

Report to: **Strategic Planning Committee**



Date of Meeting: Friday 21st July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

East Devon Local Plan 2020-2040 Consultation Draft – Consultation feedback

Report summary:

This report provides an outline of the full appended consultation report on the further draft plan consultation. The report does not seek to provide responses to the comments made or outline what action has been taken in response as this will be considered through an audit of the changes made to the plan which will be taken to committee at a later stage. In practice, relevant feedback has been drip-fed to this committee within the reports on policies and sites. No specific conclusions have therefore been drawn from its content. Committee are, however, asked to note the contents of this report as providing an overarching summary of the consultation that will be provided to the Inspector when the plan is formally submitted to examination.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Members note the local plan further consultation feedback report.

Reason for recommendation:

To highlight to members key themes raised in feedback on the local plan further consultation.

Officer: Ed Freeman – Assistant Director, Planning Strategy and Development Management,
e-mail – 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
- 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

The local plan further consultation pages can be viewed at:

<https://eastdevonlocalplanspring24.commonplace.is/>

Links to other background documents are contained in the body of this 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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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Strategic Planning Committee will recall that from May to June 2024, we conducted a further consultation on the draft East Devon Local Plan. This consultation followed an earlier one in late 2022 and focused on eight specific topics not fully addressed in the original consultation. This committee report summarises the full feedback report included in the appendix.
- 1.2 It's important to note that the feedback report does not comment on every matter raised in all responses, as doing so would result in an excessively long document. However, it does provide detailed information on key matters, offering insight into the nature and scale of responses, including technical details raised by respondents.
- 1.3 The consultation feedback presented here does not include officer commentary, suggested responses to comments, or recommendations for committee actions or responses. Relevant feedback has been and will continue to be incorporated into various reports on policies and sites presented to the committee as we progress towards a publication draft of the plan.

2. How consultation was undertaken

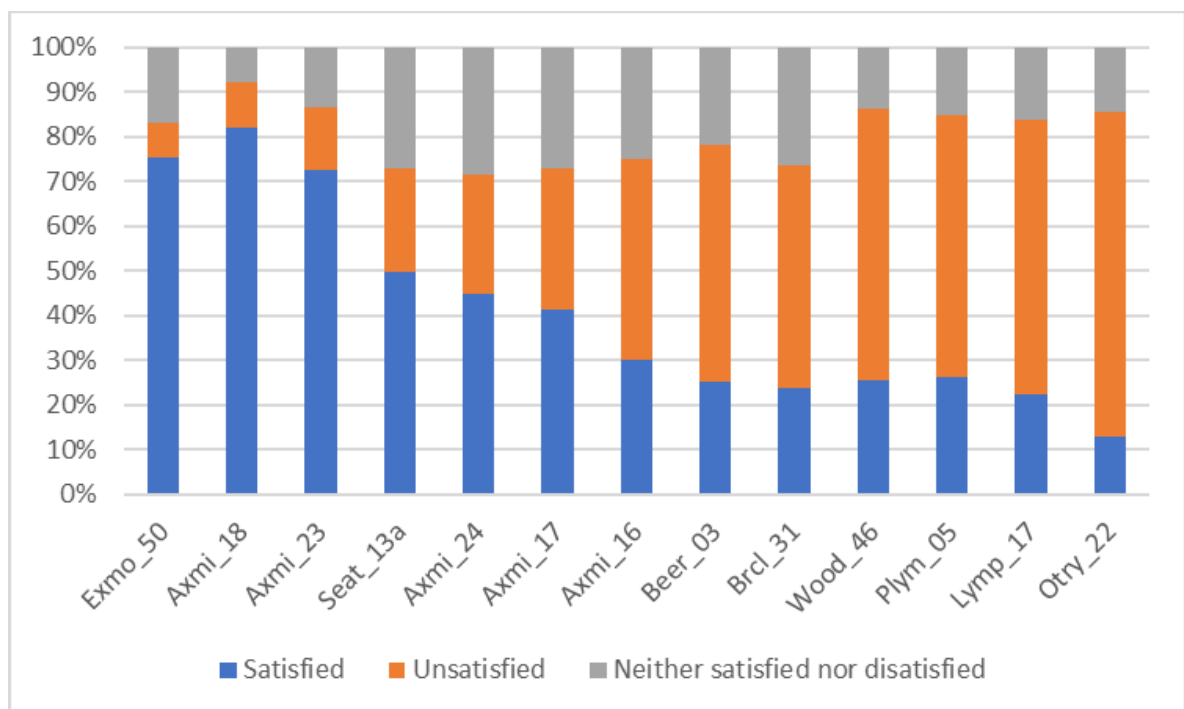
- 2.1 The consultation survey was made available online, allowing for direct submission of comments. The Council utilised the Commonplace software platform, previously used for local plan consultation, and the plan was also available in PDF format for those preferring to comment via letters and emails.
- 2.2 We received responses from approximately 1,300 respondents through the Commonplace online software and around 250 separate emails or letters. Some concerns were expressed about the accessibility of the Commonplace software, as in

