

**Agenda for consultative meeting of the  
Strategic Planning Committee  
Tuesday, 8th March, 2022, 2.00 pm**



**Members of Strategic Planning Committee**

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

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**Venue:** online via the zoom app

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Issued: Monday, 28 February 2022

**Important - this meeting will be conducted online and recorded by Zoom only.  
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Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-public-meetings/#article-content>

Between 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022, the Council has delegated much of the decision making to officers. Any officer decisions arising from recommendations from this consultative meeting will be published on the webpage for this meeting in due course. All meetings held can be found via the [Browse Meetings](#) webpage.

1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

2 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 17)

3 Apologies

4 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

5 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

6 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

7 New Community and Infrastructure Provision - Evidence and Timeline (Pages 18 - 24)

This report summarises the work that has been undertaken so far on a new community and sign posts Members to various reports and supporting information.

8 Settlement Hierarchy (Pages 25 - 29)

This report seeks to pick up on Members views expressed on the hierarchy of settlements and options for addressing the shortfall in housing sites in the working draft Local Plan.

9 HELAA Spring 2022 Call for Sites (Pages 30 - 35)

This report sets out the proposals for a further 'call for sites' as part of the work on production of an addendum/additional work to the current Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) that is in production.

10 Response to Mid Devon Issues and Options Consultation (Pages 36 - 38)

This report summaries the current Mid Devon Local Plan Issues Consultations and provides a proposed response from this Council.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

**For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546**

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL****Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held online via the zoom app on 22 February 2022****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 3.12 pm. The meeting was adjourned briefly at 11.03am and reconvened at 11.10am and adjourned at 1.08pm and reconvened at 1.40pm.

**76 Public speaking**

Councillor Alasdair Bruce read out the following statement on behalf of Feniton Parish Council in relation to Minute 87 Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040:

You will today be considering a strategy for the distribution of new development in the draft local plan. Most importantly for local communities, you will be identifying the specific sites where it is proposed development should be located. I am aware that the initial draft of the local plan does not meet the government's housing target for East Devon by some 900 houses and that the committee faces a potentially difficult task in bridging the gap.

I have noted that among the potential options to achieve this, the village of Feniton is identified in at least two. This seems to be partly because the "call for sites" produced a number of superficially suitable sites and partly because of its identification as a larger "Service Village".

I would like to remind the Committee that four of the sites at Feniton have already been tested at the consolidated Planning Inquiry of 2014 when all but the smallest site were rejected. The Planning Inspector concluded unequivocally that Feniton is not a sustainable location for new large scale housing.

The developers of these sites and the new sites now proposed at Feniton cannot claim with any authority or credibility that Feniton has become a more sustainable place for large scale housing. Indeed, I and the Parish Council would contend that if anything the situation is now worse.

Relative to the population the number of jobs easily accessible to the village is tiny. As a consequence the working population has to drive to its employment and car ownership in the village is way above the national average. While it is tempting to conclude that the presence of a railway station in the village makes it suitable as a commuter village for Exeter or Honiton, the reality is that trains only stop every two hours. The prospect of providing a service in the peak period that is sufficiently frequent to attract commuters from their cars is zero. The single track line will not allow it. Bus services are equally uninviting or inconvenient.

The Primary School is at capacity and on a constrained site. Consequently, the parents of new families coming to the village are already often required to transport their children to other villages by car. None of these parents is then going to return, park up and seek public transport to get to their jobs.

The village shop provides a good service but very few could rely on it for their total weekly shop. Most travel by car to supermarkets in nearby towns. While the draft plan

identifies Feniton as a “Service Village”, leisure facilities and other services in the village are limited, there is no doctor, so again more car journeys are needed to meet the needs of the village population.

So, typical of many East Devon villages, the pattern in Feniton is one of already very high car usage on completely unsuitable village lanes. The “main roads” into the village all have places where two cars cannot pass, are dangerously narrow and none have a footpath. This is already completely unsustainable. More housing at the scale proposed by developers is simply not acceptable in this location.

In addition, Feniton is already well known for its propensity to flood. Housing on open fields around the village will only add to this problem. I have reason to believe that the one small development approved at the Inquiry in 2014 - Acland Park - failed to implement flood mitigation measures. Moreover the site is incomplete, abandoned and a health hazard. The experience in Feniton is that more hard surfaces always add to the existing flooding problems for the rest of the village.

Developers have put forward land around Feniton that in theory could provide 650 new homes. While the Committee might be tempted to include some of this in the draft local plan to meet the 900 home shortfall, I would urge you to consider this very, very carefully.

The HELAA assessment has not been published for these sites. No sustainability assessment has been made of the sites individually or more importantly, collectively. I believe that the categorisation of the majority of the sites as 4 or 5 (i.e. potentially suitable for development) is not supported by the facts and is in direct conflict with the 2014 Decision of the Planning Inspector.

The village’s Neighbourhood Plan of 2018 is clear about the implications of mass development and the problems facing Feniton. In supporting the plan, East Devon District Council noted that it was made with “considerable community engagement” and congratulated the Parish working group on “all its hard work”.

Members will be aware that a Planning Inquiry is a quasi-judicial process. The Planning Inspector was very clear in her judgement in 2014. Feniton is not a sustainable location for new mass housing. Nothing has changed.

Councillor Roger Giles spoke on behalf of Ottery St Mary Town Council and residents in relation to Minute 87 Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. He referred to the current Local Plan and how Ottery St Mary had seen a 25% growth which was more than any other town in the district other than Cranbrook. He raised concerns that in the draft Local Plan there was a possibility that Ottery St Mary could see an astonishing further 1,300 houses which would be in excess of a further 50% growth. This proposal would make Ottery St Mary unsustainable as the town had no railway station, a poor bus service, the secondary school and primary school already at capacity and an overstretched medical centre.

He also raised concerns about the proposed additional 470 houses proposed for West Hill highlighting that residents in West Hill also use the secondary school and medical centre in Ottery St Mary. He advised that Ottery St Mary Town Council and West Hill Parish Council were working together to address these issues and sought clarification whether the email sent to the Council on 9 February 2022 addressing the Local Plan proposals had been brought to Strategic Planning Committee Members’ attention. In response the Chair acknowledged receipt of the email but could not confirm if it had been

shared with Committee Members and would follow this up after the meeting. He addressed Councillor Giles concerns about the proposed additional housing for Ottery St Mary and advised that all the sites put forward in the district were to be reassessed in light of the policies discussed since December 2021. He advised the Council would be taking a policy led approach to the sites proposed and that some sites would no longer be eligible.

**77 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Members were happy to accept the minutes of the consultative Strategic Planning Committee meetings held on 25 and 26 January and 8 February 2022.

**78 Declarations of interest**

Minute 81. Housing monitoring update to year ending 31 March 2021.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 81. Housing monitoring update to year ending 31 March 2021.  
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 82. Further engagement with developers and site promoters to inform Local Plan production.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 83. Local Plan revised plan making timetable.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 83. Local Plan revised plan making timetable.  
Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 84. First Homes - interim guidance note.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 85. Torbay Local Plan Housing update Growth Options Consultation.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 86. Self-build monitoring report.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.  
Councillor Dan Ledger, Personal, Chair of Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Board.

Minute 87. 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 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.  
Councillor Jess Bailey, Personal, Devon County Councillor for Otter Valley.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040.  
Councillor Kevin Blakey, Personal, Cranbrook Town Councillor.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Mike Howe, Personal, Bishops Clyst Parish Councillor and owner of a convenience store in Clyst St Mary which is in my ward as a district councillor.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Paul Hayward, Personal, Director of Exeter Science Park and employed as Clerk to All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils and locum Deputy Clerk to Axminster Town Council.

Minute 87. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Philip Skinner, Personal, Known to FWS Carter & Sons and the Stewart family; Owns land in Talaton that is in the HELAA process which is not detailed in any documentation being discussed and a previous Member of the Science Park Board.

Minute 86. Working draft of the proposed East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2040. Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, Personal, Broadclyst Town Councillor and Broadclyst Ward Member.

79 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

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

There were no confidential / exempt items.

81 **Housing monitoring update to year ending 31 March 2021**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management’s report outlining the latest robust monitoring figures on housing supply and monitoring to year ending 31 March 2021.

Members noted that houses delivered was down on preceding years due to the pandemic, seeing 872 completed. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that although this figure was below the 918 Government standard method the overall shortfall was just two houses after taking into account over-supply in some of the previous year’s which demonstrated a five year housing land supply position. However, the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management raised concerns that this was in a declining position and drew Members attention to paragraph 5 about future risks highlighting there was a need for immediate action and that Members needed to accept that the Local Plan was unlikely to be adopted before 2024.

