waiting to RESERVED Matters to implement policies is, in the vast majority of cases, too late.
- Agents for Bourne Leisure endorse draft Policy 65, which recognises that opportunities to deliver walking and cycling links and access to high quality public transport in new development will be more challenging in rural areas compared to urban areas

- The National Trust support policy and highlight relevance of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. The National Trust recommend that consideration is given to including the emerging LCWIP, which is being produced by Devon County Council, as an SPD.
- Exeter Cycling Campaign welcome the commitment to “Protecting transport sites and routes” in the draft but these are largely leisure routes. To deliver a modal shift away from private vehicles the Local Plan should enable a network of new, safe cycle paths that connect up settlements in East Devon to enable journeys for commuting, retail and education purposes, following Department for Transport design guidance and be designed for desired commuter levels (where 50% of journeys are by foot or bike). This is especially important for the proposed new town.
- The proposed Infrastructure Delivery Plan should give prominence to cycle, walking and bus connections to the new town, and the final choice of location should take into account the public transport options including access to train stations
- The Local Plan would benefit from proposing adding a new commuting cycle route from Axminster to Seaton (the nearest station).
- Policy should be more specific and firmer, for example:
 - a. Walking and cycling paths will have priority across all side roads in new developments, and signalled crossings of major routes will be of single phase.
 - b. 20 mph speed limit will be the default design (both with signage and road layout) in all new developments.
 - c. Cycle parking shall be designed to be more conveniently located than car parking in residential, retail and educational developments, and should allow for the charging of e-bikes.
 - d. Cycle parking numbers will meet or exceed LTN 1/20-specified numbers
 - e. Cycle parking design will meet LTN 1/20 standards (e.g. will accommodate non-standard bike forms, be secure, be sheltered, be of Sheffield-stand design)
 - f. To meet the policy statement that walking and cycling links should be “coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive”. It should be a requirement for all new developments that they are connected up to the cycle network.
 - g. Permeability of developments should be higher for those on foot or travelling by bicycle, and this permeability should be maintained across independent developments. For example, in Cranbrook there have been issues where obvious links to networks etc are outside of the planning boundary, so it's too late or difficult to make links better into the development.
 - h. For commercial and employment developments, cycle access and parking as well as showers, lockers should form part of the application to enable those arriving by bicycle to do so safely and conveniently.

Policy 66 - Protecting transport sites and routes

- National Highways would like discussions and further evidence regarding the bus priority route at A3052/A376 to M5 Junction 30; and park and areas of search at A30/Heavitree Road corridor, and A376/A3052 Clyst St Mary corridor; due to their interaction with the strategic road network.
- Devon County Council support recognising these routes and protecting them from other development.
- There appears to be an omission in Policy 66 (Protecting transport sites) where there is no commitment to improving existing or adding new train stations.
- Support this policy, let's make sure this happens.
- Explain relationship between Devon County Council and EDDC and complexities of widening transport choice when privately owned bus companies are involved.
- Unclear on what the policy is trying to achieve, cannot understand criteria for specifying some strategic cycle schemes and not others – for example, why is Exe Estuary Trail not listed?
- Exmouth Town Council seek protection of Bapton Valley Park as an evolving walking/cycling route in Exmouth.
- Exmouth Town Council highlighted a local campaign to protect Summer Lane for active travel.
- Exmouth Town Council seek protection of the area around the train station to enable the delivery of an integrated transport interchange.
- Need to protect the cycle route from Knowle to Exmouth, it is enjoyed by many and under threat from Exmo_17 proposal.
- Strongly support the creation of cycle route between Feniton and Sidmouth, as referenced in the Ottery and West Hill Neighbourhood Plan.
- Strongly support the creation of cycle route between Sidford and Sidbury.
- Need a safe cycle route between Seaton and Colyton, as roads from Colyford entrance to Seaton Wetlands and Colyton are very dangerous.
- Extend the Seaton to Colyton cycle scheme to Axminster as this is a common route for commuters.
- Sidmouth Cycling Campaign support this policy
- Have not mentioned all the Sustrans cycle routes, and the international "Trans Manche" route.
- The Clyst Valley Trail is years away from being delivered so should not be protected.
- Query why the cycle route from Cranbrook to Treasbeare to Exeter has not been protected – does the Clyst Valley Trail include this?
- The Boniface Trail is also partly within East Devon so should be added to the policy.

- Promote duelling of the railway line and/or passing loops to enable a more frequent service.
- Restore Seaton Junction station so it can be redeveloped.
- Need a new light rail link between Seaton Junction and Colyton, then onto Colyford and Seaton shared with the tram.
- Re-instate light rail link from Feniton to Sidmouth, to connect Sidmouth, Tipton and Ottery back to the rail network.
- Redevelop the railway from Exmouth to Exeter to enable it to function as an attractive commuter route.
- Bus priority routes assume there are sufficient, reliable, affordable buses which is not the case.
- Allocate a park and ride facility in the north of Sidmouth to cater for additional day visitors causing congestion and lack of car parking.
- Park and Rides sites will need electric vehicle charging points.
- An 'urban tram' is required that runs directly from Park and Ride to central Exeter.
- Owner of land on the A377 corridor, Cowley has submitted land and supports its allocation for a Park and Ride site.
- Exmouth Town Council note the potential for a Park and Ride at Sowton to serve Exmouth has been overlooked.
- Typo as "A4052" does not exist, should state "A3052".
- The National Trust supports the protection of sites and routes that promote sustainable travel, including the Clyst Valley Trail. It would be beneficial if further details could be set out with regards to the Partnership working with Exeter City in respect of the Clyst Valley Trail that are required to ensure connections to the wider active travel network.

Policy 67 - Travel Plans, Transport Statements, Transport Assessments

- National Highways expect transport evidence to inform the thresholds.
- National Highways suggest the policy contains an option to require a transport assessment/travel plan outside any thresholds if necessary, to ensure unforeseen developments that could have transport implications to be addressed.
- Devon County Council state such supporting documents for developments of a reasonable size and nature are standard requirements. Travel Plans raise awareness and provide opportunities for people to change to more sustainable travel modes.
- This is a good policy, support.
- Travel Plans should encourage people out of their cars and onto the railway, as well as encouraging walking and cycling.
- Support this policy but note that new settlement Option 1 does not comply as it very remote with no public transport.

- No new housing should be built without significant improvements to public transport.
- Bullet point 3 should be separated into two bullet points.
- Exmouth Town Council (ETC) support setting thresholds but these must be evidence-based.
- ETC concerns about limited scope to influence public transport providers.
- Need to ensure transport statements/assessments meet local need and are produced to a minimum standard as they often inaccurate and misleading.
- Sustainable travel needs to be incorporated in new development from the outset to ensure residents use active travel and not cars.
- It is not possible to forecast the amount of vehicle movements that will be generated by a development.
- Exeter Airport Ltd state the policy is imprecise and should include provisions that will apply to development that may give rise to unacceptable impacts irrespective of thresholds.
- Policy is misleading as does not thresholds on the size of development before transport is considered.
- Policy is not robust enough; it needs targets and detail on monitoring to ensure aspired levels of sustainable travel are achieved.
- Cars are necessary in rural areas so road network should be improved to cut travel times.
- Transport assessments assume bus services will be the same when development has finished which, given cuts over recent years, should not be the case.
- The extra number of vehicles assumed in new development feels too low.
- Bullet point 3 should be 2 separate bullet points:
 - Proximity to environmental designations
 - Impact on promoting walking and cycling
- Exeter Cycling Campaign have concerns about the efficacy of “Where development schemes generate substantive additional vehicle movements...planning permissions will not be granted...unless a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan identifies measures to secure new sustainable travel arrangements”. Travel Plans and Assessments in new housing developments are often ineffective at nudging people away from using their private vehicle for all journeys, however short.

Policy 68 - Parking standards

- National Highways generally agree with this policy but require further information with regards to a non-residential parking standard, to ensure parking provision is appropriate to reasonable trip generation assumptions in the transport evidence.

- The Environment Agency recommend this policy should also provide for expansion of EV charging points for existing communities to ensure sufficient infrastructure is in place as society transitions to EVs. This could perhaps include a presumption in favour of new EV charging proposals.
- Devon County Council state each site should have its own parking standards – rural locations will require additional parking spaces, with lower provision in urban areas where there are good sustainable alternatives.
- Devon and Cornwall Police suggest considering designing out crime principles when designing parking provision in new development, for example avoiding large rear parking courts in preference to on-plot parking.
- Lyme Regis Town Council support measures to deliver EV charging but would like reference to need to retro fit or provide community facilities.
- Requiring 1.6 parking spaces for each house assumes car travel will be the norm, so likely to increase CO2 emissions.
- Clyst Honiton Parish Council is concerned that the current parking standard of 1.6 parking spaces per dwelling may not be sufficient, due to narrower roads and unusable garages. This could lead to cars being parked on pavements or too close to each other, which could have health and safety implications.
- Sidmouth Cycling Campaign support the inclusion of a cycle parking standard in this policy, but suggest it is separated from the car parking standards paragraph. We also recommend replacing the requirement of 2 cycle parking space per dwelling with a reference to the requirements of LTN 1/20. Table 11.1 of LTN 1/20 suggests a minimum requirement of 1 secure space per bedroom. This table also provides guidance on parking standards for non-residential development, which should be referenced in this policy. Provision should also be made for charging e-bikes in residential developments.
- All new housing should make provision for electric car charging points.
- Install electric car charging points in all car parks and explore opportunities in other public spaces.
- Housing in rural areas should have off-road parking for at least two cars, especially with the increase in electric cars.
- No need for policy as included in Part S of the Building Regulations (including where exceptions may apply).
- Flexibility to parking standards based on site location should be kept as in adopted policy TC9.
- Policy should breakdown provision for dwellings to provide clarity.
- A developer states the policy lacks clarity and needs more detailed parking standards which provide a suggested bedroom tenure/car parking spaces breakdown.
- The Avenues Residents Association (Exmouth) advise - Pol 68 appears to be incomplete. The Plan needs this section to be completed properly. The wording used

here is very weak and the Council should be doing more than "liaising", they should provide policy for operators to work to!

- Exeter Cycling Campaign state parking policy needs to be strengthened for cycle parking standards. The Local Plan should commit to the national guidance minimum cycle parking numbers laid out in LTN 1/20 of one cycle parking space per bedroom rather than the proposed 'per dwelling'. The local plan should mandate that this cycle parking must meet LTN1/20 standards for design, convenience and minimum numbers.
- The proposed car Parking standard is too low for East Devon, especially for rural area. And some comments suggest it should be more flexible to reflect the different needs of different areas and household.
- The policy could be seen as an important way to encourage people to use public transport or bicycles instead of cars.
- More EV charging points will be needed across the district, in order to encourage people, switch to electric cars.
- Car parking standard should consider the subsequent for the on-street parking issue in East Devon.
- Provision of electric vehicle charging points duplicates Building Regulations so does not serve a clear purpose. Should delete from policy.

