

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held at Online via the zoom app on 11 January 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.30am and ended at 3.53pm. The meeting was adjourned briefly at 11.10am and reconvened at 11.15am and adjourned at 12.35pm and reconvened at 1.05pm.

58 Public speaking

Mr Dan Rogers from Bell Cornwell Planning Consultants spoke on minute 64 on behalf of Cranbrook LVA, the owners of the Farlands Site which sits in the expansion area of Cranbrook. He referred to a planning application that Cranbrook LVA had submitted that proposed 260 homes, a small neighbourhood centre and a junior sports pitch and raised concerns that the delays in the examination process of the Cranbrook Plan DPD and the delays in the proposed phasing of education (M11) could put this delivery at risk. Mr Rogers suggested two interim solutions that could help move the new housing development forward which was to use temporary classrooms at existing schools and referred to Broadclyst Community Primary as an example or use existing capacity from other local primary schools advising this flexibility would help the council's five year land supply to allow small development sites to be delivered without being beholden on the delivery of key infrastructure.

In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised Members that officers had been working closely with Devon County Council as education authority to find ways of unlocking school places to support the delivery of Cranbrook but ultimately delivery of a new school in the town was the only solution and that is what Cranbrook Plan DPD required. If an alternative solution could be found then Planning Committee could always allow a departure from that policy but it was important to maintain a strong and robust policy position to ensure that homes are not coming forward ahead of the required school places.

Mr Alan Kennard spoke on minute 65 and referred to the anticipated Government's review of the planning legislation which would determine East Devon's housing targets and hoped the housing figure would be less than currently required to achieve. He asked Members to take into consideration the already approved outline planning applications from developers regardless of whether little or no building had commenced. He also referred to the Triple Axe Action Plan published in April 2021 detailing the need to reduce the effluent of phosphates and other chemicals into our rivers and urged Members to include a policy that required all significant planning applications to address the consequences of run off and be subject to regular monitoring. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged Mr Kennard's concerns about the water courses and advised about the Axe Nutrient Management Plan which was in place for the River Axe. He was pleased to advise that the new Ecologist had started last week who would address these issues.

Councillor Bruce also spoke on minute 65 and read out a statement on behalf of Gittisham Parish Council which read as follows:

In recent years there has been a significant westward extension of Honiton within the parish of Gittisham, of both residential and allocated commercial land. As part of the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment further land has been identified

as being available which would encroach further towards the conservation village of Gittisham. In fact to within 400m of the village and visible from the village (see Gitti_01 and Gitti_05).

The land suitability ranking shown on the maps in the supporting Supplementary Site Identification Report gives for this land a Grade 2 ranking (page 188/189) however, the accompanying Site Assessment text at page 22 gives a Grade 3 ranking. Whilst both these rankings suggest that the land is not suitable for consideration at this stage there is a caveat in the report to the effect that should numbers not be met elsewhere that other land might need to be brought forward. The ranking is likely to be an important consideration should that search become necessary and given the parish council's concerns about possible future inappropriate encroachment of development impacting on the setting of the village, it is important that clarification is given. To assist, Gittisham Parish Council would suggest, that a clear distinction be made between land north, which is an employment allocation in the current local plan and south of the railway line and in relation to land south of the railway line, consideration be given to the ranking being revised to level 1, recognising that there are many sound planning reasons, as indeed identified by your officers, to include that this land is not delivered.

In response to all the speakers the Chair advised that the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management would provide written responses where required.

So in summary Gittisham Parish Council strongly objects to any further encroachment of residential development to the west of the Hayne Farm development (land reference numbers Gitti_01 and Gitti_05).

59 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Members were happy to accept the minutes of the consultative Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on 14 December 2021 subject to clarification of the following queries:

- In response to a question raised about the omission of a proposal put forward for Chapter 2, it was advised that Members' did not vote on the proposal as it was to be considered at Chapter 2.
- Clarification sought about whether Members' were required to vote on proposed amendments to the wording of policies. The Chair confirmed that Members would be required to vote if it was a departure to the proposed policy.

60 **Declarations of interest**

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Mike Howe, Personal, Clyst St Mary Parish Councillor and owner of a business in Clyst St Mary.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Olly Davey, Personal, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Paul Arnott, Personal, Colyton Parish Councillor.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Philip Skinner, Personal, Known to FWS Carter & Sons and will refrain from speaking or voting on anything to do with them. Also owns a piece of land that is in the HELAA process which is not detailed in any documentation being discussed.