Points raised during discussion included:

- Reference was made to the table in paragraph 3.2 which should read (Number = A x 5) and (Number A x 8) as this was the annual requirement;
- Concerns raised that the wording in paragraph 5.2 could imply that developers could come forward with pre-emptive sites. In response the Chair advised that any sites that came forward would go through the Planning Committee and it was the Committee’s responsibility to determine applications that were not in line with current policy. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged the concerns raised about pre-empting but

emphasised the need to maintain the five year land supply. In response to a question he advised that he hoped to bring a report on the HELAA to the meeting in April;

- Reference was made to the removal of the Axminster Urban Extension detailed in paragraph 5 – future risks and questioned the suggestion that it had been removed because it was undeliverable. The Chair advised that the urban extension was removed as officers felt it was not able to deliver housing within the next five years and also addressed the phosphates issues in the River Axe. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy confirmed that evidence suggested this was the case but the urban extension could be revisited at a later date. He acknowledged there could be phosphate issues in many rivers in the district but highlighted that the River Axe was a priority as it was a European Designated Habitat.

The Chair proposed an additional recommendation that a short briefing session with Strategic Planning Committee and Planning Committee from planners about how to boost the housing supply outside of the emerging Local Plan. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed he was happy to arrange if Members agreed

**The Strategic Planning Committee noted:**

- 1. The residential dwellings completion data and future projections for the district including the comments on future supply risks detailed in section 5 of the report;**
- 2. The confirmation of a Five Year Land Supply;**
- 3. That the Housing Monitoring update will be published on the Council's website;**
- 4. Request a short briefing for Strategic Planning Committee and Planning Committee from planners as to how supply can be boosted outside the Local Plan.**

**82 Further engagement with developers and site promoters to inform Local Plan production**

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management sought Members' views about whether they would like wider engagement with developers and site promoters following the 33 site presentations held on 25 and 26 January 2022. Interest to present to Members had been received on a further 27 sites that had either scored low or high in Officer's initial assessment while there was also a small number of other parties that had missed the registration deadline.

Comments received from Committee Members included:

- Support for options 1 & 2 and welcomed more time to hear from other developers;
- Support for option 3 as none of the information provided by developers would be binding.
- It would be helpful to hear about the proposed new community but the suggestion of more long days listening to presentations would not be welcomed;
- If we are to understand the opportunities for the district we must listen to more presentations;
- It is important to be democratic and transparent;
- Support for option 2 to set aside time at a later stage of plan production which would give more time to understand the policies

The Chair proposed option 2 together with the recommendations as written in the report. He further proposed to not accept sites that are not major applications of less than 10 houses.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. For Senior Officers to promote option 2 in response to the remaining requests for presentations to Strategic Planning Committee and specifically whether more time to set aside to have presentations from developers and site promoters and, if so, when and how the meetings should be arranged;**
- 2. To Senior Officers that Officers to able to meet with developers and site promoters where this is necessary to gain further information and evidence on a site to inform assessment work provided such meetings are minuted.**

**83 Local Plan revised plan making timetable**

The Committee considered the report which updated Members on the timetable for production of the new Local Plan noting that progress had been slower than initially envisaged due to resourcing issues and Members consideration of the working draft Local Plan taking longer than envisaged in the original work programme. The expectation was for consultation on a draft Local Plan to be in September/October 2022.

Discussions on the report included:

- Clarification was sought about the further call for sites which Members supported at the last meeting as a search for sites underpins the whole Local Plan. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to paragraph 2.4 and welcomed Members view about whether they were happy to wait to run the call for sites alongside the consultation on the draft Local Plan. He advised a further report for a call for sites outlining the options and practicalities would hopefully be brought to Committee in March;
- Clarification sought on surface water and river flooding implications as the Environment Agency were not updating their information until autumn which could impact on planning processes. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that the flooding maps and infrastructure assessments were ongoing and Officers were gathering evidence to form assessments of the sites which would be brought to Members when it became available
- Concerns raised about the resource implications and whether there would be capacity to undertake a further call for sites.
- It is essential that all town and parish councils be included in the call for sites to find out whether they were aware of any plots of land that could be developed or to find out their aspirations for their town or village. The Chair was hesitant about this and suggested that councils could put forward sites without the landowner's knowledge when we need a willing land owner to allocate the site.

**That Strategic Planning Committee note the proposed amendment to the local plan making timetable (consultation proposed to now be in autumn 2022)**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Of agreement that a new Local Development Scheme, with a detailed plan timetable, will be brought to Committee in spring 2022 and that a further report on practicalities for a further call for sites be presented.**

**84 First Homes - interim guidance note**

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management presented the report that sought Members approval of the draft Interim Guidance Note: East Devon – First Homes introduced by Government for first time buyers with a household income of less than £80,000 per year.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management drew Members attention to the various options within the report and advised if Members were minded not to pursue the preferred options that delegated powers to amend the guidance notes would be needed to be sought to ensure its accuracy.

Discussions covered:

- As a lot of developers challenge rural exception sites so there is a need to make policies robust and unchallengeable; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed the policy on rural exception sites was robust and there were no issues to date
- Reference was made to paragraph 1.3 and whether there were sufficient applicants to take up the offer of at least 25% affordable units as first homes. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development advised 25% was a Government requirement and advised he was happy to look into this but there was an assumption that this would be an attractive offer for those struggling to get onto the property ladder
- There is a need to provide first homes in areas where there is growing economy;
- It was questioned how to make developers make deliverable houses. In response the Planning Barrister advised that Homes England had set up templates and guidance notes in relation to this. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management reassured Members that the Council was working on the processes for supporting this when the NPPF brings out the guidance and the framework for first homes. He also advised about other local councils were participating in drafting legal agreements and monitoring;
- It was questioned whether there were any comparisons to determine how this would fit within East Devon. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised all councils were in similar positions as this was a new type of affordable housing ownership product for first-time buyers and time will tell on how it would work.
- Issues about cost recovery and whether councils would be able to enter into a fee agreement;
- Reference was made to paragraph 3.7 and the balance between affordable housing delivery and its impact on Strategy 24 of the Local Plan. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that guidance would be developed over time and would be incorporated into the new Local Plan

**ROMMENDATION:**

- 1. Of approval of the draft Interim Guidance Note: East Devon – First Homes;**
- 2. Of agreement to delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management in consultant with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning to make any minor changes to finalise the Interim Guidance Note and to publish that document on the Council's website.**
- 3. Of agreement to delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to authorise the use of the Interim Guidance Note: East Devon – First Homes for development management purposes from the date of publication of the Note.**

## 85 **Torbay Local Plan Housing update Growth Options Consultation**

The report presented to Committee summarised the current Torbay Local Housing Update Growth Options Consultation for meeting Torbay's housing requirements up to 2030.

The Service Lead - Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that Torbay Council was struggling to meet their housing need and referred Members to paragraph 1.2 which detailed Torbay's consultation documents and the following list of proposed options to help meet the Government's housing figure of 596 houses per year:

- Option 1 – No further greenfield allocations beyond already allocated or approved sites.
- Option 2 – Limited further greenfield development
- Option 3 – One or two further urban extensions.
- Option 4 - All sites that have not been ruled out in principle
- Option 5 – Meeting full needs (as required by Government)

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that as it was unlikely Torbay Council would meet their housing need he sought Members views on the council's response on page 139 highlighting that East Devon District Council had the same landscape and environmental constraints. The response also highlights the impact on peoples' home lives and climate change if new homes to meet Torbay's needs are delivered in East Devon when residents lives are fundamentally based in Torbay.

Comments received from Members included:

- This is an excellent and diplomatic response;
- It does not make sense for Torbay Council to outsource housing to more than 20 miles away;
- There is a need to follow our own advice and not take the easy option to develop on greenfield sites.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Of endorsement of the proposed response in this report and delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to submit comments accordingly**

## 86 **Self-build monitoring report**

The Committee considered the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management's report on demand for plots from the period 30 October 2020 to 31 October 2021. The period saw a continued demand with an overall 44 individuals added to the register with 26 plots consented between 31 October 2021 and 30 October 2024 highlighting there was a need to permission service plots to meet that demand.

The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the appendix to the report outlining information about budgets which suggested the majority of builders were looking to build larger properties rather than affordable housing projects and suggested this may change in the future when plots come forward through policy requirements in the Cranbrook DPD as well as the self-build policies in the Local Plan.