the original draft plan consultation. We acknowledge that consulting on a document of this scale and breadth is challenging, and no software is without faults. The feedback on the software has been passed to its providers for continuous improvement.

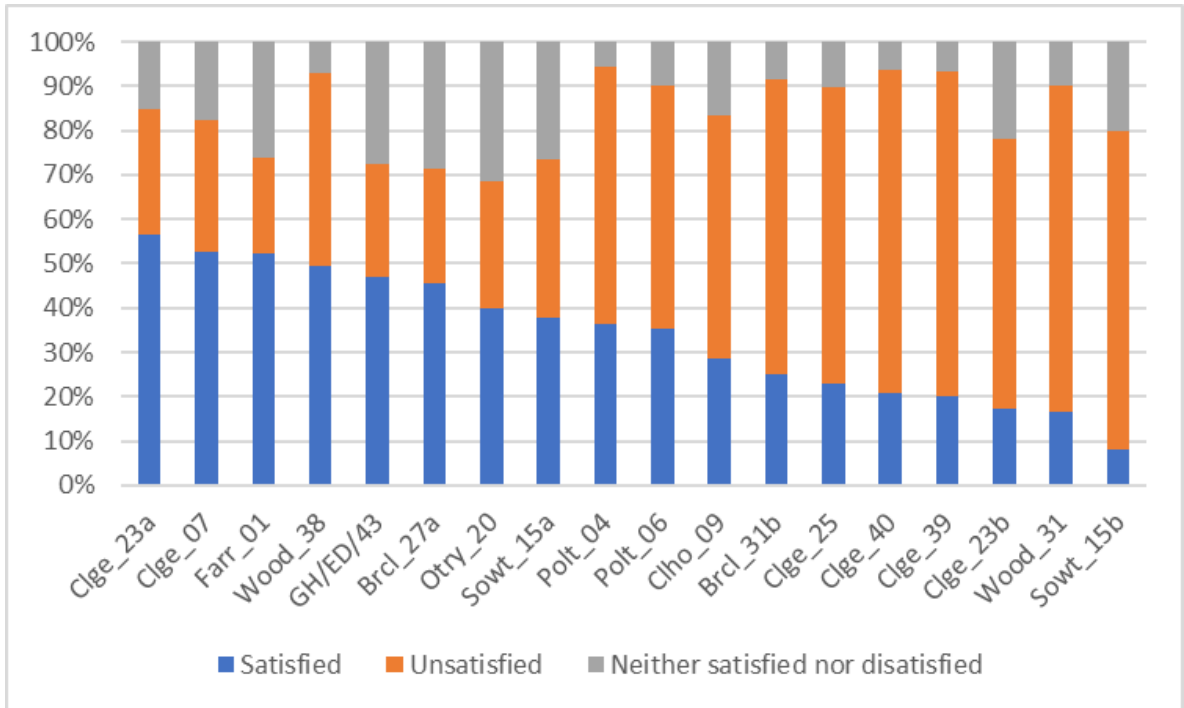
- 2.3 We received feedback from a range of amenity and environmental groups, public sector bodies, organisations, and service and infrastructure provider companies. These include Devon County Council, the Environment Agency, South West Water, NHS, and many town/parish councils. Many of these responses related to technical issues and infrastructure capacity considerations.
- 2.4 In the feedback report, we generally have not specified who made particular comments or observations, especially regarding comments from the general public. However, we do outline specific responses provided by statutory consultees, as this is particularly relevant where some bodies have legal duties or responsibilities related to the matters they're commenting on.

