

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee



Date of Meeting Tuesday 5 March 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Consultation on Housing sites

Report summary:

The Draft Local Plan consultation which took place from November 2022 to January 2023 included numerous housing and employment sites for consultation as either 'preferred', 'second choice', or 'rejected'. Additional sites for housing development were submitted in this consultation which have been reviewed and assessed, in accordance with the Site Selection methodology. As a result, a total of 13 'new' sites are recommended for the upcoming public consultation. Six sites are 'preferred' allocations, six are rejected, with one site currently categorised as second choice.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

1. That Strategic Planning Committee agree to consult on the housing sites detailed in this report as part of the Reg 18 Addendum consultation planned to start at the end of March.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure public consultation on housing sites as part of the Local Plan preparation process.

Officer: Ed Freeman – Assistant Director, Planning Strategy and Development Management,
efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk, Tel 01395 517519

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; It is important that we follow a defined assessment process in deciding which sites to allocate for housing development, to ensure a rational process is followed and can subsequently be justified. It is important that the public are given the opportunity to provide feedback in response to the draft proposals.

Links to background information The consultation draft local plan from November 2022: [Draft Local Plan Consultation - East Devon](#) [Site Selection methodology \(May 2022\)](#)

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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Report in full

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the most important aspects of producing a Local Plan is allocating sites for new development. To ensure we have a clear approach on how we consider sites, we have published a Site Selection methodology and are taking all potential sites through this process. Under this process, first we identify a 'long list' of sites (Stage 1), then sift out sites that are unreasonable (Stage 2), only assessing in more detail those sites with a reasonable prospect of being allocated (Stage 3). Finally, based upon a combination of the site assessment, Local Plan spatial strategy, and district-wide housing/employment requirement, we select which sites to allocate, and not, with reasons why (Stage 4).
- 1.2 The Draft Local Plan consultation which took place from November 2022 to January 2023 included numerous housing and employment sites for consultation as either 'preferred', 'second choice', or 'rejected'. We also published a summary of the Site Selection findings at that time.
- 1.3 The Draft Local Plan included a housing requirement of 18,920 dwellings over the plan period 2020 – 2040. The plan included an additional 10% 'headroom', which results in a total of 20,800 dwellings. Against this, the Draft Local Plan identified a supply of 20,441 dwellings, a shortfall of 359 dwellings against the draft policy aspiration.
- 1.4 Additional housing sites were submitted during public consultation, and these have now been subject to a 'summary' assessment with a recommendation as to whether they should be allocated, or not. In addition, one site (Seat_13) was not included in the Draft Local Plan consultation; whilst a smaller version of another site (now known as Brcl_31) was not previously included in the Draft Local Plan consultation due to significant highways constraints – further detail on this is included later in this report.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to highlight the summary assessment findings of these additional housing sites, with the intention these are published for consultation in March 2024.

2. Consultation on Housing Sites

- 2.1 A total of 38 additional housing sites were submitted in consultation on the Draft Local Plan. None of the additional sites have been assessed by the HELAA panel to date as it has not been possible to arrange a panel meeting to consider them. They have however been assessed by officers with advice from consultees. Most of the sites were sifted out (Stage 2 in the methodology) for reasons including lack of evidence from the landowner on land availability, overlap with existing sites, and being located in a rural location (i.e., not within or adjacent to settlements in tiers 1 – 4 of the settlement strategy, and not offering potential to be a new settlement).
- 2.2 The site sifting process resulted in 12 'new' sites, plus the existing site at Seaton (Seat_13) that have been subject to site assessment. At this stage, a 'summary' site assessment has been prepared, with further detailed assessment on matters of landscape, historic environment and ecology to be undertaken following public consultation.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 contains a map of each site, some factual details, and the summary site assessment and conclusion for the 13 sites. The following table highlights the conclusion for each site on whether to allocate or not.

Summary of Housing sites proposed for consultation

Settlement	Site ref.	Address	No. dwellings	Allocate?
Axminster	Axmi_16	The Co-operative Food, West Street, Axminster, EX13 5PA	15	No – rejected
Axminster	Axmi_17	Land at Millwey Chard Road, Axminster, EX13 5NL	19	Yes – preferred
Axminster	Axmi_18	Millwey Garages, St Andrews Drive, Axminster, EX13 5EZ	6	Yes – preferred
Axminster	Axmi_23	Websters Garage, 9 Lyme Street, Axminster, EX13 5AT	10	Yes – preferred
Axminster	Axmi_24	Land West of Prestalier Farm, Beavor Lane, Axminster,	29	Yes – preferred
Beer	Beer_03	Land at Quarry Lane, Beer	35	No – rejected
Exmouth	Lymp_17	Land SW of Marley Hayes, Hulham Road, Exmouth EX8 5DZ	20	No – rejected
Exmouth	Exmo_50	Disused police station	20	Yes – preferred
Plymtree	Plym_05	Land West of the Village Hall	43	No – rejected
Seaton	Seat_13	Land adjacent to Axe View Road, Seaton, EX12 2JT	39	Yes – preferred
Tipton St John	Otry_22	Combe Bank	29	No – rejected
Western side of East Devon	Brcl_31	Land at Mosshayne Lane, Pinhoe, East Devon, EX1 3TR	1000	Second choice
Woodbury	Wood_46	West of Wood_10	23	No – rejected

* For information, sites Axmi_17, Axmi_18 and Seat_13 are owned by East Devon District Council.

- 2.4 As the table shows, a total of six sites are 'preferred' allocations for housing, totalling some 123 dwellings; with six sites totalling 165 dwellings not preferred for allocation.
- 2.5 Approximately 1,000 dwellings are included in site Brcl_31, a large site adjacent to the boundary of the M5, proposed as a second choice site for the purposes of the forthcoming consultation. This site was submitted by a national housebuilder in consultation on the Draft Local Plan, which included a sketch masterplan. A key issue is it appears that highways access from the B3181 to the north is required over land that is owned by National Highways, who emphasise that "...our estate cannot be considered as being available for third party development and alternative access proposals should be explored. National Highways would request this is made clear in any public consultation." The housebuilder has said they intend to commence discussions with National Highways shortly, with the aim of resolving any issues prior to publication of the Regulation 19 Local Plan. The forthcoming public consultation may also provide further detail on this matter.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 Following discussion and approval at this Committee, the 13 housing sites will be subject to Regulation 18 public consultation alongside the other aspects on this agenda, with consultation taking place from March 2024. An addendum to the Sustainability Appraisal report will also be published for consultation, highlighting the key sustainability effects of the housing sites, as well as the other aspects of the Regulation 18 consultation.
- 3.2 Where appropriate, some of these housing sites may then be included as allocations in the Regulation 19 'publication' Local Plan, later in 2024.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the report

Legal implications:

There are no direct legal implications resulting from the report.