The Committee were supportive of the self-build monitoring report and questions raised during discussion were:

- Clarification sought from the Council's policy perspective about how would self-builds fit within development schemes;
- Clarification sought about what was the floor area space on the self-build policy;
- It was suggested that people who want to build £1m houses must contribute to the local budget to help deliver extra services; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged the frustration felt and advised that all self-builds were exempt from contributing to Community Infrastructure Levy
- Need to avoid self-build homes being sold on by someone who builds houses for a living. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised there was a requirement to live in self-builds for a minimum of three years (to be exempt from CIL) which the council enforce rigidly
- There is a need to make it work for all levels of income;
- There is a need to encourage and provide opportunities to people wanting to build their own homes;
- Would like to see serviced plots throughout the district and not just Cranbrook focussed;
- We urgently need serviced plots to introduce diversity in house designs;
- Would like to see a requirement on developers all over the district to provide serviced plots for the younger people who otherwise do not have the opportunity to get themselves on the property ladder;
- Suggestion to revisit the budget requirement for the council to look into acquiring self-build plots.

In response to the questions raised the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management acknowledged there was a need to review the council's approach to self-build and custom build homes to help identify suitable sites to bring forward and purchase but at present the land coming forward has been quite limited over the last couple of years. He referred to Policy 41 in the new Local Plan that requires 5% of dwellings on sites of 20 homes or more to be custom or self-build plots as well as different vehicles for delivering these. He suggested the need to investigate further to reduce some of the red tape during the planning process such as a plot passport to remove the need for formal planning permission.

**The Strategic Planning Committee noted:**

- 1. The draft monitoring report and that it will be used to inform planning permission decisions (both to inform local plan production and inform decision making on planning applications);**
- 2. That 44 individuals were added to the self-build register during the latest monitoring period (31/10/20 to 30/10/21);**
- 3. The need to permission 26 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/20 and 30/10/23 to meet level of demand show on Part 1 of the self-build register (between 31/10/20 and 30/10/22);**
- 4. That the demand for self-build plots indicated on the register should be taken into account in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.**

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

Chapter 5 – Future growth and development on the development on the western side of East Devon

10. Strategic Policy – Exeter Science Park

- Do not support option B as would like to see the Science Park expanded

- Well sought after area;
- Support for option A
- There is a need to read option C carefully and have it on the back burner;
- The Science Park not only delivers jobs but it delivers a very high tech of jobs and skills we do not see in the normal walk of life with connections between Exeter City Council and Exeter University.
- In response to discussions the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised the Science Park wanted to have land to expand into and were in discussions about what land is available. Preference would be to have land as near to the existing Science Park to benefit from infrastructure and existing facilities but if this was not possible an expansion on land to the south of the A30 would be an option;
- Caution raised for option C as this would be part of the Clyst Valley Regional Park and the need to consider wildlife;
- Would like expansion to take place north of the A30 that abuts the Science Park

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option that:**

**The proposal is for land to be allocated for Science Park expansion. Policy will explain and expand on:**

- **The types of uses that will be allowed;**
- **Any relevant phasing policies;**
- **Particular design standards and approaches that might be applicable.**

11. Strategic Policy – High quality employment north of Sowton Village

- Support for option B as this is a very sensitive area and right against the A30 and M5 with limited land for development without encroaching onto Sowton Village Conservation Area where there are a multitude of listed buildings. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that evidence was being gathered and referred to an updated economic development needs assessment for site assessment work for this particular area. Preserving the historic village of Sowton can be achieved provided there was adequate landscape separation
- Support for option A as it is adjacent to the M5 and A30 and in close proximity to the Science Park with an opportunity for housing growth;
- Concerns raised that this would be more Greenfield development. Not supportive of this because we need a hierarchy to develop on what has already been built on. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management agreed that brownfield land should be used first but there is none.
- Need to consider the flooding implications of the Culm Valley

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option:**

**The proposal is for land to be allocated for a high quality business park to the north of Sowton village. Policy will explain and expand on matters to include:**

- **The types of uses that will be allowed;**
- **Any relevant phasing policies;**
- **Particular design standards and approaches that might be applicable;**
- **Links to the Clyst Valley Regional Park including provision of a green bridge over the A30.**

12. Strategic Policy – Aviation and aeronautical activity employment provision east of Exeter Airport terminal

- Exeter Airport is vital to the district and support;

- Need the airport to remain sustainable
- Dunkeswell Airfield needs to be included in the new Local Plan.

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option:**

**The proposal is for land to be allocated for aviation and aeronautical activity employment provision. Policy will explain and expand on matters to include:**

- **The types of uses that will be allowed;**
- **Any relevant phasing policies;**
- **Particular design standards and approaches that might be applicable;**
- **Links and justification in respect of the operation of the airport and greening its activities and flying.**

13. Strategic Policy – Exeter Airport and its future operation and development

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option:**

**Proposed policy will address the role of Exeter Airport as a key transport gateway and it will safeguard the airport and its land for aviation uses. Noise sensitive development within the 57db noise contour around the airport will be restricted (in order to ensure future airport operations are not adversely impacted) alongside ensuring that any development proposals do not have a material impact on navigational aids.**

**The transition to zero carbon operations at the airport will be supported through enhanced public transport surface access and the installation of renewable energy generating capacity.**

**The role of the Airport as a test bed for new technologies will be supported through the development of a sustainable aviation cluster. Land to the north of the runway is proposed to be allocated to support research and development activity alongside maintenance/ repair/overhaul and new freight/cargo operations. Land to the south is proposed to be allocated for further aviation related, employment and training/education uses.**

The ongoing development and potential for expansion of Cranbrook.

- Perturbed about the thought that we might be giving the go-ahead to annexing parts of other communities. There is a need to consider neighbourhood plans. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised the Council's preferred approach would be to deliver just the growth envisaged in the Cranbrook DPD which was hoped to be adopted later this year. He drew Members attention to the plan at Annex 3B that showed land currently put forward beyond the Cranbrook Plan area.
- Not happy with this policy as one of the previous Local Plan items was to avoid the coalescence of settlements;
- Support paragraph 5.28 (option A) as it has been the view of Cranbrook Town Council;
- Clarification sought on the future delivery vehicles. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that the Council was very close to offering the contract to consultants with lots of experience in this area of work to determine the best delivery vehicle based on the Council's vision;
- At some point sensible discussions are needed about neighbourhood plans as the Local Plan comes first and there are neighbourhood plans that have been recently made and now there is talk about throwing these away because of the Local Plan;
- Suggestion to revise neighbourhood plans instead of ignoring them;

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option:**

It is **not** proposed that the new Local Plan will supersede the Cranbrook Plan. The policies of the Cranbrook Plan will remain applicable and will be formally saved. The Cranbrook Plan does, however, only run to 2031 and this means that the new Local plan will need to be revised and replaced before this date or ensure policy coverage for and at Cranbrook in future years. There are also some existing local plan policies that are applicable at Cranbrook and a view will need to be taken, in due course, on whether these are also saved or whether we supersede them with new local plan coverage that may for selected policies 'sweep-over' and include land in the Cranbrook Plan areas.

#### 14. Strategic Policy – Green infrastructure and the Clyst Valley Regional Park

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option:**

**Proposed policy will address green infrastructure in the western parts of East Devon in general and specifically the future of the Clyst Valley Regional Park. Cross reference will be made to the consultancy work on landscape appraisal to inform possible park boundary amendments/extension.**

**Policy reference will be made to how development schemes should contribute to and complement green infrastructure initiatives more generally and how the park will form a setting and context for future developments. Policy to also note that the park offers scope to accommodate Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) as a means to provide mitigation in respect of adverse impacts on protected habitats and also potentially other green initiatives such as biodiversity off-setting.**

**With proposed additional development coming forward on the western side of East Devon there is a clear argument for the expansion of the park as a means to provide supporting and additional Green Infrastructure.**

#### 15. Strategic Policy – Development next to the M5 and north of Topsham

- Concerns raised as it is quite a distance from Topsham town and the access is poor so very cautiously support it and there is a need to bear in mind the facilities around and the need to sort out cycle trails. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management that a number of sites had been put forward and this area was also looked at through GESP in terms of a joint development that would extend south into Exeter that was already being built and together could potentially provide up to 1,500 homes which could deliver a level of services to support that community.
- Reservations made about Clge\_20 and Clge\_24;
- Concerns raised as Blue Ball Pumping Station was at capacity and could not take any further development;
- There is a need to look into mitigation measures to consider the health and wellbeing of people living close to traffic noise

**Members advised that they support officers preferred option:**

**Proposed policy will provide for the comprehensive development of land allocated (indicative boundary shown at this stage) for mixed use development with an estimated capacity of around 580 new homes next to the M5 and north of Topsham. Policy will:**

- **Require a comprehensive masterplan for the whole site to be produced and agreed before specific parcels of land come forward;**
- **Joint working across the City boundary to align development in East Devon with that in the City;**

- **A range of facilities to meet and address East Devon and cross boundary needs - needs to be determined in the context of East Devon and Exeter collective needs and provision and capacity in Exeter city (existing and planned) services and facilities.**
- **Links to the Clyst Valley Regional Park;**
- **Transport and especially pedestrian and cycle links including potential for a new rail crossing; and**
- **Require that any development respects the landscape quality of the lower Clyst and provides links with the Clyst Valley Regional Park.**

**Provision of land, amount to be quantified, for employment uses, any infrastructure needs or other provisions.**

The Chair thanked Members for their feedback on the policies and invited Members to provide feedback on any policies that they felt had been missed out of the Local Plan or whether they wanted further discussions on certain policies so that Officers could bring back at a later meeting.