Minute 63. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst.

Minute 64. A clean growth vision for development in the West of the District.
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst.

Minute 64. A clean growth vision for development in the West of the District.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor.

Minute 64. A clean growth vision for development in the West of the District.
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Family members live in the West of the District.

Minute 65. Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document.
Councillor Eleanor Rylance, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst.

Minute 65. Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document.
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor.

Minute 65. Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document.
Councillor Kevin Blakey, Personal, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Minute 65. Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document.
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Family members live in Cranbrook.

Minute 65. Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document.
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Parish Councillor and a resident of Broadclyst. Also have a planning application currently in with East Devon District Council at Broadclyst Station which borders one of the expansion zones in the Cranbrook Plan DPD.

61 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

62 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential / exempt items.

A motion was proposed by Councillor Jess Bailey and seconded by Councillor Phil Skinner to change the order of discussion for the working draft of the new Local Plan and start at Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 to give priority to the new town and spatial strategy. This motion was later withdrawn.

Councillor Bailey referred to Section 13 of the Constitution and said it was important to start at the most key and important part. In response the Chair sought legal advice who advised it was for the Chair to decide on how each item on the agenda was discussed but Members could table motions relating to the order in which the items on their agenda were considered.

An amendment to the motion was proposed by Councillor Mike Howe and seconded by Councillor Phil Skinner to change the running order of the agenda so that the Working draft of the Local Plan would be discussed first as this was not finished at the last meeting. In response the Chair advised it was important to discuss the Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document today for Members to support a public consultation before submitting it back to the Inspector

RESOLVED:

To change the order of business

63 Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management reminded Members about the need to continue with discussions about the detailed policies and asked Members to discuss policy 64 which was to protect key sites and routes from development.

Chapter 12 – Prioritising Sustainable Travel and Providing the Transport and Communications Facilities we need

64. Strategic Policy - Protecting transport sites and routes

- It is important to protect our cycle networks that already exist. An upgrade to the cycle route from Exeter to Exmouth should be given consideration;
- Cycle routes are fragmented and need to be joined up to be effective;
- The need to be mindful that cycle paths are often used as footpaths. The mix of cycles and public can cause problems;
- Concerns raised about the danger on roads for cyclists and the need for designated sections on the road;
- A lack of a cycle route from A30 to the A3052;
- The need to make greener connections between communities;
- Policies in the past had always used footpaths as cycle ways. Cyclists should be using roads;
- Priorities need to change from using the car to cycling. There is a need to prioritise active travel. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management reminded Members about the 20 minute neighbourhood and advised the first priority was walking and cycling in new developments and additional cycle and walking routes would be needed.
- There is a need to consider public transport and passing loops as not everybody is able or willing to cycle all year round. There is an opportunity for an expansion of public

transport as buses occupy the same space as cars and other road users and are subject to the same congestion;

- The Department of Transport and the Highway Code have given priority to cyclists;
- Clarification was sought on whether the policy was only to protect existing cycle routes and whether there was an opportunity to protect potential routes as there is great potential for a cycleway from Exmouth to Woodbury Common. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that additional routes could be considered and discussions would be needed with Devon County Council to deliver these routes;
- When considering future cycle routes there is a need to consider that the routes go both east and west and north and south.
- When considering the new town cycles should be able to go from the A3052 to the A30;
- There is a need for a policy on future transport routes to be compliant with the NPPF paragraph 106 - 109

An amendment to Policy 64 was proposed by Councillor Skinner and seconded by Councillor Allen to include the need for designated sections on the road for cyclists and a proposed cycle link between the A3052 to the A30.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendment

A further amendment was proposed by Councillor Ben Ingham to include an additional bullet point to the preferred option to read:

- Enhance/upgrade the following routes:
 - Exeter to Exmouth where it passes through East Devon

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendment

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

The preferred approach is to include policy that protects sites and routes from development, and show these on the policies map. We are seeking comments on which sites/routes through public consultation, but at this stage we intend to protect the following sites and routes:

- Enhance/upgrade the following routes:
 - Exeter to Exmouth where it passes through East Devon
- Strategic cycle network schemes:
 - Cranbrook to Exeter
 - Seaton to Colyton
 - Feniton to Sidmouth
 - Clyst Valley Trail
 - Sidford to Sidbury
- Railway passing loops as necessary at:
 - Axminster
 - Honiton
 - Whimble to Cranbrook

