

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, 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

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 28th 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 8th 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.