Policy 69 - Rear Servicing of Shopping/Commercial Development

- Support policy as it will ensure a much better experience in town centres.
- Exmouth Town Council (ETC) support this policy, particularly important for pedestrianised areas such as the Magnolia Centre in Exmouth.
- ETC consider that different methods of distribution may be popular in the future such as cargo bikes, rail freight, electric vans so policy should support alternative, environmentally friendly delivery methods.
- Agree with policy as it's not fair for delivery vehicles to get parking fines when they are only trying to do their job.
- Reasonable ambition but rarely practical.
- Do not agree with removing the ability for town centre shops to receive deliveries, particularly with centuries-old streets and layouts.
- Need to clarify whether the policy applies to all Class E uses or just shopping and commercial development.

Policy 70 - Safe vehicular access to sites

- National Highways generally agree with this policy but it should be noted that access affecting the strategic road network are also informed by DfT Circular 01/2022 and must comply with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.
- Sensible policy.
- Support this policy, which should be applied to the proposals at Hawkchurch to build 38 dwellings on a narrow lane.
- Several respondents, including Exmouth Town Council consider that the term “safe access” is subjective – who will determine this? Devon County Council often issue standing advice, refer to statutory guidance, or not comment at all.
- Whilst Highway engineers may like space for two bin lorries to pass, Poundbury shows how access can work without adverse impact on the urban environment.
- Safe access is important but also need to consider how traffic impacts can be reduced.
- Safe access should be considered near schools.
- Add pedestrian and cycle access to the policy to ensure they are given greatest weight.
- The impact of access traffic upon other local road users should also be considered.
- Road widths need to increase as roads are clogged with parked cars, making it difficult for emergency vehicles to pass through.
- Question the need for this policy as it unnecessarily reiterates NPPF para 110b.
- This policy should explicitly include the need to ensure safe access for electric and human-powered vehicles. This is the future that we need to be building.

Policy 71 - Aerodrome Safeguarded Areas and Public Safety Zones

- Exeter and Devon Airport Ltd (EDAL) support this policy and will support the Council to ensure it is fully and consistently applied.
- EDAL consider the policy should be amended to state development which would impact on the operation of safety or navigational systems at the Airport must provide suitable mitigation, for example funding for system upgrades.
- This policy is used by the airport and developers to limit the delivery of solar PV panels, which is too restrictive as there are very few flights, warehouses are planned on the edge of the Airport, and the runway is culverted at Clyst Honiton.
- Good to protect minor airports such as Dunkeswell which still provide lots of low-level infrastructure.
- Exeter Airport should be closed and redeveloped as housing – an airport should not be included in a carbon neutral plan.

- Welcome policy 71 on aerodrome safeguarding but need to consider safeguarding of Exeter Airport in all allocations, including for the proposed new town.
- Clyst Honiton Parish Council has expressed concerns about this policy.

Policy 72 - Digital Connectivity

- National Farmers Union state Rural areas continue to suffer with a lack of connectivity (broadband and mobile), in the modern age this is a real barrier to business, resulting in a drag on efficiency. We welcome the recognition of the need for connectivity, but importantly this is not just for new development, there are large parts of the district which do not have an acceptable service so provision of new infrastructure to cover these 'not-spots' should be encouraged.
- Need flexibility for scenarios where 'superfast broadband' may not be feasible, for example in rural communities.
- The provision of 'sufficient mobile connectivity' is subject to service provision beyond the control of a developer and should be omitted from the policy.
- Exmouth Town Council Members support the policy but stressed the need for community resilience in respect of possible over-reliance on electronic communications.
- General support received for this policy, and numbers of comments pointed out the need of improvement on digital connectivity across East Devon.
- Policy should also cover the existing housing.
- Barratt David Wilson Homes - Policy requirement for new development to provide access to superfast broadband and high-quality communication duplicates the changed Building Regulations (changes came into effect 26 December 2022). This part of the policy does not serve a clear purpose – should be deleted

Policy 73 - Wireless connectivity and telecoms infrastructure

- Exmouth Town Council members support this policy.
- Private fixed broadband networks on new housing estates can limit residents' choices
- EDDC should pause 5G rollout due to health concerns, more research needed.
- Programme of extension of wireless connectivity and telecoms should consult local residents in advance.

Chapter 11 - Policy omissions from - Prioritising Sustainable travel and providing the transport and communications facilities we need

- The Local Plan would be improved with the addition of a planning policy which mandates that active travel infrastructure and public transport is in place and roads are adopted by DCC before houses are occupied so that bad driving/parking habits do not develop.
- Work Hubs: The Devon Climate Emergency Response Groups 'Carbon Plan' referred to 'work hubs' as one means of reducing the need to travel. The Local Plan should align with this and commit to work hubs as one means of decarbonising transport.

Chapter 12 - Caring for our outstanding landscape

General matters raised in respect of this chapter included

- The Policies in this Chapter were strongly supported. There were some requests for wording changes and minor additions but overall the policies were seen as very important to maintaining a high-quality environment.
- Numerous respondents supported the protective nature of the landscape policies but felt these were at odds with other policies of the Plan, particularly those supporting or allocating additional housing, employment or solar development. The sentiment was that these will inevitably lead to the loss of greenfield sites and will impact on the visual appearance and character of the landscape.
- Woodbury Parish Council submit nine maps showing where and how the countryside should receive further protection across the parish and beyond, by increasing public footpaths, quiet lanes, public open space, green wedges, public access woodland.

Policy 74 - Landscape Features

- The policy is considered to be important by respondents and most comments expressed concern that new development could be detrimental to important landscape features and/or suggested additional features to be included in policy.
- The East Devon AONB team support this policy.
- Devon County Council recommend the policy is amended to refer to “valued landscape attributes” and “special features and qualities” as evidenced in the Devon-wide Landscape Character Assessment.

More detailed points included:

- High quality landscape is vital to East Devon's economy, sense of place and at the root of wellbeing in the District. Protecting and enhancing must have a very high priority in the Plan.
- A number of respondents felt that proposals for new development undermine countryside protection policies.
- A large area of countryside will be lost to the new town and this was considered to conflict with countryside protection objectives.
- Disingenuous to suggest that developing greenfields will provide more green space.
- This policy should make clear that it applies to all proposed developments including land allocations and proposed development put forward through the LP.

- The landscape, countryside and rural area should be protected from light pollution and development detrimental to tranquillity.
- Need to refer to the Environmental Improvement Plan being published in Jan' 2023. Sitting at the heart of the government's Environment Act, its targets will include; to halt the decline in species populations by 2030, restore precious water bodies to their natural state; and boost nature recovery by increasing tree and woodland cover.
- Need to refer to the Plant Biosecurity Strategy published 9th January 2023. The strategy sets out how more than 30 signatories, including Defra, the Royal Horticultural Society, National Farmers Union and the Woodland Trust, will deliver an ambitious programme of behavioural change across society through the Public Engagement in Plant Health Accord.
- Climate change and protection of habitat should be prioritised
- The text refers to landscape appraisal/LVIA, it is suggested that further guidance be prepared on what will be required to demonstrate that a development will protect and enhance features.
- All High Distinctiveness Habitat should be strongly protected and not just trees and hedgerows or Irreplaceable Habitat.
- There is no need to include Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land in this list given that it is covered by '83. Policy - Development on High Quality Agricultural Land'.
- Support protection of trees and hedgerows. Replacement will not compensate for loss of mature trees or ancient hedgerows.
- Concern that trees and hedgerows are removed without penalty, and that replacement/mitigation isn't properly monitored or enforced.
- Archaeological features should be referred to.
- Sites should not be allocated within the AONB's.
- Important lowland heath should be referred to.
- There is no commitment to control solar farm developments. Developers are taking advantage of the maximum size allowed before government approval required.
- Concern was specifically raised in respect of landscape features on, or around, sites at Littleham, Exmouth, Whimple, Colyton, Yarty Valley and the Axe Valley.
- Devon Wildlife Trust consider that the list of features that contribute to the nature and quality of East Devon's landscapes should be expanded to include wildlife corridors which must not be subject to impacts from lighting. Furthermore, the list should include 'the development must deliver a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain'. They also provide specific suggested policy wording amendments.
- A developer recommends criterion a) is deleted as it conflicts with policy 85 which priorities protection of certain trees rather than all trees; and sometimes tree removal can be beneficial.
- A developer states the provision of homes and employment carries substantial weight in the planning balance when considered against the lack of robust housing and

employment land supply in EDDC and across the subregion. This policy needs to be applied flexibly in recognition of this shortfall; this is especially the case in areas outside of the AONB which are less sensitive to change.

Policy 75 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- Policy is well supported. Numerous respondents expressed concern about the quality/quantity and impact of new development on the AONB's.
- The East Devon AONB team support this policy and the justification paragraphs 12.4, 12.5 and 12.9 supporting local landscape character assessments and LVIA's but would encourage a clarification of how the setting of an AONB is considered.

More detailed comments included:

- The Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership welcomed the reference to AONB management plans and the AONB Teams are happy to work with officers to refine and develop the policy further. They request clarification on defining the setting of the AONBs, and also how it will be determined whether development proposals could affect the special qualities of an AONB.
- The National Farmers Union state within the landscape protection these areas are granted, it is vital that these farm businesses are allowed to develop where needed, in order to remain viable. Within this policy there should be specific provision for what agricultural businesses deliver for the AONBs in terms of landscape management and development that allows them to continue should have specific regard.
- Devon County Council state the third bullet point should refer to scope for mitigation and whether there is potential for significant effects to reflect the NPPF.
- Lyme Regis Town Council support protection of areas through AONB status but do not support national park designation for either East Devon or neighbouring parts of Dorset.
- A number of respondents felt that sites in, or impacting on, AONBs should not be allocated. Some additional comments said that no major development should be considered in the AONB and that this is not in the public interest and/or exceptional circumstances should not apply. Point 3 should make clear that major development should not be permitted within the AONB.
- Prominent new development, within and/or highly visible from, the AONB is not supported. Anything visible from an AONB must be rigorously analysed for visual impact prior to planning approval, as per latest govt. guidelines
- The Policy should make clear that it applies to all proposed developments including land allocations and proposals in the Local Plan.
- The landscape, countryside and rural area should be protected from light pollution.