65. Policy - Travel Plans, Transport Statements, Transport Assessments

- This policy is too woolly and not defined on what is acceptable;
- People still have an obsession to stop the use of vehicles but it is the fossil fuels that must be stopped;
- There is a need to go electric;
- Clarification sought on whose responsibility it was to produce a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and how can EDDC make certain that it was acceptable within the policy. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management

advised it would be produced by the applicants or consultants acting on their behalf and it would then be assessed by this council in partnership with Devon County Council;

- Concerns raised when a Transport Assessment comes back unacceptable after land has been allocated for development
- The wording in the policy is confusing;
- There is a need for a travel plan because so many developments assume car usage which impacts further on the road network;
- The need to facilitate active travel and the need to make it possible for people to walk and cycle;
- Concerns raised that the impact on the road network provided by the developer could impact on house prices which could affect our need for affordable housing;
- There is a need to promote public transport;
- Travel plans and road networks are vital;
- Reference was made to Chapter 9 of the NPPF promoting sustainable transport, paragraph 106 on page 30 stating that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals highlighting b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;
- The need for 'blue sky thinking' for the future e.g. driverless buses/electronic travel routes

It was proposed by Councillor Allen and seconded by Councillor Skinner for a Strategic Policy on Sustainable Transport.

The majority of Members' were in support of the proposal for a Strategic Policy on Sustainable Transport

It was proposed by Councillor Arnott and seconded by Councillor Davey to support the policy as written.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

- **Requires a Travel Plan at specified thresholds of residential and non-residential development.**
- **Requires a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment at specified thresholds of residential and non-residential development.**
- **Enables a Travel Plan, Transport Statement or Transport Assessment to be required below these thresholds taking into account: the scale of the proposed development; availability of public transport, proximity to environmental designations; impact on promoting walking and cycling; cumulative impacts of multiple developments in the area; and whether there are particular types of impacts.**

66. Policy – Residential car parking standards

- To encourage the green agenda that we wish for there is a need to consider EV charging points for every new home in East Devon. In response Members were advised to be careful when considering this issue as it would entail car parking spaces being provided for all new properties when this is not always the case and it would also be difficult as there is no universal charging point for EV's so it is usually better to require the wiring to be provided and leave home owners to install a charging point suited to their vehicle;
- There is a need to provide adequate overnight lorry parking facilities which is not mentioned in this policy. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged there was a policy in the existing local plan and advised it would be appropriate to look at a relevant replacement policy;
- There is a requirement to have evidence for residential car parking standards to make sure people can actually park their vehicles;

- Concerns raised about using public car park spaces for residential parking. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that this had been done in the past in sustainable locations with excellent public transport facilities and where all facilities, such as, schools and jobs were within walking distance;
- Concerns raised about the second paragraph and the omissions it will produce and this should be made an exception rather than a rule;
- Concerns raised that town centre car parks would be used for residential car parks during the day which could be to the detriment of businesses in those town centres;
- Clarification sought on whether officers would look at providing secure lorry parking facilities especially for lorries with loads on board. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised this would be included in the Roadside Services Policy;
- Clarification was sought on the redevelopment of the Exeter Services at Sowton and the need for a policy if the Services were to encroach onto East Devon. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised if Exeter City Council were to promote this and an alternative location was found in East Devon then further discussion would be required with Exeter City Council.

The following amendments were proposed by Councillor Moulding and seconded by Councillor Ingham that the necessary infrastructure be provided to all new dwellings so that the EV charging points are ready as and when required; to incorporate reference to residential commercial uses and secure lorry parking along trunk roads; to amend the last sentence to extend car clubs for not just cars but also electric bikes and for the provision of electric points and that town centre car parks should not be used for day residential parking.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendments.

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:
Residential car parking standards**

The preferred approach is to include a policy setting out residential and non-residential car parking and cycle parking standards.

In town centres where there is access to public car parks and/or on-street parking lower levels of parking and in exceptional cases where there are also very good public transport links, car parking spaces may not be deemed necessary

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Development needs to provide Electric Vehicle Charging Points in accordance with the latest Government guidance.

Rapid charging points will be particularly important in the public domain.

Provide spaces for public electric car charging point and for car clubs.