Committee Members raised the following points:

- There is a need to discuss neighbourhood plans to give Officers a steer how we should work with them as many town and parish councils have only just completed their neighbourhood plans. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management reiterated that legislation states that the Local Plan takes precedent over neighbourhood plans because of the allocation of growth on a strategic level to meet housing needs. He advised it will not mean they will be ignored and will be taken into regard but equally housing needs need to be met in the district.
- Would like to consider delivery of sport and sports delivery on a regional scale; The Service Lead – Planning Strategy & Development Management advised this could be explored if Members were wanting to pursue the new community which presents an opportunity for a regional sports hub;
- There is a need to consider agricultural working, farming and rural businesses including Bicton College; In response to Bicton College the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management agreed there may be a need for policy provision to support its continued use for further educational purposes;
- The need for clear Housing Policies on disability and vulnerable elderly people with disabilities, in particular housing for everyday living. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy advised this had been addressed through Policy 39 as well as policies about nationally described space standards;
- Reference was made to giving planning permission to an outstanding house and the need to restrict this by not including green wedges to prevent coalescence;
- Aspirations for a centre of excellence;
- There is a need to consider land owned by EDDC for housing development. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the Housing Taskforce which had been set up to look at EDDC land and advised this would be looked into to understand what assets the Council controls and what land might be suitable
- To not lose focus on sustainability we need specific sites to come forward on the further call for sites in accordance with the hierarchy of settlements. We cannot have sprawling sites all over the countryside;
- Would like to see a report about a more proactive approach to redeveloping brownfield sites. In response the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised there was a need to look at the urban capacity study again to see what opportunities there could be.

- Would like all the Local Plan documents available to view in one place and easy to find on the Council's website;
- Still have concerns that there are sites in the Local Plan that have been turned down on appeal;
- Reference was made to the new community and a need to consider the deliverability of major infrastructure if CIL cannot cover all the costs. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management advised that a lot of evidence work was still being gathered to understand what infrastructure would be needed to ensure sustainable developments
- More discussion is required about the Devon County Show and the need to protect the ground and parking related to it. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management confirmed he was happy to look at the showground but parking would be difficult as some of the parking was off site.

The Planning Barrister reminded Members about the three recommendations appended to the report and drew Members attention to a small typo mistake to Recommendation 3 which should read paragraph 8.1 to the report and not 6.9 as stated.

The Chair moved the recommendations and reiterated to Members that the sites would be brought back to Committee at a later date after Officers have done the further work on site allocations.

To remind Members of Recommendation 3 the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management referred to the minutes of the previous meeting where Members took a straw poll and were in support of options C, G and I within the table in paragraph 8.1 and advised Members they would need to vote on the recommendation based on the following:

- C – Look to villages below tier 4 for growth.
- G – Search for extra sites.
- I – Be less restrictive to development in the AONBs.

Clarification was sought about why further votes on recommendations were required when straw polls had already taken place. The Chair clarified the recommendations were to agree the straw polls as one holistic vote. The Planning Barrister further clarified that the straw polls had been informal votes and the recommendations set out in the report on page 196 needed to be voted on.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. Of endorsement, in principle, of the proposed working draft Local Plan;**
- 2. Of agreement to delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to progress with refinement and final formulation of draft policies, including through engagement with internal staff and key public sector outside partner bodies and service providers.**
- 3. The Strategic Planning Committee considered paragraph 8.1 of the report to give a clear steer on a favoured approach to ensure allocation of sufficient and appropriate sites to meet housing and other development need and noted that as currently drafted there is a significant element of the housing need for which suitable sites have not been identified.**

#### **Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

D Ledger (Chair)  
M Allen  
P Arnott  
J Bailey  
K Blakey  
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  
G Jung  
R Lawrence  
J Loudoun  
D Manley  
H Parr  
M Rixson  
J Rowland

**Officers in attendance:**

Ed Freeman, Service Lead Planning Strategy and Development Management  
Shirley Shaw, Planning Barrister  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Jo Garfoot, Housing Task Force Service Lead

**Councillor apologies:**

O Davey

Chairman .....

Date: .....



Report to: Strategic Planning Committee

Date of Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## **New Community and Infrastructure Provision – Evidence and Timeline**

### **Report summary:**

This report follows Members consideration of the working draft Local Plan at their meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 where Members resolved to receive a report on a new town and infrastructure provision. This report seeks to summarise the work that has been undertaken so far on a new community and sign posts Members to the various reports and supporting information. The timeline for further evidence that is being commissioned is set out and has been designed to ensure that Members have a full portfolio of evidence to inform future decision making on this issue.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

#### **That Members:**

1. **Note the previous reports and debates that have taken place on the issue of a further new community, infrastructure requirements and delivery vehicles.**
2. **Agree in principle to the inclusion of a new community as part of the spatial strategy within the working draft Local Plan subject to this being reviewed as further evidence comes forward.**

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To ensure that Members are aware of the work that has been undertaken on a new community, infrastructure provision and delivery vehicles and that this helps to inform consideration of the spatial strategy proposed within the working draft Local Plan.

Officer: Ed Freeman – Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management  
[efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk), Tel 01395517519

#### Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning

- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** See links within the main body of the report.

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

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

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## Background

At Strategic Planning Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 Members in considering the spatial strategy for the new Local Plan considered that they needed a further report on the proposed option of a new community and the delivery of infrastructure to support it. This report is intended to respond to this request with a report detailing the reports that have previously been brought to Members on these issues and signposting Members to those reports and supporting evidence documents. The report then details the work that is currently on-going and to be progressed over the coming months to develop a robust and comprehensive evidence base. In the meantime it is hoped that this report will enable Members to give further consideration to the principle of a new community as part of a strategy to meet the growth needs of the district.

## Past work

At Strategic Planning Committee on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018 Members considered a report entitled “Principles for Accommodating the Future Growth Needs of East Devon”. It can be found at: [040918StrategicPlanningCombinedAgenda.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#). This report detailed the constraints of the district including the coastline, AONB’s, flood zones, protected habitats etc. and identified key principles for accommodating growth in the future. These principles have helped to inform production of the working draft local plan. Included in the report was also consideration of locations for accommodating growth. The report acknowledged the constraints of many of the existing settlements that would limit their ability to accommodate growth. The report then assessed options for accommodating growth in the “north west quadrant of the district” which is much less constrained. These options included focusing growth around one or more existing villages, establishing a new town or establishing a number of new villages. The report did not reach any firm conclusions on these options but did recommend a series of principles for locating growth in the district. These were:

- “A significant proportion of growth to be accommodated within the western part of the district.
- Accommodate growth in the existing towns focusing strategic growth around Axminster, Exmouth, Honiton and Ottery St Mary with the remaining towns taking more modest growth to meet the needs of those settlements.
- Villages to bring forward modest levels of growth to meet their own needs through neighbourhood plans.

- Focus development around main transport corridors where possible”

Members resolved that “...the proposed principles for growth as the basis for future discussion and consultation on accommodating growth in the district be endorsed.”

As a result these principles have helped to guide officer’s work through the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) and more recently through work on the new Local Plan.