- Several respondents said that allowing developments that impact upon the AONB on the basis of their economic benefit is not justified.
- Many areas outside AONBs are just as beautiful and being overdeveloped (Hawkchurch and Whimble were given as examples). These areas require protection too. AONBs should take a greater share of this rural development.
- AONBs need appropriate development to enable a mixed demographic, local employment etc. Limiting development in such areas produces a huge demographic imbalance and divorce young families from their extended families and support networks. This is socially damaging.
- Why do the AONB's have such a high degree of protection given their limited public access and a lack of public facilities.
- The Local Plan should allow absolutely no development beyond the settlement boundaries (eg Sidmouth, Sidford, & Sidbury) otherwise there is a real threat to the AONB. Recent developments on edges of towns have encroached on the AONB.
- There should be a review of the AONB boundaries urgently and additional land should be brought into the protection of the AONB where appropriate.
- The impact of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill currently going through parliament should be fully assessed before committing to damaging allocations in AONB's.
- All of the construction will cause adverse effects on the AONBs from increased emissions for the next 20+ years.
- Tourism is a major source of income to our area but developing the AONBs will deter visitors
- Monitoring development in AONB and enforcing conditions is important
- The AONB forms part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site along the Jurassic Coast and needs protecting from further development. The south West Coast Path is an important walkway for all ages and also needs its access protecting for future generations
- Accepting that some AONB development is needed, this should be sensitively designed small scale development rather than large housing estates of repetitive styles. Large allocations are not supported as more modest scale and higher quality would sit better within the landscape.
- Some representations referred to specific proposed site allocations, for example at Whimble, Colyton, Sidmouth and Exmouth. These matters will be considered as part of the site specific considerations.

Policy 76 - Coastal Preservation Areas

- The policy is well supported with a general opinion that coastal preservation areas should not be built in

More detailed comments included:

- The Environment Agency consider it would be good if the policy included an additional 'purpose' of the green wedges to help communities to adapt and be more resilience to climate change should be added.
- Devon County Council are not aware of the detailed assessment (paragraph 12.7) but note landscape character is broader than openness and views to and from the sea only.
- Coastal areas must be protected for wildlife as well as people - every effort should be made to make sure that marine and coastal wildlife is not adversely affected by changes (increases) in human activity - eg increased noise, lighting, movement or pollution of coastal area.
- Although public access is important, owners of dogs are frequently insensitive to the need to control them to avoid disturbance to species of biodiversity importance or to other non dog owners. This includes damage caused by dog fouling.
- Appropriate proposals for increased public access must exclude access that adversely affects existing homes and infrastructure
- Is there potential conflict between this policy and the rural farm diversification policy?
- The policy should be strengthened. Some housing allocations will destroy the openness to and from the sea and so should not be allowed. Has this been assessed?
- Anything affecting the health and biodiversity of the coast, as well as the views, should be included in its protection. Sewage, road and agricultural run-off should not be permitted to enter the rivers or sea.
- Concern that the scale of development proposed is going to cause sewage overflows onto all the surrounding coastal areas.
- The coast of East Devon is unique in its visual and geological form, it needs to be carefully managed and protected to ensure it continues to be a valuable attraction for visitors - as well as providing vital habitat for biodiversity.
- Visual openness is extremely important to those who wish to enjoy the coast path and country walks.
- A review is long overdue. Past errors, and intrusive development, should be corrected.
- Much of our coastline is protected by ownership e.g. the National Trust, but the need to prevent overdevelopment and inappropriate development is clear.
- It is unclear from the Policies Maps where the boundary of the CPA lies around the area of Seaton Hole. The mudstone cliffs must be protected as they are prone to collapse from above as well as from coastal erosion from below. Policy should recognise that water flows from above must be identified and managed properly as well as proper building controls ie risk assessment for proposed groundwork and heavy plant usage near these cliffs.
- Littleham brook (north of Maer lane) should be within the CPA. This whole area represents a significant and necessary floodplain for runoff for this side of Exmouth.

Policy 77 - Areas of Strategic Visual Importance

- The policy is well supported with numerous comments that views are important to local and District character. It was also noted that views were considered important in Neighbourhood Plan consultation feedback.
- The East Devon AONB team support the Policy but are unclear as to how these 'strategic' areas or view type have or will be identified and mapped and how they will be evidenced in respect of any particular development. They are happy to work with Policy officers to develop this Policy further to enable the key view 'types' or areas across the AONBs to be identified.

More detailed comments included:

- Several respondents refer to the need to prevent light, noise and/or substance pollution and enforce if necessary.
- EDDC must insist that areas of strategic importance are preserved. There should be no exceptions to this.
- An exception should be made for solar and wind farms which may impact visually on a landscape, but are too important to be turned down solely for this reason.
- The Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership would like clarity as to how the 'strategic' areas/views have been identified and whether they can be mapped and be evidenced in respect of any particular development. They recognise that views are a special AONB quality and are happy to work with officers to develop this policy further.
- Need clarity as to how these views are different to point j. in policy 74.
- Support reference to the study 'what makes a view' in paragraph 12.9, but need to clarify that it is Blackdown Hills AONB specific.
- Policies need to be strengthened and written specifically into Policy 32 to prevent future industrialisation of the countryside.
- AONB landscapes require particular protection and are of high visual importance
- The new town is contrary to this policy as it will cause light pollution, noise pollution, traffic pollution and a detriment to the enjoyment of the area.
- Anything affecting the health and biodiversity of the coast, as well as the views, should be included in its protection. Sewage, road and agricultural run-off should not be permitted to enter the rivers or sea.
- Development will damage landscapes even if visual impact is low.
- Specific views were referred to, including Woodland Trust's new woodland at Yonder Oak, Whimble and Littleham and the Maer Valley in Exmouth.
- Agents for Bourne Leisure objects to policy noting it refers to "key views and views of local landmarks" but without specifically identifying or designating them. Items a and b of

draft Policy 77 are particularly concerning, as a judgment will need to be made without any proper consideration at the plan-making stage. This will create inconsistent decision-making and will not provide certainty for applicants or the local community. Bourne Leisure requests that draft Policy 77 is removed from the Plan or is reworded to address the concerns. They also advise policy also references “cumulative impacts within views”. Existing development needs to be taken as the baseline for the built environment and provides the context for assessing new/additional development. Applications for extensions should not lead to the Council re-assessing the harm of existing developments, as this is the wrong starting point and may inadvertently rule out needed and sustainable development.

- Barratt Homes and Vistry object to policy wording, which fails to recognise that changes to views may not always result in a negative or adverse impact on that view.
- The effect of this policy would be to prevent the vast amount of development as Landscape Institute guidelines interpret any change as being harmful – therefore amend wording to ensure landscape has an appropriate weight in the planning balance.
- Policy should be applied flexibly, especially outside AONB's, in recognition of the shortfall in employment land (but also housing land) in EDDC and across the sub-region

Policy 78 - Green wedges

- The policy for protection of green wedges was well supported, however numerous respondents expressed concern that existing green wedges are being eroded and coalescence is already taking place/will take place as a result of proposed allocations.

More detailed comments include:

- Existing Green Wedges have been ignored while considering proposed development sites. It is contradictory to allocate housing in existing green wedges, especially where appeals have been won on the basis of the protective designation.
- The proposed policy is weaker than the existing policy, which should be retained.
- Green wedges aren't necessary. Landscape harm, the loss of recreational spaces, and harm to ecology can be addressed without the need for this blanket policy approach. Each application should be assessed on its merits and within these more sensitive areas they can be informed as necessary by landscape and visual appraisals and detailed ecological assessments. They can then be judged on the appropriate balance of harm and benefits.
- Development on a Green Wedge is likely to cause loss of agricultural land, impacting food security

- Development on a Green Wedge will have a detrimental effect on the wildlife and biodiversity of the area. Within GW's there should be at least 10 % net gain for biodiversity from pre development baseline, using the metrics set out in the Environment Bill (2021)"
- Sports provision in Green Wedges are likely to require lighting which will affect the flight paths of bats.
- The Policy should be fully adhered to there should not be any exceptions.
- Concern was expressed that some existing green wedges are not effective (as development is being allowed in them)
- Links between settlements, eg tree-lined cycle/footpaths are essential/are acceptable within GW's
- If Green Wedge land is lost then compensatory provision should be made on adjacent land.
- Important policy for the creation of place, identity, landscape, habitat, active travel and recreation opportunity.
- Smaller green wedges even within major housing developments, are crucial in providing access to open space and in their ability to protect existing habitats (hedgerows, trees) and to allow net gain on site
- Should have same status as Green Belt.
- Existing green wedges are not large enough to create a meaningful gap that separates settlements and should be much larger where possible.
- Green Wedges should provide wildlife corridors between and into settlements. Woodlands should have a 50m buffer from new developments and a target of 30% canopy cover in new developments. Existing trees, hedges and other bio-diverse habitats should be enhanced in new developments in order to allow for this permeability between sites.
- Development within green wedges should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and then it should be minimal and not detract from the landscape.
- Neighbourhood Plans received a lot of community support for Green Wedges and these areas (eg Sidmouth-Sidbury, West Hill to Ottery St Mary and Beer to Seaton) warrant protection in the local plan. Urban sprawl should not be permitted in these areas.
- Additional Green Wedges are required. Farringdon (and other villages affected by the new town), Clyst Honiton, Cranbrook, Exmouth, Colyton, Sidbury, Sidford, Lympstone, around Woodbury Common and Whimble were specifically suggested as locations to be considered for new or additional GW's.
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise We would like to see the addition of a further requirement: 'Development within Green Wedges must deliver a minimum 25% biodiversity net gain'.
- Broadclyst Parish Council - The Council does not agree with the statement that development in Green Wedges will be supported if it cannot be located elsewhere, and that it would not compromise, individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed

development, the integrity of the green wedge, either by diminishing its physical extent or through visual intrusion. The protection to land identified as a Green Wedge must be sacrosanct and upheld without exception.

Policy 79 - Land of Local Amenity Importance or Local Green Space

- The policy was well supported although some responses suggested that the terminology may need to be clarified.

More detailed points included:

- The Environment Agency comment that these spaces will be crucial in helping communities to adapt and be more resilient to climate change.
- Policy is ambiguous. Unclear it relates to green space “on the ground”, whether it is publicly-accessible or it relates to spaces between (and including?) buildings that are simply visible. It may duplicate Policy 77 and unclear whether it includes trees.
- Policy should apply environmental criteria in addition to visual ones and these spaces should include at least 10 % net gain for biodiversity from pre development baseline, using the metrics set out in the Environment Bill (2021)
- Don't want local amenities, prefer a more isolated lifestyle.
- LGS and LLAs are needed for human and biological protection.
- Maps need to be improved and policy should say the areas are under review. LGS and LLAI should be listed.
- Housing allocations threaten some of these areas eg Mear Valley and Littleham Fields at Exmouth, contrary to this policy.
- Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to LGS and LLAI should be referred to
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise We would like to see the addition of a further requirement: 'Development within LLAI or LGS must deliver a minimum 25% biodiversity net gain'.
- Broadclyst Parish Council - The Council does not agree with the statement that development in Local Green Space or Land of Local Amenity Importance areas, development will be restricted to those limited types of appropriate development set out below, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Local Green Space or Land of Local Amenity Importance areas must be protected from development without exception or exemption.

