

Date of Meeting 14 February 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## East Devon self-build monitoring report

### Report summary:

A self-build monitoring report has been produced that covers the period from 31/10/2021 until 30/10/2022. This shows that the overall demand for plots indicated on the self-build register was 28, with 11 on 'Part 1' of the register. We will need to permission enough serviced plots to meet the demand indicated on Part 1 (11 plots) between 31/10/2021 and 30/10/2024.

Supply figures show that we permissioned around 16 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/21 and 30/10/22. This means that, so far, we are 10 plots short of meeting our 2020 – 2021 demand figures of 26, but we have up to 30/10/2024 to meet this legal requirement.

The methodology used to inform the report is unchanged from the last monitoring [report](#), which was published in February 2022.

The number of plots permissioned is significantly lower than in previous years and consideration should be given to whether further measures are required in the new local plan to encourage self-build.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That SPC endorses the draft monitoring report for use in planning decisions (both to inform local plan production and inform decision making on planning applications).
2. That SPC note that 28 individuals were added to the self-build register during the latest monitoring period (31/10/21 to 30/10/22).
3. That SPC note the need to permission 11 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/21 and 30/10/24 to meet the level of demand shown on Part 1 of the self-build register (between 31/10/21 and 30/10/202);
4. That SPC note the additional need to permission 10 additional plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/22 and 30/10/13 to meet the 'residual' requirement from the demand shown on the register for 31/10/20 to 30/10/21;
5. That SPC note that the demand for self-build plots indicated on the register should be taken into account in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.

### Reason for recommendation:

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

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

**Links to background information** [Self-build and custom build - Monitoring - East Devon.](#)

**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 Introduction

### 1.1 Background to self-build register

1.2 The Government is keen to encourage opportunities for people to build their own homes. It diversifies the supply of housing, gives individuals and groups the opportunity to tailor make their own home, can be cheaper than buying a 'standard' home from a house builder and can produce innovative designs with enhanced ecological credentials

1.3 Since March 2016 we have kept a register of people who are interested in building their own home in East Devon. Since October 2017 we have had a duty to ensure that enough serviced plots are 'permissioned' to meet the demand shown on the register. Our latest self-build monitoring report 31/10/21 to 30/10/22 shows the latest demand and supply figures and includes definitions of what constitutes self-build housing. We need to consider the results in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.

- 1.4 In April 2017 we introduced a local connection test so that, generally, only those who live or work in East Devon, are included on the part of the register that is used to gauge demand for the number of plots that need to be permissioned (Part 1). In February 2020 this Committee decided to keep the local connection test and not to introduce a financial solvency test or a registration fee. It is not considered that circumstances have changed that would justify reconsideration of these issues.
- 1.5 In addition to being relevant to developing plans and policies, Government Guidance states that the self-build register is likely to be a material consideration in planning applications. The guidance also says it should be taken into account in housing decisions, including preparing local housing strategies, delivering affordable housing, supporting community-led housing and building housing on land owned by the local housing authority. The register should also be used to inform disposal of Council owned land and when preparing redevelopment plans. The relevant officers have been made aware of the monitoring figures.

#### Summary of draft self-build monitoring report

- 2.1 The latest (sixth) self-build monitoring report (attached) shows that during the last monitoring period (31/10/2021 to 30/10/2022 – these dates are set by legislation) 28 individuals were added to our self-build register. Since April 2017 our register has been divided into two. Part 1 includes a local connection test: we have a legal duty to permission enough serviced plots that are suitable for self-build to meet the level of demand shown on Part 1 of our register. The number of individuals added to Part 1 of our register in the latest monitoring period (which is referred to as a base period) was 11. Part 2 of the register is for those who do not meet the local connection test. Parts 1 and 2 together indicate the general level of demand for self-build and we must have regard to this in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.
- 2.2 We are required to show that we have permissioned enough serviced plots to meet the demand shown on Part 1 of the register within the three years following the end of each base period. Our figures show that sufficient permissions have been granted to meet the demand shown for the first five base periods. Our figures show that we permissioned 16 of the 26 plots to meet the demand for the sixth base period – the time for meeting this need does not expire until 30/10/2024.

#### Implications for emerging planning policy

- 3.2 Whilst the monitoring report shows that we are meeting our legal requirements, Members have previously expressed a desire to do more to promote self-build opportunities. It is noticeable that the number of self-build plots permissioned last year was significantly lower than in previous years. We now have an adopted plan for Cranbrook with a policy requiring the provision of self-build plots and it is hoped that this will significantly increase opportunities for self-build as the expansion areas are developed. The policy in the emerging local plan should further increase opportunities in the future, but members may wish to consider whether more should be done through the local plan to encourage new build away from specific allocations. Strategic Planning Committee did not support an officer recommendation to allow self-build on the outside edge of settlement boundaries in limited circumstances and may wish to reconsider this issue at a future meeting in light of the reduced supply figures and whatever responses are received to the local plan consultation.

**Financial Implications**

There are no specific financial implications regarding the council's finances on which to comment

**Legal Implications**

No legal implications other than as set out in the report and attachment.