At Strategic Planning Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 Members considered a report on “Garden Communities and Delivery Vehicles”. The report can be found at: [2SPC Garden Communities and Delviery Vehicles 091019.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#). The report highlighted the Governments Housing White Paper of 2017 and its target of delivering 300,000 homes per year. It also drew Members attention to the Independent Review of Build Out led by Sir Oliver Letwin MP. The review advocated significant additional powers for local planning authorities in relation to large sites of over 1,500 units. This included giving local authorities clear statutory powers to purchase the land for such large sites compulsorily at prices which reflect the value of those sites once they have planning permission and a masterplan that reflect new diversity requirements (in terms of the range of house types and tenures). Further powers to control the development of large sites through the involvement of Local Development or Infrastructure Development Companies were also advocated by the review.

The report went on to highlight the government’s Garden Communities Programme prospectus. The prospectus invited bids for ambitious, locally supported, proposals for new garden communities at scale. The prospectus offered tailored assistance to help design and deliver the vision for these places. The expectation of Government was for local areas to deliver significant housing and economic growth in locations where there is sufficient demand for housing. An Exeter and East Devon bid had been successful and anticipated the delivery of circa 20,000 homes both within and outside of the city under garden community principles. This was linked to the Liveable Exeter programme and projects in Teignbridge as well as potential growth options within East Devon.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 report also introduced issues around delivery vehicles to ensure that the Council had sufficient control over what is delivered and how including the suitable provision of infrastructure. Options such as a locally led development corporation were highlighted. The option of bidding for monies to investigate these options through the MHCLG Delivery and Innovation Fund was also highlighted.

In response to the report Members resolved to acknowledge the importance of having effective delivery vehicles in place at the earliest possible stage and agreed the principle of submitting a bid to the MHCLG Delivery and Innovation Fund to explore the creation of a locally led development corporation. Members also recommended that cabinet support the garden communities’ status. This was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet at their meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It should be noted that EDDC remains part of the garden communities programme as part of the joint bid albeit in the absence of a commitment to a proposal within East Devon support through the programme has been directed to the other authorities.

At Strategic Planning Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 Members considered a draft policies and site options consultation that had been prepared for the GESP. This can be found at: [Agenda item - Greater Exeter Strategic Plan: draft policies and site options consultation - East Devon](#). This

document highlighted opportunities for 3 potential new communities within the west of East Devon, these were referred to as Higher Greendale, Hillbarton and Oil Mill Lane. Each of these options was summarised in the proposed consultation materials in terms of their opportunities, sensitivities and the potential requirements that would be needed to make growth in these locations acceptable in planning terms. Sat behind this document was a detailed sustainability appraisal (SA) assessing each of these options and the emerging evidence base for the GESP which included a Transport Strategy and housing and employment needs assessments.

Although Members ultimately resolved to withdraw from GESP a clear initial evidence base for a new community in the west of East Devon had been established and published at this stage. These documents can be found at [www.gesp.org.uk](http://www.gesp.org.uk) . The options have remained largely unchanged since then with the exception of the Oil Mill Lane option which relates to a smaller area than considered under GESP.

On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 Members at Strategic Planning Committee considered a further report on the issue of garden communities and delivery vehicles which followed on from the October 2019 report. The report can be found at: [7. Garden Communities and Delviery Vehicles 151220.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#). It included details of the findings of the work commissioned at that time on delivery vehicle options that was undertaken by Local Partnerships. The report set out the further work that needed to be undertaken to establish a business case to support the establishment of a locally led development corporation. Members noted that an expression of interest had been submitted to the MHCLG New Development Corporation Competition and recommended to cabinet that a budget of £300k be set aside for work over a 3 year period to progress this work. This budget was subsequently agreed by Cabinet and Council.

On 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Cabinet considered a report entitled “Cranbrook New Community – 10 years in” which can be found at: [Cranbrook Overview - 10 Yrs.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#). Although not directly about establishing a new community and delivery vehicles it sought to highlight key lessons that can be learned from Cranbrook partly with a view to informing work on the new Local Plan and any future new community proposals. As a result that report and in particular section 2.1 covering the main learning points for Cranbrook are considered important to exploring a further new community and need to inform future work.

## **Current and future work**

Much of the above-mentioned work focuses on the opportunity that a new community presents and the potential to ensure the delivery of a high quality development supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure through appropriate delivery vehicles. Alongside this work officers have been considering the options across the whole district for accommodating the growth needs of the district. This work is summarised in the working draft of the Local Plan that Members considered at their December meeting and subsequently. The documents relating to this can be found on the agendas of the December Strategic Planning Committee meeting and subsequent agendas. In many respects this work is equally important in considering proposals for a new community as it demonstrates that there is a lack of good sites to accommodate growth in much of the rest of the district. This reinforces the assumptions that underpinned the 2018 report on the principles for accommodating growth and confirms that some form of large scale development in the western part of the district would be required to meet housing needs. The three options highlighted at that time remain in play with options for the large scale expansion of one or more villages highlighted in the options for meeting the housing shortfall while the opportunity for one or more new communities is also presented.

The work demonstrates that even with a new community proposal accounting for 2,500 homes in the plan period there would still be a shortfall of around 900 homes to be accommodated on sites that have either not yet been identified or that have not scored highly in officer's initial assessment. At Members meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> February Members voted in favour of looking at villages below tier 4 for growth, a search for extra sites and to be less restrictive to growth in the AONB's. Officers will now pursue these options, however it is very unlikely that they will yield sufficient additional sites to accommodate the shortfall of housing sites needed to meet the housing need without a new community forming part of the spatial strategy for growth.

In terms of further work involved in developing the evidence base there is significant further work that officers will need to do to consider the 3 options for a new community noting that at present officers have not presented any scoring of these options. The work also needs to consider this option in further detail against alternative scenarios such as higher levels of growth in existing settlements, however officer's initial view is that a new community presents the most sustainable option.

Consultants have now been commissioned to undertake the further work envisaged in the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 Strategic Planning Committee report which dovetails with the work officers are doing on local plan production. This work will help to assess the options for a new community as part of the first phase of the work. The commission is flexible and allows for the work to be terminated after stage 3 below if Members are not minded to pursue one or more of the new community options. In the event that a new community option is pursued then the brief allows for this to be master planned and a business case developer for an appropriate delivery vehicle.

The overall commission envisaged should it run its full course would cover the following key areas:

- 1) Review of options for the choice, form and location of new community proposals – a number of large scale proposals have been promoted through the initial call for sites process. The commission will help to ensure that there is a robust evidence base to inform the selection of development proposals in terms of the ability to secure key outcomes in line with the NPPF considerations.

The options review will need to consider key infrastructure such as:

- transport infrastructure both within and around the site including impacts on the major road network and the ability to promote active travel and a choice of modes of transport
- energy infrastructure and the ability to support zero carbon development
- green infrastructure including the ability to mitigate potential impact on key habitat sites and to provide biodiversity net gain
- community infrastructure, for example to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Connections to key services such as electricity, water, drainage and broadband as well as community and other infrastructure needed to support the development.

A full understanding of what infrastructure is needed and the associated costs will be required to assess the viability and deliverability of each option. The review will also need to consider the parties involved in each option and the governance arrangements and delivery vehicles they propose.

- 2) Vision– to work with Council officers and members to develop a 30 year vision for a new community in the district which sets out the Council's requirements in the form of

a set of criteria against which the options and their proposed delivery vehicles can be assessed.

- 3) Initial Options Appraisal – to use the vision and criteria developed at stage 2 to assess the major development options and make an initial recommendation to be considered alongside a draft Local Plan for consultation.
- 4) Masterplan – Following consultation on the draft Local Plan and consideration of responses to each of the options if a proposed site for allocation is identified then the consultant team will then be expected to undertake a master planning exercise for this site in consultation with key consultees and through a process of community engagement.
- 5) Preferred delivery option/model – this will include all necessary stakeholder engagement to help define the preferred option for the delivery vehicle to bring forward the preferred new community option.
- 6) Business case – to include final modelling of infrastructure costs, indicative viability assessment and long term stewardship and legacy arrangements.