Policy 80 - Contaminated Land

- The Environment Agency comment that the policy could specify that the purpose of the policy is to protect the water environment as well as human health.
- Exmouth Town Council and several other respondents agree with policy.
- How can you do this if you want to build everywhere?
- Should stop plan until current plan expires in 2030.
- Very happy with this chapter but will it be applied because contradicts a strategic site allocation elsewhere in plan.
- Policy does not recognise contamination from agricultural activity.
- A few respondents raised the need to consider decontamination of waste from low carbon technologies including batteries.
- Hundreds of acres will be contaminated by solar and energy storage companies when technology becomes obsolete – bonds need to be required by EDDC to cover future costs of contamination.
- Decontamination of land must be properly recorded and monitored.
- A Few respondents felt that brownfield development should be prioritised.
- New town is too close to landfill site and Hill Barton Business Park with its noise pollution and unpleasant odours and particulates.
- There is lots of contaminated land to the west of East Devon affecting Option 1 of the new town and bad smells which would affect the new town.
- Good aspirations but monitoring and enforcement are biggest issues.
- Harm to people needs to be considered properly, not just trying to build houses everywhere.
- Two proposed new town options are on landfill sites.
- Denaturing contamination would add to development costs and disincentivise brownfield development.
- Contamination of former Seaton gas works has not been fully investigated but nearby development has commenced.

Policy 81 - Potentially Hazardous Developments Notifiable Installations

- The Environment Agency support this policy.
- Exmouth Town Council and one other agree with policy.
- Battery energy storage systems are hazardous and need to be classified as such in the local plan.
- Support policy and should apply to pipes from waste to heat plants and high-tension power cables.

- Add to policy wording 'or adjacent land x metres'
- Who decides what is a health and safety risk and how great it is?
- Why build when it is dangerous to health? You don't have to build and build.

Policy 82 - Control of Pollution

- The Environment Agency are satisfied that this policy includes the basic elements we would want to see in a pollution control policy, particularly regarding pollution of surface or ground waters. However, the policy says that permission will not be granted to proposal that will result in 'unacceptable' levels of pollution. It is not clear how an 'unacceptable' level of pollution would be defined. The policy should be clear that new proposals will be expected to not cause pollution of air, land, or water and that any unavoidable impacts will be adequately mitigated. To address this the policy should require new development to be accompanied by a construction environment management plan (CEMP). The CEMP would need to cover SuDS and soil management during construction to avoid compaction and sediment laden run-off. Paragraph 12.29 states that 'possible pollution effects from proposed development can be a material consideration'. We recommend that this is amended to be less ambiguous so that 'can be' is replaced by 'are'. Paragraph 185 of the NPPF is clear that likely effects on pollution should be considered.
- Natural England recommend that this pollution policy is strengthened to recognise the importance of environmental assets such as clean water and air to the natural environment and local communities. Policy should seek to protect habitats from water-related impacts and where appropriate seek enhancement. We would expect this policy to address the impacts of air quality on the natural environment. In particular, it should address the traffic impacts associated with new development and proposals which are likely to generate additional nitrogen emissions as a result of increased traffic generation or from agricultural development which can be damaging to the natural environment.
- Exmouth Town Council ask who defines acceptable levels and whether policy can be used to address issues with South West Water.
- Support policy.
- Several respondents queried the definition of what is 'acceptable'.
- How can you do this?
- Most important but developers are allowed to evade and SWW cannot refuse – EDDC need to protect residents by applying.
- Need to apply to battery energy storage systems and large agricultural units.
- This should be a top priority.
- Should be enforced.
- Too many properties are not connected to the mains sewers.

- No indication of what an unacceptable level of pollution is – all pollution is unacceptable.
- Need to consider, manage and minimise air pollution (traffic, solid fuel burning) noise pollution (traffic), water pollution (plastic and microplastic, sewage and farm waste) light pollution (streetlights, domestic lighting, commercial buildings).
- Battery energy storage systems are ecological disasters in the making and plan should assess.
- Can policy be used to address Southwest Water mismanagement?
- River pollution big issue in East Devon.
- Does item 1 include wood burning stoves?
- Needs to be stronger to address river pollution.
- Need to keep storm water separate from sewage.
- Should not allow developments near watercourses.
- Point 5 should refer to all insects, not just flies.
- There is no acceptable level of pollution.
- New town option 1 too close to Hill Barton, which already causes problems for residents.
- Where will sewage/drainage be discharged?
- Should not interfere and cause damage to humans and environment.
- Pollution should be barrier to development, including from additional traffic and affecting water environment.
- More air and sea pollution will be caused by scale of development proposed at Exmouth.
- Agents for Bourne Leisure endorse the principle of draft Policy 82, but requests that 'visitors' is added to the policy wording to ensure that adequate amenity protection is provided for visitors to East Devon as well as residents and the wider environment.
- Barratt Homes and Vistry feel that policy should be reworded because new development should be self-sustaining and should not be required to correct existing pollution issues.

Policy 83 - Development on High Quality Agricultural Land

- The Policy was well supported. There was an overriding concern that food production should be prioritised over other uses.

More specific points included:

- Natural England advise that soils should be valued as a finite multi-functional resource which underpins our wellbeing and prosperity. Decisions about development should take full account of the impact on soils, their intrinsic character and the sustainability of the many ecosystem services they deliver. This policy could be made more robust by

requiring relevant development to incorporate a soil handling plan and sustainable soil management strategy based on detailed soil surveys.

- National Farmers Union state food security and securing the provision of an acceptable level of home produced food is critical for the nation and with future challenges and the impact of climate change this will only become more vital. Therefore support policy
- One respondent stated that, whilst no-one wants to see the loss of greenfields, given the need for housing the policy was as balanced as it could be.
- Conflict between areas suitable for high fruit/vegetable productivity (eg the very fertile low lying pebblebed soils) and suitability for solar farms. They should be protected for food production.
- High value cropping systems with minimal tillage should be encouraged to prevent silt entering rivers due to historic style ploughing eg Exe is being silted up
- Land management plans should be required to slow down water flow and enable capture of silt from eroding farmland. There seem to be few references to this in the plan.
- A number of respondents felt that there is no justification for loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, especially given the uncertainty of future food production.
- It is inappropriate to allocate sites in the Local Plan for development without undertaking a full assessment of the agricultural quality in terms of Grades 1, 2, 3a and possible 3b. Such an assessment will help the authority to determine if the benefits of the development justifies and clearly outweighs the loss of high quality agricultural land needed for food security.
- Grade 3b should be included as Best and Most Versatile. It is capable of greater output in times of drought and climate change than higher grades.
- No justification to develop any agricultural land apart from the provision of agricultural workers accommodation but only if unavailable on or nearby the farms.
- It is right that allocated development do not need to justify the loss of high quality agricultural land. Sites have been allocated due to the strategic benefits that can be delivered and should not therefore need to justify the principle of development relative to the quality of the agricultural land to be lost. This could otherwise unduly delay and overcomplicate the delivery of these sites, if not potentially prejudice their delivery.
- The policy is weak and open to exploitation. Greater clarity as to what “overriding need” means.
- Food security is as important as energy security. We may not be able to import the bulk of our food into the future.
- Include a section on rewilding/biodiversity net gain of 3,4 and 5 Grade land, and encourage eco-tourism. This forms part of the BNG mitigation hierarchy within the Environment Act 2020.
- Development allocations, and allowing solar farms, run counter to this policy.

- All existing agricultural land within the West side of East Devon, i.e. Farringdon, will be replaced by new houses
- C G Fry object to blanket prohibition that has not been evidenced. This risks delivery of development that will support the strategic outcomes of the draft plan. Should be redrafted to reflect NPPF paragraph 174 b.
- Barratt Homes and Vistry suggest that the requirement that development will only be permitted on the best and most versatile land where land of a lower grade is unavailable is ambiguous because it does not confirm the way in which the assessment should be undertaken.
- Broadclyst Parish Council - Policy 83, development on High Quality Agricultural Land is not supported. It is felt that the policy wording is too vague and that it offers too many opportunities to be overridden.
- Clyst Honiton Parish Council is concerned that the development of a new town will require the development of high-quality agricultural land. They believed that the environmental impact of developing this land should be carefully considered.
- The provision of homes and employment carries substantial weight in the planning balance when considered against the lack of robust housing and employment land supply in EDDC and across the subregion. This policy needs to be applied flexibly in recognition of this shortfall; this is especially the case in the western side of the District where development is clearly focused.

Chapter 12 - Policy omissions from - Caring for our outstanding landscape

- Calls for - new landscape protection areas to further defend our special place from more development. What about wider buffer zones to Woodbury common, protecting special views and nature corridors and designating green wedges
- Rewilding should be encouraged through policy
- Whereas many other planning authorities refer to 'blue corridors' in their local plans, there is no mention of these as such in the East Devon local plan.

Chapter 13 - Protecting and enhancing our outstanding biodiversity and geodiversity

Chapter 13 of the plan addresses biodiversity and geodiversity. There was a general picture of strong support for protection and enhancement of biodiversity in comments received, with some calling for stronger policies. Key general cues raised in comments were.

- The Environment Agency comment that the introduction to the chapter is a good start, but parts of the chapter and some of the policies seem disjointed and muddled.
- Exeter City Council stress the importance of joint working with the City and Teignbridge in respect of mitigating in combination impacts on European (wildlife) sites. In terms of addressing these impacts, the updated Joint European Sites Mitigation Strategy will be key.
- Devon Wildlife Trust are impressed with the breadth and detail provided within Chapter 13 'Protecting and enhancing our outstanding biodiversity and geodiversity' and applaud East Devon District Council for their commitment to exceed minimum national levels with regard to biodiversity net gain.
- Protection should extend to gardens
- New development should incorporate nest boxes for birds ie Swift bricks, House Martin nest boxes House Sparrow boxes a Super Highway for Hedgehogs to obtain access to gardens at night perhaps some hidden areas for them to sleep during the day.
- I also believe wild area with a good pond also Bat roosting boxes perhaps also a Kestrel nest box or two.
- Some native trees of course and hedgerows.
- Any new housing developments would be a marvellous opportunity to create a wildlife friendly eco system area, all you have to do is create the spaces and the creatures would colonised it over time.
- There is no provision for animals to migrate through urban areas. Connectivity is vitally important for biodiversity. If each site is assessed on its own, the effect will be to isolate populations which will lead to eventual annihilation.
- Credible checks should be put in place to ensure that required mitigation/habitat provision is delivered as part of/alongside development.
- Developers should be held accountable for adverse impacts.
- A respondent advised a tree does not become carbon neutral until it is 27-34 years old (EU research) so any tree negatively impacted by development or pollution cannot be carbon offset in time for East Devon to become carbon neutral by 2040.
- A number of respondents commented on the challenges and failures of translocations.
- New planting should be in keeping with natural habitat.
- There was a call for a green doughnut economy.