3. Summary of consultation responses

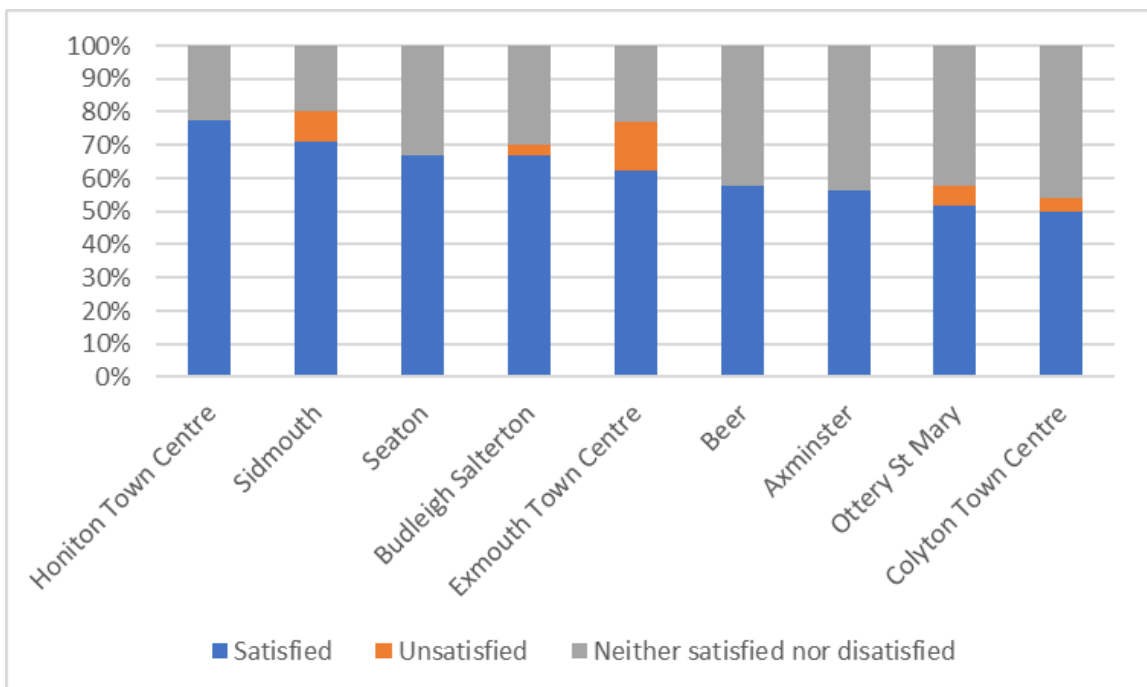
- 3.1 Most people commenting on the plan expressed dissatisfaction with one or more aspects of the consultation. There were some limited statements of outright support, and more typically, qualified support for specific aspects or policies. The full consultation report provides more detailed information on the key highlights from submissions made on the Commonplace platform.
- 3.2 There was a general trend of brownfield sites being more popular than greenfield. The graph below sets out the sites in popularity order with respect to their satisfaction at being allocated. The site that received the most responses was Brcl_31 with 101 and the site with the least was Axmi_18 with 62.