67. Strategic Policy – Digital Connectivity

- Reference was made to the NPPF Chapter 10 – Supporting high quality communications and the need to provide not only broadband but also radio and electronic communications masts.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Allen and seconded by Councillor Moulding to widen the policy to include all high quality communications and should be structured to take account of the requirements of the NPPF.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendment.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

The preferred approach is to include a policy to require all new development to have access to superfast broadband from day one recognising it is the fifth utility and to continue to support the expansion of full fibre broadband connections in the district.

Other requirements would include requiring ducting to be installed with capacity for more than one provider and other provisions to enable the delivery of multi operator fibre to the premises and sufficient mobile connectivity.

Developers are encouraged to have early discussions with strategic providers or CDS for major development.

Chapter 13 – Caring for our outstanding landscape

68. Policy – Landscape Features

- Fully support the 10 items listed but it fails to consider what we should be stopping such as no new dwellings in protected areas at all;
- The need to include the best and most versatile agricultural land and dark skies;
- The need to include areas of strategic importance;
- Would like to see a clear strategy on planning applications;
- The conversion of barns and agricultural buildings should not be permitted in AONBs;
- The need to protect existing hedgerows to protect wildlife;
- The need to protect existing countryside from encroachment;
- Concerns raised about trees being uprooted and killed prior to the submission of a planning application;
- Thought should be given to wildlife corridors and migration patterns;
- Applicants should be required to submit landscape surveys when they put in planning applications;

The following amendments were proposed by Councillor Bailey and seconded by Councillor Allen that the wording 'where possible' be removed from the policy; to incorporate best and most versatile agricultural land and dark skies and have a clear strategy for the applicant to demonstrate how they meet the policy on the landscape and especially via the landscape survey.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendments.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Bailey and seconded by Councillor Allen that the Areas of Strategic Visual Importance be added as a separate policy in the local plan.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendment.

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:
This overarching policy aims to protect important features in the landscape, whether designated or not.**

Landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of East Devon's landscapes, in particular:

- i. **Trees (including individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands), hedgerows and field boundaries;**

- ii. Irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland;
- iii. Rivers, tributaries and flood plains;
- iv. Other watercourse and water bodies;
- v. Seascapes and coastline;
- vi. The landscape setting of settlements;
- vii. Topographical features;
- viii. Areas of features of cultural and historic value;
- ix. Important views and visually sensitive skylines; and
- x. Aesthetic and perceptual factors such as tranquillity, wildness, intactness, rarity and enclosure.

The Council will seek the retention of important hedgerows. Where retention is not possible and a proposal seeks the removal of a hedgerow, the Council will require compensatory planting with a mixture of native hedgerow species.

69. Policy – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- Buildings in the AONB should not be built beyond a certain height. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that the proposed policy gives the highest level of protection already and urged caution about precluding development as some development may be needed in the AONB.
- Delete the wording ‘where possible’ in the first bullet point;
- Need to be mindful how we support areas of the AONB as this may imply areas outside the AONB have less importance;

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

It is proposed that a policy be included to ensure that the highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in East Devon:

- Development in the AONB or affecting the setting of an AONB will only be permitted where it conserves, and where possible, enhances the character and natural beauty of the AONB;
- Development in an AONB will only be permitted where it is appropriate to the economic and environmental wellbeing of the area or promotes understanding or enjoyment of the AONB;
- Major development in an AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest; and
- Development proposals that could affect the special qualities of an AONB (including the setting of an AONB) either individually or in combination with other developments, should be accompanied by a proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

AONB Management Plans will be a material consideration in decision making.

70. Policy – Coastal Preservation Areas

- The word ‘supported’ in the officers preferred option be deleted to read: ‘appropriate proposals which increase public access to the coast will be considered.’
- The policy is not clear or definitive;
- Support shown for option C which gives a greater level of protection;
- Suggestion made for the need to work with local actors to reduce the risk of river pollution and to help develop infrastructure that minimises the outflows of effluent;
- What does ‘protected’ mean?

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

It is proposed that a policy be included to ensure that coastal preservation areas and the undeveloped coast is protected from development which would harm its

character. Appropriate proposals which increase public access to the coast will be supported.