- A number of respondents were concerned about whether there was a real commitment to biodiversity or whether policies would or could be enforced in practice and whether development with adverse impacts may occur regardless. There were cases where representations cited past decision on past planning applications where they believed policies had not been applied.
- A respondent suggested it was “*greenwashing*”.
- Concern was expressed about the Council having sufficient resources to apply policies, ensure they are enforced and for monitoring.
- A developer states that if development incorporates sufficient open space to offset any recreational impact, it should not be refused.

Policy 84 - Protection of Internationally and Nationally important wildlife sites

- The Environment Agency are concerned that the policy refers to ‘areas secured as compensation for damage to an internationally or nationally designated site’ and that it is not clear how broad the definition is and whether it would include areas like the Clyst Valley Regional Park, which have been identified as Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space as well as Environment Agency schemes such as the Lower Otter Restoration Project.
- The Environment Agency support the provisions for the protection of wildlife sites but point out that the terms ‘Habitats of Principal Importance’ and ‘Priority Habitats’ are the same thing and suggest that one term should be used to avoid confusion.
- Natural England advise - Internationally and Nationally Important Sites Point 3 – suitable measures should be secured rather than proposed. Point 4 - 20% BNG is not appropriate in this context as any mitigation or compensation requirements required for statutory designated sites should be dealt with separately from BNG provision. Ecological relevance and connection to the affected site would be better added to Point 4 for Regionally and Locally important sites. The policy should refer to Habitats of Principal (not Principle) Importance.
- Agents for Bloor Homes:
 - The first part of the policy relates to internationally and nationally important sites so the first sub-heading needs to be amended to reflect this i.e. reference to locally-important sites should be removed from the sub-heading.
 - Reference is made to biodiversity net gain for impacts to all Wildlife Sites. It is considered that this duplicates policy requirements set out in Policy 87 – Biodiversity Net Gain, and should therefore, be removed.
 - Proposed avoidance, mitigation and, as a last resort, compensation measures for impacts to designated sites (refer also to Paragraph 2.4 below) should ensure that the integrity of

these site is maintained and significant harm avoided e.g., in relation to the Conservation Objectives for National/International Wildlife Sites such as SACs, SPAs or Ramsar Sites, or the 'Favourable Condition' of sites such as SSSIs. There is no requirement to achieve a net gain for these sites, either in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), legislation or elsewhere.

- The application of the ecological mitigation hierarchy for impacts to National/International Wildlife Sites such as SACs, SPAs and Ramsar Sites should be amended to reflect the due process that it required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended; the 'Habitats Regulations') for ensuring that the integrity of these sites is maintained.

- Habitats of Principal Importance (note Principal spelt incorrectly in the Policy and at other locations in the Consultation Local Plan) have been included in this Policy. These are not Wildlife Sites and it is considered that these habitats should be addressed through inclusion under Policy 85 to ensure a clear and consistent approach.

- Devon Wildlife Trust advise ...suitable biodiversity net gain of at least 20% is proposed' is repeated twice within this policy. We would like to see this strengthened to '25% is required'.
- Criteria in policy supported – though one responded advised they have been overridden in respect of solar energy and battery storage.
- In respect of point 2 in policy concern that loss should not happen under any circumstances – noting that many habitats can't be replaced (or take very long times to establish).
- Considered that policy needs to be rigorously applied.
- Concern that developments next/near to designated sites can cause harm and needs to be carefully controlled, including in respect to adverse impacts from occupants after construction.
- Development should not happen on or at designated sites,
- Policy supported but should include local wildlife sites in neighbourhood plans.
- Energy efficiency is more important than perceived appearance. I'd rather we produced ugly houses that were warm, dry and easy to live in, that visually acceptable ones that require huge energy to heat them and keep them dry. In practice it's rarely an either/or.
- Who decides what trees and hedges are "worthy of retention"?
- Yes to minimising energy needs.
- Yes to space minimum standards.

Policy 85 - Protection of irreplaceable habitats and important features

- The Environment Agency think that the wording of the policy should either be simplified to just refer to 'Habitats of Principal Importance' or the list of habitats expanded to

include: Intertidal mudflats; Rivers and Streams; Estuarine habitats; Coastal and floodplain and grazing marsh; Broadleaved mixed and yew woodland; Traditional orchards; Lowland heaths and Maritime slopes and cliffs.

- The Environment Agency suggest that more emphasis should be given to restoring and expanding the habitats through partnership working and community projects.
- The Environment Agency highlight the importance of data gathering and monitoring of the condition and distribution of the habitats for ensuring their ongoing protection.
- South West Water support the policy but want water habitats included within the protections proposed, including seagrass.
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise we would like to see a requirement for habitat replacement to be in line with the most recent DEFRA biodiversity metric in order to compensate for the time taken for these habitats to establish.
- The SVBG would like to draw attention to the fact that ancient and veteran trees are included in the definition of irreplaceable habitat within the National Planning Policy Framework – making it all the more important to protect and enhance the distinctive network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees throughout the District.
- Policy is supported but needs enforcing.
- Hedgerows should be incorporated into development schemes and afforded greater protection.
- Agents for Bloor Homes - As set out above in Paragraph 2.5, Habitats of Principal Importance should be addressed by this policy.
- Care needs to be taken that trees and hedgerows are not cut down over night as has happened in the past. Could go further by emphasising the penalties for wilful destruction.
- Policy should refer to protection of water meadows (and other habitats).
- Positive that damaging impacts of light pollution are referenced in policy.
- Concern that policy is not strong enough – the Exmouth Wildlife Group commented that the hedgerow element was lacking in clarity and is dated and could stipulate the retention of a certain (as yet unquantified) metreage of hedgerow in proportion to either the number of houses being built or size of development.
- It should be acknowledged that there are instances where hedgerow removal cannot be avoided, such as needing to access a development site.

Policy 86 - Habitats Regulations Assessment

- Natural England support the aims of this policy. It should be noted that some intertidal land being created as part of the River Otter Restoration Project (LORP) will be designated as “6. Areas secured as sites compensating for damage to a European site” within the lifetime of this plan. It is suggested that much of the policy wording around the

South-East Devon European Sites Mitigation Strategy (SEDESMS) could be moved to the justification.

- Natural England considers the policy restricting development within the pinch points protecting Beer Quarry and Caves SAC to be overly restrictive. Only development which would restrict bat commuting e.g. by removal of hedgerows or trees, or by artificial lighting or wind energy development could cause an adverse impact on bats. We recommend removal of the words “planning permission will not be supported for any development proposals within the pinch points, and” but retaining the rest of the policy.
- Natural England highlight that it is important that the reasoning behind the 400m zone around the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SPA is fully explained – it is not and never has been solely about predation of ground-nesting birds by cats, but the restriction is also necessary to reduce direct recreational pressure and dog related impacts. For this reason, tourist accommodation should also be restricted within 400m. This revised wording is required to be consistent with SEDESMS.
- Natural England advise that in addition to mention of pinch points affecting Beer Quarry and Caves SAC, policy justification para 13.34 should also refer to the published Beer Quarry and Caves SAC Guidance and this document should be added to the Plan’s evidence base.
- The Environment Agency support the approach set out in the policy and hope that work on the Axminster Nutrient Management Plan and new initiatives will help to provide solutions.
- The Environment Agency strongly support the approach set out in the supporting text that the Council will assess development and encourage measures to protect and where possible enhance water quality. However, given the specific pressures in East Devon, the agency would encourage a specific nutrient management policy that links potential for funding of upstream river restoration delivering phosphate stripping to achieve this. The Agency advocate a consistent district wide approach, drawing on experience gained from the Axe catchment, to see developments across East Devon offsetting their foul effluent derived nutrient inputs whilst at the same time achieving environmental betterment and net gains for nature.
- In terms of the requirement for water efficiency measures, the Environment Agency are concerned that as currently written, the impression is that this is about water quantity rather than quality and suggest re-writing so development need to achieve nutrient neutrality not just wastewater minimisation.
- Devon County Council would like to discuss this policy to ensure the council is aware of the input that we can provide on planning applications in the River Axe SAC catchment.
- South Somerset District Council welcome the policy and recommend that the plan includes a reference to adjoining LPAs that are also impacted by the issue.
- Comment raised that the River Axe SAC is under particular threat from phosphate run off and it is unclear what measures EDDC is allowing to offset nutrient neutrality.

Mitigation measures need to be guaranteed to work and transparent. Also calls for stronger links to the Environment Agency.

- National Farmers Union state farm businesses are making significant investments in slurry storage across England, either to meet regulatory requirements or to future proof the business. This allows them not only to meet Environment Agency requirements on storage and spreading windows, but also make best use of what is a very valuable resource.
- The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that SANGS should recognise other needs, not just those of dog walkers, by appealing to young families and those with limited access to other nearby natural open space.
- In many cases this is not an ‘intensification’ of a farm business but just better management of the resource that is already within the business. In these cases, it should not be treated as ‘development’ as it will not have any ‘additional’ impact on phosphate loading in the catchment (as relevant to the Axe catchment).
- Where businesses come forwards with developments to improve water quality these should be looked on positively.
- A developer advised that policy must be reconsidered in order to ensure that it does not unduly prevent or delay the delivery of the district’s housing needs and to ensure there is the flexibility to respond to changes in legislation, policy and guidance – noting Defra-funded Nutrient Mitigation Scheme to be run by Natural England.
- Commented that compensation not acceptable, better to refuse on principle.
- One respondent said “well done”.
- A call was made for Habitat Regulation Assessment to apply to all developments.
- The 400 metre cats buffer zone was challenge with evidence cited that cats will travel and predate further than this, comment that the buffer should be bigger. A further buffer was also called for that limits scale of developments in this buffer – 400-800 metres with development at a maximum of 3 dwellings per hectare.
- Considered that AONBs should also fall under this policy.
- The East Devon AONB team support these requirements as they apply to sites within the AONB
- Agents for Bloor Homes advise that policy is replicates legal requirements and is therefore unnecessary. it is recommended that the section of the Policy entitled ‘HRA process and requirements’ is deleted. The Policy should then be changed to ‘HRA avoidance and mitigation strategies and guidance’

Policy 87 - Biodiversity Net Gain

- Natural England supports policy on Biodiversity Net Gain. We recommend policy is expanded to make it clear that by following the mitigation hierarchy, impacts on

biodiversity should be avoided. If this is not possible, then impacts should be mitigated and finally if there is no alternative, fully compensated. Only after that process is completed should BNG requirements be applied. Whilst recognising that the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy is still in an early development stage, it should still be possible through the current NRN mapping to identify key and priority areas for off-site BNG to be used for connecting and enhancing habitats. A suite of 'good practice principles' [Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development, A Practical Guide. | CIEEM](#) for biodiversity net gain have been developed and published. This information may be useful in gathering evidence and developing policy. These same principles also form the basis of the BS8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing biodiversity net gain [BS 8683:2021 | 31 Aug 2021 | BSI Knowledge \(bsigroup.com\)](#) which is also available and may be of use.