Key outputs from the work to include:

1. Transport Assessment – This will need to consider the impact of each of the proposed new community options on transport infrastructure taking into account other growth planned for within the area including as yet undelivered growth in the adopted Local Plan and Cranbrook Plan as well as that emerging through the production of the new Local Plan. Impacts on all forms of transport will need to be considered including impacts on the county and strategic road network which will need to be considered in consultation with the County Highway Authority and Highways England. The county council have an up to date traffic model of the area which will be made available. This can be used to test options for mitigating the impacts of growth on these networks. The capital and revenue costs of doing so will also need to be understood through this work alongside the alignment with the Exeter Transport Strategy 2020 – 2030.
2. Infrastructure Requirements Report – A detailed report covering all of the infrastructure requirements of the 3 new community options with a breakdown of the costs involved of connecting to key pieces of infrastructure. The report will need to identify where there are key benefits of one option over another as a result of its proximity to key infrastructure connections or where differences in capacity mean that one site is easier/ less costly to connect than another. The infrastructure requirements to be informed by the visioning work.
3. Vision Document – A document produced following workshop sessions with officers, members and partners detailing a high level vision for any new community within the west end of East Devon. The report to include key objectives for the community and a purpose and role for the settlement as well as setting out a criteria so that each of the options can be scored in terms of how well they would deliver against the vision.
4. Initial Options Report – An assessment of each of the 3 new community options against the agreed vision document and the criteria within it taking into account the gathered evidence on infrastructure costs, proposed delivery vehicles, transport implications etc. such that a clear recommendation is made of which option will best deliver on the Council's aspirations. It is expected that this will be published as part of the evidence base in support of the consultation draft plan.

5. Masterplan – it is expected that this will provide a strategic level framework in the first instance that can be used as the basis for public consultation and engagement alongside the publication draft of the Local Plan. As such it provide a spatial interpretation of the vision and a foundation for future place making. It will enable further levels of detail, including design codes, to be commissioned in the future.
6. Business case – this will set out the rational for establishing a particular form of delivery vehicles to ensure that the vision for the new community is realised. It is expected that the five case model will be used to develop the business case. The business case will need to fulfil the requirements of section 3 of the ‘Guidance on the New Towns Act 1981 (Local Authority Oversight) Regulations 2018’ document.

This work is envisaged to progress alongside the work on the Local Plan to ensure that Members have sufficient information and evidence to consider the options and for them to be subject to consultation at the draft plan stage. The intention is then that if an option for a new community is to be progressed that it be developed in terms of a masterplan and business case such that by the time of consultation on a publication draft of the plan these details will help Members and the public to understand exactly what a new community would look like and how it would be delivered.

It is understood that Members are keen to understand the viability of a new community and how successful it would be at delivering infrastructure in a timely fashion, however there is a lot of work that needs to be done first to understand the infrastructure that needs to be provided, developing a vision for the new community and potential delivery vehicles. These factors will all affect the viability of any new community proposal. As a result there is no quick answer to the question of viability and this will inevitably be one of the last outputs from this work.

## **Conclusion**

It is hoped that this report enables Members to better understand the work that has already been undertaken on developing a new community and delivery vehicles to ensure that it is delivered in a way that meets Members aspirations. The evidence base for this work is ongoing and Members are not at this stage being asked to commit to any options for a new community. It is however important for officers work in progressing the Local Plan and the above mentioned commission that Members give officers a steer as to whether a new community forming part of a spatial strategy for growth is something that is supported in-principle based on what is currently known.

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## **Financial implications:**

No direct financial implications on which to comment.

## **Legal implications:**

There are no legal comments other than as set out in this information report.

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee

Date of Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



## Settlement Hierarchy

### Report summary:

This report seeks to pick up on Members views expressed on the hierarchy of settlements and options for addressing the shortfall in housing sites in the working draft Local Plan. The report seeks Members views on which additional sites should be added to Tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy and which settlements beyond Tier 4 in the hierarchy Members would also wish us to look to as locations for growth. The report sets out the background to this and the evidence to aid Members consideration.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Members of Strategic Planning Committee:

1. Recommend whether they wish to progress the Local Plan based on one or other of the two options for expanding the number of settlements within tier 4 of the proposed settlement hierarchy as set out in the report.

### Reason for recommendation:

To provide clarity on the settlement hierarchy to inform further work on the new Local Plan and to scope a further call for sites.

Officer: Ed Freeman – Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management (Tel: 01395 517519; e-mail: [efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk)).

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** Minutes of SPC 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 - [Printed minutes 08th-Feb-2022 09.30 Strategic Planning Committee.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#); The role and function of settlements final report: [1. Role and Function study\\_SPC report 05.10.21.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#); The role and function of settlements draft report: [Item 9 Role and Function study\\_SPC report 20.07.21.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

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## 1. Background

1.1 At the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Members considered a draft report entitled “The Role and Function of Settlements Study”. The report set out officer’s consideration of the role and function of settlements within the district and proposed a hierarchy of settlements taking into account factors such as the services and facilities available in each settlement as well as whether they have a local role or serve a wider populace among other factors. The intention was that this work form an important evidence document to underpin development of a spatial strategy for the district.

Members resolved:

- “1. That the findings of ‘The Role and Function of Settlements as a draft document be considered and its use as evidence to inform production of the emerging Local Plan be endorsed.
2. All Members of the Council should send to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management all comment and amendments that they wish to be taken into account. The Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to then report back to the Committee at a meeting after the September meeting.”

1.2 Following this meeting some comments from Members were received and the information in the document was fact checked with the relevant town and parish councils. A final version of the study was then brought to Members at their meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This concluded that based on the available evidence the settlement hierarchy should be as follows:

- Tier One – Principal Centre: Exmouth
- Tier Two – Main Centre: Axminster, Cranbrook, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Seaton, Sidmouth
- Tier Three – Local Centre: Broadclyst, Budleigh Salterton, Colyton, Lypstone, Woodbury •
- Tier Four – Service Village: Beer, Branscombe, Broadhembury, Chardstock, Clyst St Mary, Dunkeswell, East Budleigh, Exton, Feniton, Hawkchurch, Kilmington, Musbury, Newton Poppleford, Otterton, Payhembury, Plymtree, Sidbury, Stoke Canon, Tipton St John, Uplyme, Westclyst, West Hill, Whimple.

At the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021 meeting Members resolved:

“That Strategic Planning Committee endorsed the findings of the Role and Function Settlements – Final Draft and endorsed its use as evidence which will be updated as further data and evidence comes forward.”

- 1.3 Following this resolution officers developed the spatial strategy put forward in the working draft local plan taking into account the evidence included within the study and as endorsed by Members.
- 1.4 At Strategic Planning Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 in response to consideration of wording in the working draft Local Plan on the intent of policy regarding the settlement hierarchy Members resolved that they wished to include more settlements within Tier 4 of the hierarchy. Members also resolved that they would wish to undertake a further call for sites and that this should be focused on the settlements within the 4 tiers within the settlement hierarchy. It is therefore important before a call for sites takes place that there is clarity about which settlements should make up Tier 4 within the hierarchy so that the further call for sites can focus on these locations.

## 2. Potential Additional Tier 4 Settlements

- 2.1 Two options for expanding tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy are included below. These have been informed by the evidence included in the Role and Function of Settlements Study:

### Option 1:

- 2.2 There were a small number of villages that did not ‘make the cut’ in terms of being considered suitable for inclusion in tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy but were reasonably close to having a comparatively greater level of services and facilities than those villages that are less well served. In Officers opinion these settlements like numerous others could only sustainably accommodate a modest level of growth to meet the needs of those communities and these were envisaged to be accommodated through other policies that enable locally led growth in rural areas through community led development, exceptions sites etc. However if Members wish to expand the number of settlements within tier 4 within the hierarchy then the following are considered to be the next most sustainable settlements:
  - Colyford ;
  - Rockbeare;
  - Upottery; and
  - Woodbury Salterton.
- 2.3 These settlements have several facilities/services (local and/or strategic) as well as a relatively high employment density. However, they are missing some key day-to-day facilities – there is no shop in Upottery, Woodbury Salterton or Rockbeare; and Colyford does not have a primary school.
- 2.4 Members are directed to the “Role and Function of Settlements Study” at [Item 9 Role and Function study\\_SPC report 20.07.21.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#) for the evidence to support this assessment. From there it can be seen that these are the settlements that have the next highest number and range of strategic and local level services and facilities. It is suggested that overall these 4 settlements are on a par with each other and if Members wish to lower the threshold for inclusion in tier 4 it would be possible to defend the logic of including these settlements.