71. Policy – Green wedges

- Support shown for option A as written but do not support the proposal to consider green wedges in the future. Concerns were raised about the need to consider green wedges before the strategic allocations because once the land has been built on the green wedge has been lost especially when considering green wedges in the new town;
- Agree with options A & D and a suggestion made to put them together;
- Don't eliminate smaller green wedges;
- It is important to recognise green wedges first before deciding where development should go otherwise we are in danger of undermining existing settlement containment policies such as that between Ottery St Mary and West Hill;
- Concerns raised that green wedges are being overridden for development;
- There is a need to consider wildlife migration patterns;
- Would like to see a green wedge between Sidford and Sidbury;
- Clarification sought on Option C which suggested a review that may allow more green wedges but would it include a review of the existing green wedges. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that Option C would allow more green wedges to be designated but with any option it will be necessary to assess the extent of the green wedges needed to achieve the aims of the policy and establish a common evidence base for their inclusion in the plan whether they are existing green wedges being re-designated or new green wedges;
- We need to protect what we already have and do not see the need for reviewing the green wedges that we already have;
- Clyst St May, Clyst St George, Ebford and Exton all need a green wedge;
- The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised Members that in order for the Local Plan to be found sound at examination it would be necessary to have evidence to prove the need for the existing green wedges as well as any new ones.

Councillor Allen proposed an amendment and seconded by Councillor Arnott for the review in Option C be done starting from the position that the existing green wedges are retained.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendments.

Members advised that they support Option C:

The preferred option is to include a policy that:

Green wedges are designated following a landscape review to ensure that sufficient land is designated to restrict development and therefore prevent settlement coalescence and protect the separate identities and character of settlements in close proximity to each other. Extensive areas of green wedge that go beyond the area needed to achieve this aim would unnecessarily restrict development that would otherwise be acceptable.

72. Policy – Land of Local Amenity Importance

- This policy protects town but does not protect the villages;
- Clarification was sought on the resources requires in option C. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he would have to review resources and timescales if every area of green space in the district was needed to be assessed;
- There is a need to start with what we have already have identified so that the 14 identified areas should not be affected;
- A suggestion was made to ask parish councils to produce a list of their identified local green spaces;

Councillor Howe proposed an amendment seconded by Councillor Arnott to write to all the parish councils and ask them to nominate their green open spaces for officers to assess.

Members advised that they support Option B to include a wider-reaching policy to protect Local Green Space but do not identify all LGS in the Plan.

Chapter 13 – Protecting and enhancing our outstanding biodiversity

73. Strategic Policy – Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geological features.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

This overarching strategic policy will address and afford general protection to biodiversity and geological features in East Devon, to include:

- Protection of existing features, habitats, sites and species;
- Promoting opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats;
- Incorporating beneficial biodiversity conservation and enhancement features.

Policy will also highlight the essential importance of habitat assessment and surveys accompanying planning applications, particular so in respect of cases where there is or could be the presence of protected species.

74. Strategic Policy – Habitat Regulations and mitigation of adverse impacts

- The need to consider the issues of phosphates in our rivers and the mitigation measures that might need to be taken;
- Support was shown for the support for habitat regulations;
- Mitigation measures need to be clearer for specific species to show that the species have been moved before buildings are taken down. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that a policy on protected species would be consider further on in the agenda;

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Moulding and seconded by Councillor Ingham to include the mitigation measures for reducing phosphates in our rivers.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendments.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will establish the need for mitigation measures in respect of adverse impacts that would otherwise arise from development or from occupiers or users of development of SACs, SPAs and Ramsar Sites. Policy will address:

- Need for Appropriate Assessment (under the Habitat Regulations) to be undertaken in respect of cases where development could adversely impact on sites;
- Need to contribute, where adverse impacts may arise, to packages of mitigation measures and/or to provide direct relevant mitigation works.

Policy will also need to consider exclusion zones at or around sites where development is either totally ruled out or very heavily restricted. Issues associated with predation by domestic cats is one reason why, for some sites, significant restrictions on development are appropriate.

75. Policy – Biodiversity net gain

- 20% is an ambitious amount;
- Needs to be considered on a case by case basis as it is vital for infrastructure;
- Action needs to be taken as 97% of wildflower meadows have been lost and butterflies and birds are on the decline;
- UK has the lowest biodiversity in whole of Western Europe and it is a disgrace;

- Must not accept less than 20% net gain;
- There is a need to find a way to achieve 30% net gain;
- If we build on brownfield sites 20% net gain can be easily reached;
- Clarification sought on whether advice had been taken on whether 20% could be reached.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Bonetta and seconded by Councillor Rylance for officers to further investigate a higher diversity net gain percentage for areas of outstanding natural beauty along the lines of 25% or 30%.