- The Environment Agency fully support the policy, but recommend that the plan sets out how Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved, especially of offsite compensation and enhancement schemes.
- The Environment Agency recommend that Biodiversity Net Gain be maintained for 100 years in line with national planning guidance for the development lifetime of residential development to be 100 years.
- Policy welcomed and supported with reference that developers who embrace the spirit and letter of the policy in creative ways.
- The East Devon AONB team support the details of paragraph 13.36 and Policy 87 which refers to East Devon Council recognising biodiversity net gain and support that EDDC are seeking to exceed national levels.
- Sidmouth Arboretum - Paragraph 13.41 refers to the many important sites and habitats in East Devon that are small, sporadic and exist in isolation. This is one of the reasons that our hedgerows are so important and the Local Plan should contain strong restrictions on their removal and possibly include obligations on developers to increase the lengths of hedgerows associated with their sites.
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise that they are delighted to see the Council include the requirement to exceed minimum national levels with regard to biodiversity net gain. However, in order to ensure that biodiversity net gain is delivered in a meaningful way, further information is required either within the Local Plan, or as a supplementary planning document. In representation they set out further detail of implementation.
- Call for 20% net gain to apply to all development sites.
- A respondent advocated a higher figure – 40%.
- A call that 20% should be within a defined time period for establishment and colonisation with either replacement species or those that will support a wider range of habitat and off-site mitigation is to be within East Devon.
- Concern that there is a loss period before biodiversity enhancement happens and policy should address this time lag period.

- Query why this is only a policy and not a Strategic Policy and why it does not refer to the Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Tool referred to in Strategic Policy 88 and to refer to the mitigation hierarchy cited in Policy 89.
- Concern that the starting point will be from when site is destroyed by development and not before. Concern also raised that development will invariably lead to biodiversity losses.
- It was cited that the biggest challenge will be monitoring and ensuring developers actually comply. It will require EDDC to put in place suitable resources to make sure this policy aim is achieved. A respondent suggested that this should be at the developers expense.
- Policy should state “there will be a requirement to use the latest version of the Biodiversity Metric.”
- Beaver introduction should form an explicit part of policy.
- Swift nest boxes should be allowed for as part of net gain.
- 20% net gain objected to in policy with a call for a 10% figure to match and reflect legislation.
- A 20% figure is seen as unsound as it is inconsistent with National Standards and may impact on the viability of developments and the delivery of housing across the district.
- It was considered that there is no evidence to justify a 20% figure with 10% being seen as appropriate.
- Registered provider considers 10% BNG would halt decline of natural capital and enhance it in a measurable way. Has concerns about viability and long-term housing delivery (affordable and general) if BNG is above 10%.
- A 10% requirement should be maintained in order to ensure that the requirement is ‘fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development’ (para 57, NPPF).
- Policy should not require biodiversity net gain to be delivered in the district – noting cases such as where development occurs close to district boundaries and may be more appropriate outside East Devon.
- Should be provided on site except in exceptional circumstances.
- A Policy requirement of at least 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is unjustified and unreasonable. There is no rationale provided for a figure that is double the national requirement. There is only reference to DEFRA Evidence Base and Impact Assessment Report (2017) for biodiversity net gain relating to viability. The DEFRA evidence base is from 2017 and does not provide an up to date portrait of viability, particularly as land prices and construction costs have increased exponentially since 2017. The policy fails to consider additional land take required to achieve 20%, such as where any habitat mitigation is required in the form of nutrient neutrality or Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space - this could include a large land area yet as it forms mitigation it can not be relied upon in BNG calculations – it can contribute up to a point of no net loss but not beyond. In these scenarios it would be difficult for sites to achieve 10% BNG let alone

20%. The policy should be revised to accord with the national 10% figure and encourage any increase beyond that rather than set a minimum figure of 20% that presents an additional barrier to development.

- Home Builders Federation states that there is no justification for requiring a higher percentage of Biodiversity Net Gain which could add significantly to development cost particularly where this would need to be delivered through offsite credits. Overall plan viability study needs to consider this matter, including sensitivity analysis of costs
- Housing Association planning consortium emphasise that a threshold greater than 10% must be robustly viability tested. The 20% requirement has the potential to significantly reduce affordable housing delivery
- Housing Association planning consortium wants guidance to be provided or signposted on how to practically achieve Biodiversity Net Gain, so it can be designed into processes at early stage
- Barratt David Wilson Homes urge EDDC to consider the lessons learnt from planning application 22/1532/MOUT when considering the most appropriate level of net gain. If the 20% level remains in the Local Plan, it could necessitate additional land to be identified to deliver the objectively assessed need for housing, or an increase in density. Both could result in undesirable outcomes. Any increase over that required by the Environment Act would impact on the quantum of developable land, and impact on development viability
- Policy needs to included in the overall plan viability assessment
- Agents for Bloor Homes consider that to ensure consistency with the proposed legislation, it is recommended that the Policy aligns with the legal net-gain requirement in place at that time, with 10% net gain set as the initial default position. This flexible and consistent approach would obviously allow the Policy net-gain requirement to increase above 20%, should the legislation set a higher requirement in the future.
- Agents for Bourne Leisure advise - the requirement set out in draft Policies 84 and 87 for development proposals to result in a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 20% is not justified. Draft Policies 84 and 87 should be amended to “at least 10% net gain”, in line with emerging national legislation as set out in the Environment Act 2021. Moreover, there should be further flexibility in Policies 84 and 87 as to how developers can achieve a BNG, including a mechanism for financial contributions to off-site habitats if on-site delivery is not possible. They say - East Devon already operates a well-conceived financial contribution approach for recreational impacts upon European designations. This should be extended to create funds for strategic projects which can bring wider benefits to the area.
- C G Fry express concern that 20% requirement for BNG is not supported by technical evidence and takes no account of viability and should be amended in line with the provisions of the Environment Act.

- Barratt Homes object to 20% and lack of viability evidence. Evidence base is out-of-date and partly based on another District, which has yet to be examined. Policy not justified or sound. Barratt Homes have committed to deliver 10% BNG on all developments but would support a quantum that is appropriately evidence based.
- A site promoter claims that there is no justification for pursuing a target figure in excess of the national standard (10%) and that the national policy will have a significant detrimental impact on delivery and will produce little in the way of substantive ecological benefits that would not occur anyway.
- Other agents for developers object to the 20% figure.
- Various landowners state that they would make a significant contribution towards biodiversity net gain through their development proposals

Policy 88 - Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Network

- The Environment Agency support the intentions of this policy and suggest that the Lower Clyst, The Exe Estuary Nature Recovery Area and the National Trust's Three Rivers Recovery scheme at Killerton are good options for targeting nature recovery efforts.
- Devon Wildlife Trust state '...in excess of the standard policy requirement'. We are concerned that an open-ended statement such as this is open to misuse. We would recommend that the Council provide a firm statement of their requirement and would like to see a minimum of 25% net gain required in these circumstances
- This policy is welcomed but net gain should be within a defined time period.
- Call for a ban on development in defined areas.
- There is scope to link with work the AONBs are doing in relation to nature recovery (and review of the management plans).
- Concern that more information and training is needed about the network and strategy to fully understand the benefits of this policy.
- EDDC should not allow proposals for allocated sites to be put forward if they contravene this policy.
- The East Devon AONB team support the policy and welcome the addition to the protection of biodiversity. AONBs are developing Nature Recovery Plans as part of their Colchester Declaration commitment, and these are to be included in the pending review of AONB Management Plans (2025) which will align with this Policy and may be considered as supporting evidence.
- Sid Valley Biodiversity Action Group welcome this policy in support of the Nature Recovery Green Paper.

- Agents for Bloor Homes advise - clarification is required as to the meaning of 'proposals', which, as per the proposed Policy, 'must contribute to the strategic objectives of the Local Natural Recovery Strategy....'.

Policy 89 - Ecological Impact Assessment

- The Environment Agency consider the policy to be comprehensive, but does not refer to BNG and LNRS so that the ecological policies seem disjointed. They recommend that these policies are reviewed to determine how they can be better integrated with one another and to avoid possible duplication or conflict.
- Devon Wildlife Trust state 'Surveys should not be conditioned as part of a granted permission'. We would like to see the use of stronger language in this sentence; 'will or must' would be more robust, with additional comment stating 'Unless in exceptional cases'.
- EIAs must be implemented not should as is written at the beginning of this policy.
- This assessment should be conducted by an independent assessor on all proposed developments.
- This will only work with effective, informed oversight: both review of the reports submitted by developers to ensure they are accurate and monitoring of the actual implementation.
- Some surveys miss out specific species. E.g. if a survey is completed outside of the 12 week period swifts are in the UK they won't be included in a wildlife survey.
- One respondent said "This is an essay, not a Policy."
- Agents for Bloor Homes consider that policy text could be rationalised in this section e.g. text on deviation from best practice could be included in the 'Justification' section, which follows the Policy. It is recommended that the heading 'Protected and notable species' before paragraph 13.53 on the Consultation Local Plan is deleted. Text within paragraph 13.53 can simply be included within the 'Justification' sub-section above. This will avoid confusion with the following policy, Policy 90, which relates to protected and notable species.
- Agents for Bourne Leisure object to the inclusion of 'the precautionary principle' within the policy, and particularly "increasing public participation in decision making". Public participation can be helpful in the planning process but in relation to applying the precautionary principle, there are significant risks that citizen intervention could result in overly risk averse approaches being taken on the whim of a single person. Decision making must be undertaken by, and in consultation with, professionals.
- A developer does not agree with policy text stating ecology surveys cannot be conditioned, as the long time scales on large scale applications can mean some ecological surveys become out of date, so should be able to condition survey updates.

Policy 90 - Due consideration of protected and notable species

- The Environment Agency recommend that the policy should unambiguously require that developers remove invasive species from their land to reduce abundance and prevent future spread into the wild. The policy could proscribe what circumstances this may not be achievable and list them as exemptions.
- The policy needs to be clear on how protection will be implemented.
- There should be no exceptions which lead to degradation of wildlife and loose interpretation of the policies.
- Good to note that birds of conservation concern on the amber as well as the red list are included.
- Requiring applicants to demonstrate full removal of invasives in perpetuity is unachievable. Policy needs to be stronger.
- Should apply to all protected species not just European.
- Agents for Bloor Homes advise - reference is made to the consideration of European Protected Species, defined as species listed under Annex II and IV of the Habitats Directive. It is considered that this should be modified and defined as species listed under Schedules 2 and 5 of the Habitats Regulations. The fifth bullet point in the first series of bullet points (defining protected and notable species) should be modified to text only i.e. not a bullet point.