## Option 2

- 2.5 There are a great many other villages in East Devon that fall below the tier 4 threshold. These range from those with nil or very few services and facilities to those with at least a few of the more basic ones. Bearing in mind government policy and the requirement to deliver sustainable development it is important that we use the evidence available on services and facilities to help to guide where we look to accommodate growth. We should therefore only look to those settlements with a reasonable level of services and facilities.
- 2.6 There are a further eight villages that stand out in respect of their offerings; they were recorded as having at least five facilities which include either a primary school or shop. They are therefore considered to form the next tranche of settlements that could be included in Tier 4 in addition to those identified in option 1. They are however missing some key facilities as noted in brackets in the list below:
- Raymond's Hill (no primary school, no community hall)
  - Offwell (no shop)
  - Colaton Raleigh (no primary school)
  - Clyst Hydon (no shop, no community hall)
  - Clyst St George (no shop)
  - Stockland (no shop, no bus service)
  - Dalwood (no primary school, no bus service)
  - Talaton (no primary school)
- 2.7 Again Members are asked to consider the principles of sustainable development and whether these are genuinely sustainable locations for general growth to be accommodated. Other policies put forward in the local plan would still enable some growth in these locations even if they are not included within tier 4. These would however be more limited and locally led development to meet identified needs in the community rather than wider growth requirements.

## 3. Policy Framework

- 3.1 It is important that when considering which settlements should be included within Tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy that there is consistency with the policy framework that Members have been considering as part of the working draft local plan.
- 3.2 One of the key concepts that Members supported was the 20 minute neighbourhood. It is considered important that settlements within Tier 4 can deliver a good range of services and facilities within 20 minutes easy walking or cycling distance and that the routes are safe and attractive so that there is a reasonable prospect that people will use them. If this is not the case then there is a danger that inclusion of a settlement within Tier 4 that cannot meet this proposed policy requirement would be identified as a place where general growth could be located but that cannot meet this policy requirement leading to a clear contradiction. It would also potentially conflict with clear policy aspirations to deliver zero carbon growth noting that locating development in the right locations is one of the main ways the planning system can address climate change.
- 3.3 As an example Awliscombe was identified at Members meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 as a potential tier 4 settlement, however it has a level of services and facilities that is less than any of those listed in option 1 and option 2 above. This is because some facilities such as the sports pitch are located outside of the settlement and beyond easy reach of the settlement other than by car.

## 4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Members views on these two options are sought so that the scope of a further call for sites (which is discussed elsewhere on this agenda) can be determined and also to inform further work on the growth strategy in the new Local Plan.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the originally agreed hierarchy of settlements as set out in the report of the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021 remains the most appropriate approach in officer's opinion having regard to the principles of sustainable development and in terms of delivering a spatial strategy that minimises the need to travel and in so doing addresses climate change.

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### **Financial implications:**

There are no direct financial implications.

### **Legal implications:**

To assist in the timely drafting of the new Local Plan policies a clear and settled approach to the Settlement Hierarchy must be formulated to avoid the risk of the Local Plan being found unsound at examination.

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee

Date of Meeting 08 March 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



## Call for Sites

### Report summary:

This report sets out proposals for a further 'call for sites' as part of the work on production of an addendum/additional work to the current Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) that is in production. The HELAA will provide a schedule of possible development sites to be drawn on to inform development allocations in the emerging new local plan for East Devon. A 'call for sites' provides an opportunity for anyone to identify (and inform the Council) about any land areas that they consider could be appropriate for future development. It is highlighted at the outset, however, that the owner or owners of the land need to give their consent for the land to be submitted and considered.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

#### That Strategic Planning Committee:

- 1) **Endorse the proposal for a further call for sites to support production of the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment**
- 2) **Delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to undertake this work.**

**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure that Members have given consideration to and provided endorsement of a further 'call for sites'.

Officer: Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management, e-mail - [efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk), Tel: 01395 517519

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Finance

- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** – See links in the attached the report.

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

Priorities (check which apply)

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

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Members of committee will be aware that there is a Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) that is in production. The full HELAA making process is not simple or quick and the current work draws on ‘calls for sites’ that were undertaken in 2017 and 2021. However the current round of HELAA is now drawing close to a conclusion with a final report scheduled to come to Strategic Planning Committee on the 5 April 2022.
- 1.2 Whilst this current HELAA report with full output details is awaited it has generated a body of information, that is currently available and in the public domain that has helped thinking on local plan preparation to date. Of most importance we have site boundaries and some understanding about land areas that have been identified by land owners (or agents acting for them) that have been promoted for development up to this point in time. In total over 350 sites have been promoted for development and form part of the HELAA work.
- 1.3 Officers have drawn on the sites that have been submitted for development and have undertaken initial policy related site assessment work. It was this assessment that informed possible land allocations that have been identified in the local plan paperwork that has been considered by Strategic Planning Committee over recent months.
- 1.4 The expectation, whilst not wanting to pre-empt HELAA findings, is that there will be sufficient quantities of land that will meet technical tests for development that have come through HELAA submissions to date to meet and exceed housing requirements for the local plan. However, this does not mean that the sites will be intrinsically good and desirable sites for allocation in the plan and furthermore, even if allocated, they may not be deliverable in the early years of the future local plan and as such the Council could be vulnerable to not having a five year land supply. It should also be noted that limited submissions have been made for specialist housing types, perhaps most starkly land for

gypsy and travellers. In addition we would flag up concerns that comparatively few sites have been promoted for employment uses and concerns that might arise over whether there is a sufficient quantity of land that might be available (and which would make good planning choices for allocation) to meet future employment needs or aspirations in East Devon.

## **2 A further call for sites and a targeted approach**

- 2.1 In recognition of identified concerns about the choice of potential sites to draw on when making land allocations for development in the emerging local plan (particularly noting points raised at Strategic Planning Committee on 22 February 2022) it is appropriate to undertake a further call for sites. The hope is that a further call for sites will help identify additional sites and land areas that can feed into overall assessment work and which may ultimately become good or appropriate land areas to allocate for development in the new local plan. Though it does remain to be seen how many extra submissions might be made.
- 2.2 In the further call for sites it will be appropriate to allow anyone to promote any land area in East Devon for development. There is an across authority (East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge) agreed methodology for HELAA work that provides for this. However, it will also be appropriate for the Council to 'target' certain geographical areas and land uses as potentially appropriate for development where we would particularly encourage site submissions. Key targeted area/use types are identified below.
- 2.3 **Sites on the western side of East Devon** – the working draft local plan identifies the western side of East Devon as potentially appropriate for a substantial amount of future development. Whilst there are a large number of sites that have already been submitted into the HELAA work on this western side of East Devon a new call for sites may yield further options.
- 2.4 **Local plan – tier 1 to 4 settlements** – emerging strategy identifies a number of towns and villages, falling into Tiers 1 to 4 of the working draft local plan, as being suitable in principle for further development. Settlements in Tiers 1 to 4 have a range of services and facilities that would provide for many of the day-to-day needs of people meaning that they would not need to travel elsewhere, or at least not to be car dependent (i.e. public transport is at least reasonably good). It would be desirable to encourage further site submissions at the tier 1 to 4 settlements.
- 2.5 **Brownfield sites** – In the tier 1 to 4 settlements it will be appropriate to seek to encourage more brownfield sites to be promoted for development. Whilst it needs to be recognised that East Devon does not have substantial areas of brownfield land (it does not for example have an historic industrial legacy) there are brownfields land areas that may have scope for development and reuse that may not have been submitted in call for sites to date. Seeking to encourage brownfield site submissions would be appropriate.
- 2.6 **Regeneration and intensification opportunities** – there are some areas of land and buildings, that might be in use, but which are potentially underused or underutilised that may offer scope for more intensive use. In some cases these may fall in or close to a 'brownfield' status and in other cases they maybe productively used but perhaps not as productively as may be possible. It would be appropriate (again at locations listed above) to encourage sites where an intensification of activity could be possible, for example past

suggestions have been made around potential for redevelopment of shopping centres (perhaps new flats above shops) or decking of car parks (parking below and flats above). As a 'health warning to both regeneration/intensification opportunities and also potentially for brownfield land reuse there is the need to be aware of a concern around losing a productive land use, for example that provides employment, to another use, specifically housing. Such losses could have negative impacts in their own right and if for example they mean needing to find new sites for displaced uses they could present significant challenges in respect of finding land for and delivering relocations.

- 2.7 **Sites for small scale housing developments** – there is an expectation in national policy for the allocation of land to accommodate small scale housing developments. At locations detailed above it would be appropriate to encourage smaller scale sites to be submitted.
- 2.8 **Land for non-housing uses, especially employment uses** – in past calls for sites there has been the opportunity for people to identify a range of possible uses for promoted land. Most submissions have, however, sought residential development. We do not yet have quantified levels of need or demand for employment uses, though we do have an Economic Development Needs Assessment that is being produced that will set out quantified amounts, but it will not report back until summer 2022. However, we are aware that there have been comparatively few submissions for employment or other land uses and there could be a mismatch between appropriate levels of provision to plan for in the new local plan and sites that could actually match needs.
- 2.9 **Gypsies and traveller sites** – following on from the above there has been a long standing challenge of identifying sites for accommodating gypsy and travellers. Very few past submissions have promoted land for this sector of our community and it would be appropriate to encourage such submissions.