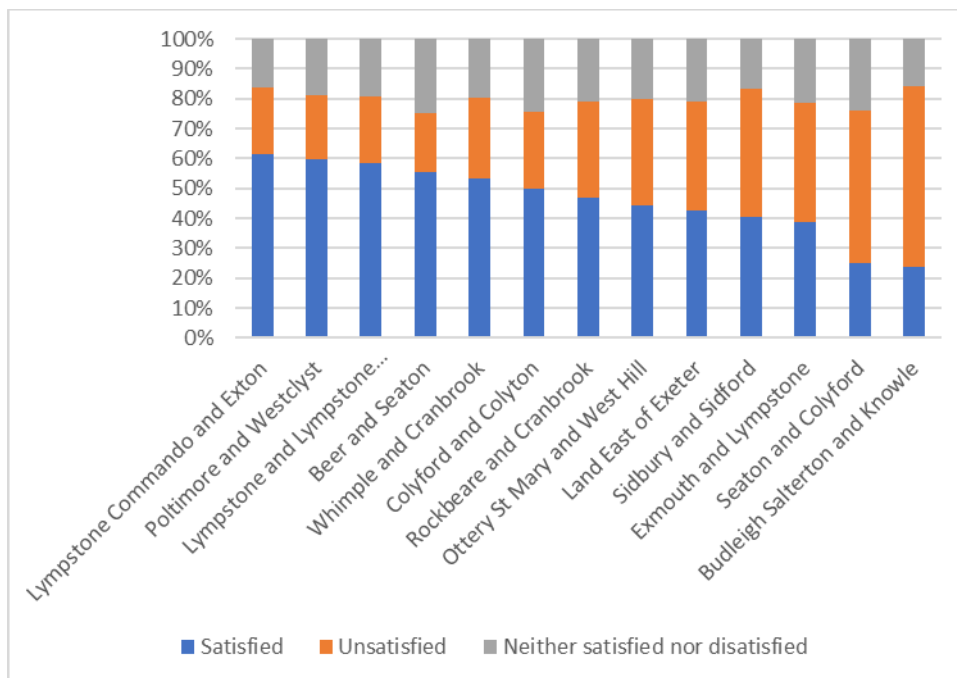
3.3 We received fewer comments in general from people on the employment sites as opposed to the housing and mixed use sites. The graph below sets out the sites in popularity order with respect to their satisfaction at being allocated. The site that received the most responses was Wood_38 with 99 and the site with the least was Clge_23b with 23.



3.4 The few responses we received on the town centre areas showed strong support across all of the areas that we proposed to designate. There was a general feeling of the need to retain the vibrancy and viability of the various centres across East Devon. The graph below sets out the sites in popularity order with respect to their satisfaction at being allocated. The site that received the most responses was Exmouth Town Centre with 48 and the site with the least was Beer with 19.



- 3.5 We included a series of questions relating to whether we should include or exclude various sites in the Coastal Preservation Areas. Although this was a popular section in terms of the number of responses, most people misunderstood the wording of the question itself and therefore to present the findings here would be misleading to the committee. The general feeling was that CPAs were an important feature of the plan and should be protected from development.
- 3.6 There were a series of questions on each of the green wedges we propose to allocate. This was the most popular section of the consultation, which reflects the importance that people place on green wedges. The Budleigh Salterton and Knowle Green Wedge was the most commented on with 283 although there was some confusion caused by the wording of the question and the way information was presented. Most respondents interpreted it as a proposal to reduce the Green Wedge area for development (referred to as Budl_01) and this reflected in the very negative response received to this designation. This is also apparent when any sites were shown to coincide with the proposed Green Wedge- although we were asking people to comment on the green wedges they were in effect commenting on potential for sites to be built in the green wedge. The fewest number of responses received was the Lypstone and Lypstone Commando green wedge with 89.



- 3.7 The sustainability appraisal, neighbourhood area housing requirements and the Clyst Valley Regional park were also covered in individual questions in the consultation, and these are addressed in the full report.

4. Where to view consultation responses in full

- 4.1 It is stressed that we, as officers, have read every submission that we have recorded as received and, as officers, have sought to record and capture themes raised in

responses in a balanced manner. Though clearly it is not possible to include in the feedback report all actual words used in all submissions.

- 4.2 This committee report provides a summary of key themes emerging from the consultation feedback. It's important to note that this summary reflects officer interpretation and does not capture all comments in their entirety. For a comprehensive understanding, we recommend reading all comments in full.
- 4.3 Responses submitted via the Commonplace consultation portal can be viewed at: <https://eastdevonlocalplanspring24.commonplace.is/>
- 4.4 Responses received outside Commonplace (emails, paper copies, letters) and documents uploaded to Commonplace can be found at <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan/further-draft-local-plan-consultation/>

Financial implications:

The work to produce to this report has been met within existing budgets. There are no other specific financial implications within this report on which to comment.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications requiring comment.