Policy 91 - Ecological enhancement and incorporation of design features to maximize the biodiversity value of proposals

- There was general support in responses received for the policy.
- However, the Environment Agency did not think it was clear what the policy adds to the BNG and LNRS policies and suggest it should be made clear what it applies to . For example, it should be clarified whether the policy exists for developments of such as small-scale that BNG does not apply such as conversions and changes of use.
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise We welcome the inclusion of the requirement for a minimum of one bird box per dwelling, but would like to see this extended to cover both bat and invertebrate boxes/bricks in addition to bird boxes. Gap provision for small mammals should be specified as 13cm to account for hedgehogs. This section should include reference to the Building with Nature accreditation.
- A number of respondents called for specific mitigation features to be set out in policy, these included Swift bricks/tubes, holes in fences, ponds, long grass and wildflower areas, open green space, tree cover, amphibian-friendly drain covers, dropped kerbs and nesting boxes for predatory birds such as peregrines.

- There was a call for the first paragraph should be redrafted to make it simpler for developers to understand what is required of them.
- A respondent considered that the policy should also refer to the need to retain any trees felled (with the necessary permission) to retain and provide natural biodiversity habitats on site.
- It was commented that policy should specify that policy application/use requires Input from a qualified horticulturist/ ecologist.
- It was felt that trigger point for policy application needs to be low and very clear.
- Where farm buildings that have previously held nesting swallows, suitable nesting sites should also be incorporated.
- For item 4 it was agreed that overhanging eaves for the purpose stated are appropriate but if they're made of the wrong materials then the houses built by house martins will drop off after a couple of weeks, often after eggs have been laid or hatched. The RSPB needs to be asked to specify the correct materials.
- There was a call that natural boundaries (e.g. hedges) to be made compulsory in as many instances as possible, rather than man-made, with a ban on clear glass.
- The East Devon AONB team supports the provision of ecological impact assessments and recognises these will contribute to conserving the detailed interests within AONB.
- Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council would like bat and bee boxes to be included and for swift boxes to be specified instead of bird boxes in line with RSPB guidance. The Parish Council would also like RSPB advise on the correct materials for overhanging eaves and for all boundaries to incorporate holes and for all these items to be compulsory.
- Agents for Bloor Homes seek clarification as to the meaning of 'proposals' within policy.
- Agents for Bourne Leisure advise that it is essential that measures to maximise the biodiversity value of proposals and to mitigate adverse impacts of new developments on biodiversity be assessed on a site-by-site basis. The requirements for net biodiversity gain should then be the basis for enhancing features for a project. Therefore, Bourne Leisure suggests that draft Policy 91 is removed from the Plan.
- Sidmouth Arboretum - Most of the design features listed are associated with the buildings. Sidmouth Arboretum suggests the small number of site features should include the planting of trees and hedgerows explicitly to reinforce their importance.
- Sidmouth Arboretum would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of design guidelines for all development and comment on developers' proposals to ensure that retention of trees and hedgerows is prioritised wherever possible and any replacement will provide appropriate mitigation to maintain current, and enhance future levels, of biodiversity.

Policy 92 - Tree Policy

- There was a broad level of support for policy though some respondents did not consider that it went far enough in respect of protecting existing trees and supporting or requiring additional planting, there were calls for tree planting targets in all new developments and opposition to any loss.
- The Environment Agency supported the requirement to take account of climate change when selection appropriate trees to plant;
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise 'Development schemes should seek to'. Again, we would prefer to see 'will' or 'must' utilised here. We would like to see the requirement for native species referred to here – please see General Comments above. It is unclear whether this may be an early draft with missing information as sentences appear incomplete. We would recommend this policy is rewritten to be more user friendly.
- There was a call for policy to specifically cover Ancient Orchards, Woodland and Veteran Trees with avoidance of loss to development with the view that as these assets are irreplaceable it would be inappropriate for loss to occur through the development process. Retaining habitat rather than replacing was seen as appropriate.
- There was comment that policy should extend to hedgerows, with opposition to their loss and recognition needed for their wildlife corridor importance. A minimum number of standard trees for new hedgerows was sought.
- There were a range of comments on minimum standards or levels of new planting in developments with a call for overall canopy levels (eg 30% coverage), a new tree in every new domestic garden, a minimum number of trees stated to be planted for developments with larger green spaces.
- It was highlighted that planting small trees is better in health and carbon neutrality terms –with a preference for native UK grown trees and also trees appropriate for specific locations, noting climate change considerations. A respondent advised that owing big trees around with associated soil presents a significant plant health risk
- It was suggested we could have more tree plantations in the AONBs and to protect current woodland there already.
- There was a call for street planting to be incorporated into all new developments with minimum planting standards specified. A respondent advised that we should also consider including a management plan for street trees - to discourage residents from carrying out 'pruning' and to make sure trees are replaced if/when necessary.
- It was suggested trees should be encased (below ground) ensuring roots are adequately restrained so as not to lead to pavement "heave", once mature. Or species chosen with downward growing roots (such as Hawthorth). Similar concerns were expressed about Proximity of tree planting to buildings.
- Design guides to guide developers (and individuals) to plant appropriately resistant and diverse species is critical.

- Having the necessary staffing at the council was seen as critical to policy success and it was highlighted that policing of trees is required before developers move in.
- There was, however, scepticism in that a tree does not become carbon neutral until 27-34 years old. There is no possible way of offsetting canopy cover or where trees are negatively impacted by development within the timespan of this plan. And also scepticism that protection had not been afforded in the past to trees and as such concern about future application.
- A view was expressed that TPOs should mean proper tree protection but in many cases trees are cut down or pollarded close to death without any enforcement being implemented. There was also a call for more TPO's on veteran trees.
- Dead wood was also highlighted as important and leaving dead trees where practical provides vital habitat for wood peckers and other dead wood users, with opposition to wood chipping.
- Newton Poppleford Parish Council want the policy strengthened to protect hedgerows and trees, set a minimum specification for street trees, minimum of one tree per garden, minimum number of trees for new hedgerows, minimum distances between buildings and trees set and presumption of refusal for developments that harm ancient orchards, woodland and veteran trees.
- Support policy in principle, but concerned that there is a lack of clarity about the term 'provide potential net gain in canopy cover and contribution towards local canopy cover goals'.
- Barratt Homes and Vistry do not consider the policy as worded can be adopted until the Devon Tree Strategy is published and then policy will need further consultation.
- Various landowners state that they would make a significant contribution towards tree planting through their development proposals..

Policy 93 - Protection and enhancement of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site

- There was support for policy for protection and enhancement of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site, noting its tourism importance and non-replaceability, with more prominence sought.
- There were, however, concerns that some recent development and big developments in general were incompatible with policy and policy and the status of the world heritage site.
- A respondent considered the first paragraph is incompatible with the second paragraph, and the third paragraph is unnecessary.

- A further responded advised “Policy 94 is the wording I would choose to deal with applications impacting the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site. Policy 93 would then be redundant.”
- Bourne Leisure advise that draft Policy 93 does not currently allow for mitigation to be provided where it would offset adverse impacts from development within the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. Bourne Leisure requests that the draft Policy is amended to allow for mitigation or compensation to be provided where it would offset harm and adverse impacts in relation to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.
- Sid Vale Association - Agreed though protection of the Jurassic Coast, a UNESCO ‘World Heritage Site’ (comparable to Stonehenge) should be given more weight and prominence as it is a key attraction to the Sid Valley and its tourist industry.

Policy 94 - Protection of designated geological sites

- Policy received limited comments though general support. With some comments that no development/adverse impacts should be allowed on or at designated site.
- Under point 2 it was suggested that the wider network of natural habitats and designated sites is far more important than the unspecified definition of ‘public benefits’. This woolly bullet gives developers far too much room for argument.
- A respondent advised that the AONB needs to be considered as an area of importance for native wildlife and woodlands.
- A respondent advised policy is sufficient to protect the Jurassic Coast, so Policy 93 is not needed.
- Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council want the policy strengthened to reduce scope for developers to argue in favour of development for public good.

Policy 95 - Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites

- There was general support for policy from the limited number of comments, though a view was expressed that id adverse impacts would arise planning permission should just be refused.
- There was comment, as well, that considered that Policy 94 is sufficient and this policy is unnecessary and confusing duplication.
- Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council consider that such sites should be fully protected and development not permitted.

Policy Chapter 13 - Policy omissions from - Protecting and enhancing our outstanding biodiversity and geodiversity

- Omission of policy reference to green corridors, noting role played by country lanes but vehicular damage that is occurring to these.
- Would be good to have a dead wood policy.
- Call for a policy regarding light/noise pollution and its impacts e.g. bats. See National Planning Policy Framework July 2021 (Para 185, 2021).
- I would like to see some reference to the need to protect the experience of those using the South West Coast Path National Trail, soon to be part of the Round England Coast Path. This is how so many local residents and visitors get to see our wonderful coastline.
- AONB should be covered in this chapter of the plan and given great nature conservation and landscape protection.
- The Woodland Trust advise - Work is underway to create a tree and woodland strategy for Devon. This plan should make space to ensure that it can deliver on the planting targets for East Devon.
- The Devon Wildlife Trust consider that there should be a dedicated overarching policy for the protection and creation of wildlife corridors. Furthermore, it is key that the balance between wider Natural Infrastructure and Natural Green Space/Natural Corridors is made to ensure benefits are genuinely enabled for wildlife and people. Functionally effective corridors with a minimum width of 20m should be encouraged in all developments to benefit biodiversity.
- Devon Wildlife Trust would welcome a commitment to use only native and locally appropriate species for landscape planting, which are locally sourced – from Devon and preferably East Devon - and, to enable this, a commitment to developing local tree nurseries and see hubs

Chapter 14 - Open space and sports and recreation facilities

General matters raised in respect of this chapter included

- In representation Sport England set out details of their role and responsibilities and amongst other matters advise that in order to meet the requirements of the NPPF there should be a strategy (supply and demand analysis with qualitative issues included) covering the need for indoor and outdoor sports facilities, including playing pitches. They note the Council's local plan comment para 14.6 to complete a new Playing Pitch Strategy. They also note the Council has a Leisure Strategy but question whether it meets the requirements of the Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance in respect of being sufficient to be a Built Facilities Strategy.