### **3 The engagement we would plan to undertake**

- 3.1 In past calls for sites we have been in contact with land agents and bodies that we are aware have prompted land for development as well as people and organisations that have been on contact lists for HELAA work and local plan mailing lists. We have advised of the call for sites on the Council web site and also done so in press-releases and more general communications about our plan making work.
- 3.2 Whilst we have 'covered all the regular bases' in past calls for sites there is scope to be more proactive in terms of our engagement on future work. Set out below are some additional ways (in addition to those listed above) that we identify could be useful mean to hopefully encourage more site submissions.
- 3.3 **Press releases and media coverage** – we would aim to get greater press coverage for the new call for sites and can look at social media and other new ways of communicating.
- 3.4 **Contacting parish and town councils** – we would want to explicitly contact parish and town councils to seek to encourage them in identifying possible development sites and engaging with their residents, communities, businesses and other constituents to identify and submit sites that may offer scope for development. We would want to open up opportunities to parish and town councils to lead on local scale engagement to reach out to

their communities, whether through local contacts, word of mouth, parish newsletters, flyers, etc., and encourage submission of potential sites.

- 3.5 **Contacting public bodies** – a number of public bodies own areas of land but they do not necessarily actively promote them for development. By targeting public sector bodies specifically it may help promote more site submissions. It should be noted that amongst the bodies that we would plan to contact would be differing departments and services of East Devon District Council. Some of these maybe land owners in their own right and others may have close contact with bodies and organisations that own land.
- 3.6 **Contacting chambers of commerce and business owners** – in past calls for sites contact has been made with land agents and organisations that are directly involved in promoting land for development, such organisations remain a key point of contact. However, a broader scope of contact with business bodies might generate more submissions from a broader spectrum of commercial organisations.
- 3.7 **Contacting the NFU and Country Land and Business Association** – it is considered that these groups which represent land owners of much of the rural land in the district may be able to highlight the call for sites among their Members such that further land may come forward that was not previously identified.

#### **4 Timetable for work ahead**

- 4.1 Subject to committee endorsement we would wish to move swiftly with the call for sites and associated HELAA work. To that end we would envisage a six week period in which sites could be submitted, starting in mid-March 2022 and running to late April 2022. We would then allow for around six weeks for officer collation and assessment of sites submitted before sites would then be sent to the HELAA panel, for a similar time period, for their formal assessment before feedback comes back to Council officers. This would take us to mid-July 2022, i.e. the start of around the time of school summer holidays. Over the rest of July and August HELAA feedback would be incorporated into a final report the contents of which would be reported to Strategic Planning Committee and used to inform proposed land allocations in the proposed consultation draft local plan that is planned to come to members in early autumn 2022 with a recommendation for consultation.
- 4.2 This further consultation should be seen within the context of the existing HELAA work. This existing work will generate a report (for Strategic Planning Committee in April 2022) and the new call for sites, along with refinement of existing site data held - including chasing up any absent information, will allow for old and new submissions to sit alongside one another in a final HELAA report.

#### **5. Resources**

- 5.1 There is a lot of work involved in a further call for sites and the assessment of further sites coming forward through both officer assessments and the HELAA panel. It is generally accepted however that this is work that is necessary and will need to be completed at some point during the remaining plan production work programme.
- 5.2 There is still a huge amount of work involved in establishing the evidence base and drafting the draft local plan for consultation. This work will need to be completed before the autumn

consultation on the draft plan can start. Completing a call for sites at the same time as doing this work rather than after it is complete (i.e. doing the call for sites alongside the draft plan consultation) presents some challenges and adds to the risk of this timetable not being achieved. This will also be affected by other factors such as our ability to fill the remaining vacant post in the Planning Policy Team and how smoothly the various work streams progress. At this stage it is difficult to quantify the likely impact of the call for sites being carried out now and instead it is recommended that regular updates to the timetable be brought to the committee with the relevant risks highlighted. This will enable Members to monitor progress and understand potential impacts on the timetable.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications.

### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications from this information report.

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee



Date of Meeting 08 March 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Mid Devon Issues Consultation

### Report summary:

This report summarises the current Mid Devon Local Plan Issues Consultation and provides a proposed response from this Council. The consultation highlights the potential for significant additional development in the Cullompton area, which could have impacts on East Devon. Our recommended responses to the consultation highlight the need to work collaboratively on strategic and cross boundary issues.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

- 1) That Strategic Planning Committee endorse the proposed response in this report and delegate authority to the Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management to submit comments accordingly.

**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure that Members are aware of the issues and to provide a proposed response to the consultation.

Officer: Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management, e-mail - [efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk), Tel: 01395 517519

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

## Climate change Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** – See links in the attached the report.

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

Priorities (check which apply)

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

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Member's attention is drawn to the fact that Mid Devon Council are consulting on an Issues report. This constitutes the first consultation phase in the preparation of a new local plan for Mid Devon that is called 'Plan Mid Devon'.
- 1.2 The consultation runs until 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and views are sought on a wide range of issues. The consultation documents can be viewed at [Plan Mid Devon - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](#). The issues most relevant to East Devon interests are:
- [Housing numbers](#) – the 'standard method housing need calculation is 365 homes per annum, which is less than the 393 homes a year planned for in the current adopted Mid Devon Plan. The issues report includes the possibility that more homes will be required to meet housing need, but consideration of the numbers and where they may be accommodated will be considered as part of the next stage of plan preparation, a 'Draft Policies and Site Options' consultation planned for the summer of 2023.
  - [Employment Strategy](#) – there is an existing employment strategy that prioritises skills, place, infrastructure, innovation and agriculture, food and drink. More evidence will be gathered through the plan review, but there are high levels of occupancy on existing industrial sites and a need to bring forward new sites. The current local plan makes provision for employment in Cullompton and in the Culm Garden Village, but there are significant infrastructure costs and long lead times. The plan will consider how housing and job opportunities can be delivered in tandem and the provision of more flexible workspaces.
  - [Cullompton](#) – issues that have been identified and on which comments are sought include "The volume of traffic on the A373 to Honiton and the need for improvements to this road" and "Opportunity for a new railway station" (para 12.28).
  - [Culm Garden Village](#) was awarded garden village status by the Government in 2017. The vision is to provide 5000 new homes with jobs, community facilities and transport integrated with Cullompton and provision is made for part of this in the adopted local plan. The new plan will explore the opportunities for further growth in this part of Mid Devon, which is only a few miles from East Devon.
  - [M5 J27 proposals](#) – the adopted plan makes provision for a 'major high quality regional tourism, leisure and retail attraction next to Junction 27 of the M5. The

issues report raises questions about whether a major retail attraction is still economically viable and explains that the mixture of land uses will need to be reconsidered, including the potential for housing.

- 1.3 It should be noted that the last two bullet pointed items/proposals already feature in the adopted Mid Devon local plan.

### **Duty to Co-operate**

- 1.3 Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) are legally required to co-operate with other bodies on cross boundary strategic issues: this is known as the 'duty to co-operate'.
- 1.4 An officer level meeting is scheduled to take place on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022) between Mid Devon and other relevant organisations, including neighbouring planning authorities. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the plan and seek views on the most important strategic and cross boundary issues that need to be identified and addressed.

## **2 Proposed Response**

- 2.1 The issues report is the first stage in the preparation of Plan Mid Devon. In responding to the Mid Devon consultation document it is not felt necessary to comment in detail on the whole document. It is recommended that comments focus on strategic and cross boundary issues that may have an impact on East Devon.
- 2.2 In terms of formal representations on the issues consultation, it is suggested that we:
- a) Welcome the opportunity to comment on the issues paper;
  - b) Request that this Council is given the opportunity for meaningful input into options relating to the development of the Culm Garden Village;
  - c) Request close co-operation regarding any initiatives to improve the A373 between Cullompton and Honiton; and
  - d) Highlight the need to work co-operatively on any impacts in East Devon that may arise from additional development in Cullompton.

### **Financial Implications**

No financial implications at this consultation stage.

### **Legal Implications**

Strategic policy-making authorities are required to cooperate with each other, and other bodies, when preparing, or supporting the preparation of policies which address strategic matters. There are no legal implications other than as set out in the report.