The majority of Members' were in support of the amendments.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that: This policy will establish a requirement for all development proposals to demonstrate at least 20% net gain in biodiversity compared with the pre-development situation by including or funding biodiversity enhancements, as appropriate.

Biodiversity losses, compensation and enhancements will be calculated using the most recent nationally endorsed biodiversity metric, taking into account any adopted local authority guidance. Compensation and enhancements will be delivered in accordance with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Network (emerging) and secured by planning conditions and/or planning obligations.

76. Policy – Protection of nationally important wildlife sites

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will afford protection to and resist loss of:

- National Nature Reserves; and
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Policy will address exceptional cases where development may be allowed and cover the need for full mitigation and/or compensation which leads to a net gain in biodiversity value.

77. Policy – Protection of local wildlife sites and features

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will afford protection to and resist loss of:

- Local Nature Reserves
- County Wildlife Sites
- County Geological Sites
- Other areas of sites identified to have wildlife importance

Policy will address exceptional cases where development, to include certain uses (including if compatible with the reasons of objectives for designation), may be allowed and cover the need for mitigation in associated with development that might under exceptional circumstances be permitted.

78. Policy – Protected species

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will seek to afford appropriate protection to protected species adding to and providing local detail to national policy and legislation on protection. Policy will seek to promote additional habitat protection in association with any development that does occur.

79. Policy – Trees and development

- On-street planting in new developments needs to be clearer in terms of compliance with the strategy; In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that caution was needed as on street planting can cause safety issues such as tree roots raising up pavements and tarmacked footpaths
- Concerns about mitigation when matures trees are cut down and replaced with small saplings;
- Need to look back at the site condition 1 year prior to the application to prevent the loss of trees prior to the planning process;
- We should be replacing trees lost through development on the basis of replacing the canopy cover on a like for live basis;
- There is a need to protect existing hedgerows;
- It was suggested that a decision on this issue should be deferred until a decision is taken on whether to move forward with the Tree Strategy. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that a policy seek tree protection was required whether the Tree Strategy is progressed or not and can link across to the strategy at a later date if it is progressed;
- Would like to see a ratio of replacement trees for every tree felled;
- No loss of ancient woodland

The Chair moved a motion that Members support officers preferred option provided that officers investigate the potential to implement the 1 year rule referred to in debate.

Members advised that subject to investigations into the 1 year rule that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will seek to afford protection to existing trees in East Devon and planting of new trees. Matters for policy to address will include:

- Encouragement of new tree planting
- Retention of trees, hedgerows and similar features on development sites
- Planting of native species
- On street planting in new developments
- Specific protection of ancient and veteran trees and ancient woodlands; and
- Initiatives and planting schemes that seek to connect existing but separate woodlands or groups of tree planting

80. Policy – Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site and geodiversity

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will seek to afford protection to the World Heritage Site and at a more local level to geodiversity interests. In respect of the Jurassic Coast policy will seek to protect and not compromise the Outstanding Universal Value that justifies its designation.

In respect of geological sites more generally policy will seek to afford protection and retention of sites resisting development that may bring about adverse changes.

81. Policy – Incorporation of wildlife friendly features into new development

- Would like the policy to be more robust to enforce developers;
- Concerns raised about hard surfacing and artificial grass and the need for conditions on this;
- The need to make sure wildlife features are genuinely 'wildlife friendly'
- The need to avoid resin drives surface water has nowhere to go;
- The need to expand on the second bullet point as small patches of grass can be a blight on the landscape.

Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:

Policy will seek to promote, encourage and where possible require development schemes to be wildlife friendly through such measures as:

- **Expecting, as the norm, planting of native species**
- **Incorporation of wild and non-manicured spaces in development**
- **Avoidance of hard surfacing**
- **Incorporation of wildlife friendly features such as bird and bee houses built into the fabric of buildings and hedgehog tunnels. In particular, an average of at least one integral bird box per residential unit should be incorporated in the fabric of all new housing developments, with flats, hotels, care/nursing homes, commercial and public buildings considered on a case-by-case basis.**

64 **A clean growth vision for development in the West of the District**

The report presented to the Committee sought Members' consideration of a Vision for Clean Growth for the West of the District and the endorsement of Appendix A, Appendix B and the technical report appended to the report.