Policy 96 - Access to open space and recreation facilities

- Whilst there was general support in feedback for access to open space and recreation facilities, with respondents noting physical and mental health benefits, climate resilience and biodiversity.
- Sport England advise that all new dwellings (19000 approx.) in East Devon in the plan period should provide for new or enhance existing sport and recreation facilities to help create opportunities for physical activity whilst having a major positive impact on health and mental wellbeing. They support use of planning obligations to ensure delivery and advise that where appropriate new sporting provision should form part of on-site provision.
- Good accessibility to open space was highlighted in representation as being very important.
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise - we would welcome the inclusion of reference to the requirement for enhancement of our natural environment within this section.
- There was a concern that in the past standards have not been met and there is now frequently under-provision.
- Though a respondent cited the quality of open space provision achieved in the 1950s and 60s.
- There were challenges around standards – with a response highlighting both qualitative and quantitative considerations and questioning whether standards in Policy 97 are the ones sought.
- World Health Organization standards were highlighted in representation with access for people to at least 0.5-1ha of public green space within 300m of their home.
- A respondent advised that wherever possible EDDC should endeavour to exceed minimum standards.

- A respondent also advocated the UN target of 3 trees visible from every home, with a green space within 30 metres and that green space should be a minimum of 300 square metres.
- A respondent advocated that 25% to 30% of all developments should be set aside as open space.
- There was concern that open spaces can be, but should not be “multiple of tiny 'offcuts' of land that are basically unusable”.
- Challenges around ability to successfully implement policy.
- There were calls for additional facilities in certain locations including football and rugby provision in the Exmouth and more open space and connectivity in and through the town, an indoor sports hall in the Sid valley, West Hill needs open space, Cricket pitch needed in Lympstone.
- A respondent advised that open space needs to be available in all weathers with too much land being used falling in flood plains.
- A response considered that we should protect existing open spaces for future generations and spaces should not be sold off as assets that can be materialised in the short term.
- There was a call for open spaces to be imaginatively designed and reference was made to need for a design code.
- But a respondent also highlighted how open access and dogs can adversely impact on wildlife.
- Exmouth Town Council Members are broadly supportive of this policy in so far as it aims to support new open and recreation space; however, experience in Exmouth has shown us that “access” is key and that it is challenging to provide accessible new recreation space of a decent size and quality within our built up area boundary due to:
 - landscape impact including AONB and Coastal Preservation Area,
 - sustainable travel and accessibility,
 - protection of Green Wedge,
 - agricultural land quality,
 - impact on wildlife/biodiversity and trees/hedgerows,
 - sports pitch site sustainability and viability.
- Are the envisaged accessibility (time) standards based on walking or driving?
- In theory this is good, but why continue to develop in the Maer Valley Park and potentially in the AONB that Littleham backs onto. Exmouth like many places needs its greenspaces for the community to access.
- The cycle path in the AONB on the former railway line is enjoyed by the community. Even during lockdown people still drove to come and access this vital greenspace. Overtime parkland has been reduced and we must protect what we already have.
- Also with new large scale developments very little is put towards greenspaces. Even plumb park only has a small area and Pankhurst has nothing. It appears that if on plans

a greenspace is allocated or an area for sports activities, then as the development progresses, developers put in further planning to alter the agreed plans and more housing is built instead. This must be not allowed to happen.

- The provision of more open space and public access is clearly desirable. But unrestricted public access, especially with dogs, can impact badly upon local wildlife. So a more thoughtful and nuanced approach is needed.
- Barratt Homes support policy.
- The impact on viability of developments also needs to be considered here, and priorities for contributions where they can render developments unviable also needs consideration

Policy 97 - Land and buildings for sport, recreation and open space areas in association with development

- Concerned that policy seeks large amounts of open space to be delivered on-site, with little room for variation and no option for off-site delivery embedded within the policy text. The policy wording implies that variation to standards can only be negotiated providing that an overall increase to standards is achieved. This offers no flexibility for scenarios where minimum standards cannot be achieved. As worded there is also no mechanism for off-site contribution.
- Queried why is Sidmouth the only town to which urban open space standards do not apply? (table p280)
- View expressed that provision for all elements itemised are important and especially Natural and Semi Natural space should be at the forefront of the applicants minds
- Noted that evidence is out of date and respondents reserves rights to make further comments.
- Respondents advises that older persons needs are lower than general provision needs and suggests Older person's housing schemes are exempt from the above requirement so long as high quality amenity space suitable for older people is provided on site.
- Considered that policy is too vague and subjective and in respect of off-site contributions it should be explicitly spent on sport and recreation provision.
- Policy should reference avoidance of outdoor light pollution.
- Policy should also refer to unstructured areas like woodland and heathland.
- Policy should refer to indoor facilities as well.
- Support principle but concerned that the wording is not sound as first paragraph contradicts second paragraph and should be deleted.
- Unreasonable to require all sites of over 200 dwellings to provide all the open space typologies identified on-site. The fourth paragraph does not acknowledge either economies of scale, or that the site may not be suitable, for all typologies, for example

playing pitches require level, well drained land. If a typology cannot reasonably be provided on-site, the policy should acknowledge that a financial contribution in lieu may be appropriate.

- Barratt Homes and Vistry agree with policy.
- Barratt David Wilson Homes have concerns about the policy seeking large amounts of open space to be delivered on-site, with little room for variation and no option for off-site delivery embedded within the policy text. No flexibility for scenarios where minimum standards cannot be achieved. No consideration of site constraints or viability. As worded there is also no mechanism for off-site contribution. So is an extra burden on developers

Policy 98 - Location of facilities for sport and recreation, open spaces and allotments

- Emphasis should be attached to upgrading existing facilities.
- The policy should be redrafted to state clearly the intention to discourage the loss of existing open spaces and allotments and the encourage the creation of new ones in urban areas.
- The policy should also consider where the value of one larger open space may be greater than a series of small ones. Cycle and footpaths along riversides could be developed through developer contributions for smaller developments.
- The policy should recognise the value trees and hedgerows in defining soft boundaries to open spaces and encouraging wildlife is to form part of new proposals wherever possible.
- There should be seating and play areas, e.g. every 1,000 metres on walkways.
- Seaton football club should not be relocated.
- Policy should define accessibility distances and how do you define “unacceptable adverse amenity or environmental impacts”?
- Sites need safe car access.
- Lockable cycle storage should be required, though importance of cycle access questioned.
- Devon Wildlife Trust state - ‘provided that unacceptable adverse amenity or environmental impacts do not arise from development’. We would like to see this sentence reworded to include reference to the requirement for enhancement of our natural environment.
- The Devon and Somerset Gliding Club (DSGC) is a non-profit organization that runs a gliding site at North Hill airfield. The club is disappointed that it was not mentioned in the new Draft East Devon Local Plan. The club is the largest gliding club in the south-west

peninsula and hosts a national gliding competition every year. The club hopes that the omission will be rectified in the final plan.

Policy 99 - Retention of land and buildings for sport and recreation use

- Sport England advise that they would be very concerned if any existing sport & recreation land & buildings including playing pitches would be affected by these proposals without adequate replacement in terms of quality, quantity, accessibility, management & maintenance and prior to the loss of the existing facility. This includes playing fields used by schools (public and private) in East Devon. They consider Policy 99 in the emerging Plan conflicts with para 99 of the NPPF and their national Playing Fields Policy in particular the proposed criteria 2 and 3.
- Sport England would question the need for policy 99 to protect sport buildings and land including playing fields – this is already covered by the NPPF in para 99. A similar “local policy” with its own local exceptions may create misinterpretation and problems that we would expect the Inspector to not support.
- Policy should refer to retention of trees.
- Policy should prevent loss of existing facilities to be replaced by worse/less accessible new ones.
- Policy needs more explicit definitions for terms “equivalent community benefit” and “small part of an overall site” which are open to abuse.
- option 3 should be treated with care - as if new dwellings are built, then there are more who might want to use the open spaces for recreational use, and hence there is no longer an excess of it. To be valid this third point needs more provision over definitions of excess provision.

Policy 100 - New allotments and avoiding the loss of existing ones

- Support - This policy meets many societal aims and is fully supported. Activity, health promoting, nutrition, learning and green space.
- View expressed that allotments should be managed by the Council.
- Allotments should be accessible by public transport and foot/cycle.
- Location for new provision should be contiguous with the previous site.
- Allotment should not be lost to development – noting food impacts of climate emergency.
- Exmouth Town Council advise policy should be clearer on designation of sites and hence protection of sites under the Allotments Act 1925 – noting private allotments are

vulnerable to loss. Also bodies responsible for site management should be consulted in respect of management matters arising from or related to 106 agreements.

- Over-supply test needs greater consideration and clarity.
- Policy needs to be applied and required, esp buy housing developers that agree to provision.
- Devon Wildlife Trust state - We would like to see rewording to include reference to the requirement for enhancement of our natural environment.

Policy 101 - Leisure and recreation developments in the countryside

- The East Devon AONB team supports this policy, particularly point 1
- Wording as drafted is unclear and goes further than policy as it refers to planning permission being granted rather than setting out the policy framework in which proposals will be assessed.
- Item 1. should also be expressed more positively, i.e. should be required to be consistent with countryside, natural or landscape policies as well as climate change policies.
- Item 2. Should promote the use of public transport, foot or cycling. Any car parking should be screened by hedgerows and/or tree planting.
- I think that we should not be promoting this kind of thing. Mainly as these kinds of sites are unlikely to be supported by public transport routes and the amount of carbon used for transport is totally not sustainable.
- Agricultural land for farming/food should not be given up so easily. the changing nature of agricultural land is to keep our food supply.
- Exmouth Town Council Members believe that there is a real risk of creep with this type of development with schemes expanding significantly and inappropriately from smaller scale proposals.
- A clear and well written policy.
- Devon Wildlife Trust advise - We would like to see rewording to include reference to the requirement for enhancement of our natural environment.
- Exeter Cycling Campaign would like to see that for developments falling under this policy provision is made for visitors arriving by bicycle.

Chapter 14 - Policy omissions from - Open space and sports and recreation facilities

- Sport England would wish to see inclusion in the plan of a policy for Active Design. They advise that Active Design will help improve health and well-being as well as addressing

climate change and promoting active travel – more walking and cycling. They cross reference principles with Objectives 1 and 6 and Policies 16 and 65 of the draft plan and include in representation a suggested model policy that could be included in the plan and a developers checklist that can be used and could be referenced.

- Sport England consider that there should be an additional policy in the plan – Community use of education sites. Such a policy would encourage greater use by communities of sports facilities and pitches that are located as schools.
- Role of Cemeteries and churchyards as valuable open spaces. Private sports clubs. River/city/town and village community hubs. mental health well-being.
- These policies are ok in principal but great care needs to be given to ensure that other policies such as wildlife conservation, biodiversity, landscape etc should not be harmed in any way.
- There appears to be a lack of consideration for use of open space as a general open space for all. It does not need to be specific to any one sport or activity.