The Service Lead – Growth, Development & Prosperity outlined that the intention of the work was to transition away from greenhouse gas emissions and transition to a net zero economy with an ambition for a clean and sustainable way of delivering inclusive economic prosperity whilst protecting the environment.

He referred to the West End of the District which was an existing focus for accommodating major growth, both major residential and commercial development. A specific prompt for the work had been the combined impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the collapse of Flybe on Exeter Airport. He advised that the Airport had played a leading role in the trial of the first hybrid-electric flight between Exeter and Newquay Airports in August. There was the potential to develop this role further and for the Airport to act as a testbed for future use of alternative fuels and to promote sustainable aviation. He highlighted that the work had identified four strategic opportunities:

- Net Zero
- Green Finance
- Greener Buildings
- Smart Grids

He highlighted to Members the planned end of sale of diesel powered HGVs in 2040 and the importance of the hydrogen economy as a potential alternative fuel.

The Service Lead – Growth, Development & Prosperity welcomed Members' comments on the documents advising having an aspirational vision was more likely to catch the eye of Government and investors in helping to support these opportunities going forward.

Comments made by Non-Committee Members included:

- This is a great report and a springboard for a greener district. It is vital not to ignore future technology;
- There is a need for green hydrogen;
- The West End needs to be more clearly defined as well as the Green Wedges and the Clyst Valley Regional Park

Comments made by Committee Members included:

- This is an excellent report and fully support the recommendations;
- We have to aspire for better things and do our very best for our communities;
- Reference was made to page 48 on the last two bullet points and the need for more detail on the motorway services;

- This is an exciting document and welcome the ambition for net zero in the West End and excited by the opportunity for a skills hub which is absolutely essential to give people opportunities to train and retrain in green technologies;

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **The Strategic Planning Committee having considered the Vision for Clean Growth for the West of the District recommends Senior Officers endorse the documents listed at paragraph 3.2 as evidence to inform the production of the local plan.**
2. **That Senior Officers recommend that the Vision for Clean Growth for the West of the District and associated documents are also considered by Cabinet.**

RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:

That the Vision for Clean Growth for the West of the District and associated documents be considered.

65

Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management presented the report which updated Members on the main modifications to the proposed Cranbrook Plan DPD and sought Members agreement for a public consultation on those modifications.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management outlined the main modifications as listed in paragraph 5 on page 50 and highlighted it was not a comprehensive list. He addressed the viability issues detailed in section f and advised Members that unfortunately in order to address these issues there was a need to remove and reduce some of the contributions.

Finally, he drew Members' attention to the sustainability appraisal hyperlinked in paragraph 8 and in particular highlighting that a non-technical summary had now been produced as well as an updated policy map to now include the flood zones and these would be included in the consultations materials.

Comments and questions raised by Committee Members included:

- Clarification sought on the junior football pitches and how will they play several teams if the pitches have been reduced from three to one. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed the adults pitch could be used for the junior pitches;
- Do not agree with putting schools into temporary classrooms. Temporary classrooms at Broadclyst Primary School was not a happy experience; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management agreed that the use of temporary classrooms was far from ideal and the current provision is for a permanent school to be provided;
- Clarification sought on what plans are in place to reduce the speed limit on the old A30 road as it is a busy and dangerous road. It was advised the London Road was to be reduced to 30mph;
- Clarification sought on alternative options for people to look at the consultation materials. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised he was happy to look at alternative options and hoped its availability online would meet most people's needs.

RECOMMENDATION:

Strategic Planning Committee recommend that Senior Officers:

1. **Approve the undertaking of a public consultation exercise as detailed in this report and in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement of the**

Cranbrook Plan DPD main modifications schedule, updated policies map and associated policies map modifications schedule.

- 2. Approve that a paper copy of the consultation materials be available to view at Blackdown House on an appointment based system only.**
- 3. Collate and summarise the consultation responses and submit them to the Inspector for her consideration.**

Attendance List

Councillors present:

D Ledger (Chair)
O Davey (Vice-Chair)
M Allen
P Arnott
J Bailey
K Blakey
J Bonetta
S Chamberlain
P Hayward
M Howe
B Ingham
A Moulding
G Pratt
E Rylance
P Skinner

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

M Armstrong
C Brown
A Bruce
P Faithfull
C Gardner
N Hookway
S Jackson
V Johns
G Jung
R Lawrence
J Loudoun
P Millar
M Rixson
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management
Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity
Matthew Dickins, Planning Policy Manager

Chairman

Date: