

Date of Meeting 17 March 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/a

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## **Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan**

### **Report summary:**

At the last PETS meeting held in October 2025, an update report was provided on the review of the Exmouth Town Centre and Seafront Placemaking Plan (EPP) and the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC). Members approved changes made to the EPP and SOBC resulting from the member, officer and stakeholder workshops held in April and July 2025, before the EPP was approved for consultation.

A public consultation exercise took place for six weeks from 4<sup>th</sup> November to 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025, further minor changes have been made based on the feedback received. This report summarises those changes and seeks endorsement of the EPP and SOBC from the PETS Group, with a recommendation made to Cabinet to adopt the Exmouth Placemaking Plan.

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

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

That members:

1. endorse the Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case, and,
2. recommend to Cabinet that the Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case is adopted by East Devon District Council.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

The Exmouth Placemaking Plan is a strategic document that provides a framework for future placemaking interventions and has been subject to a thorough consultation process. With the EPP now complete, adoption is required to progress key projects in Exmouth town and seafront.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Assets and Economy
- Communications and Democracy
- Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- Environment - Nature and Climate
- Environment - Operational
- Finance

Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning

Sustainable Homes and Communities

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

The Exmouth Placemaking Plan seeks to identify changes that contribute to the future climate resilience of Exmouth. Any measures identified in the final document will be reviewed in detail as the measures are implemented.

**Risk:** Low Risk; The risk has been reviewed for the Exmouth Placemaking Plan (EPP). This is low risk as it is a strategy document. In depth reviews will be undertaken for specific projects emerging from the EPP.

**Links to background information** [PETS meeting 20th October 2025 Agenda and Minutes](#)

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

Priorities (check which apply)

A supported and engaged community

Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery

Resilient economy that supports local business

Financially secure and improving quality of services

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### **Background:**

In July 2024, the PETS group met to review the results of the March 2024 public consultation of the draft Exmouth Town Centre and Seafront Placemaking Plan (EPP). Public comments had been mixed, with members recommending that the Exmouth Placemaking Plan should be refined before it was adopted by East Devon District Council (EDDC).

WSP were subsequently commissioned in February 2025 to review the draft EPP and SOBC and completed the exercise in September 2025. Throughout the process, officers from EDDC, Devon County Council (DCC) and Exmouth Town Council (ETC), along with Members of PETS, EDDC Cabinet and DCC's HATOC members group, were engaged to ensure all key stakeholders could contribute to the review.

As a result of all the feedback received, the following proposed actions were removed:

- The multi storey car park and leisure centre,
- Pedestrianising Queens Drive to Orcombe Point,
- The Arts and Cultural hub at Foxholes car park,
- Unlocking the Pier Head car park for use as public realm,
- Rationalising traffic movement in the town centre and seafront.

In addition, repetition and unnecessary text was removed to create more concise user-friendly documents.

WSP tested the proposed actions under each strategic objective in terms of their deliverability, readiness, ease of implementation and cost, which provided a broad priority list, with the Wayfinding Strategy and the Gateway coming out as the top priorities.

### **Public Engagement:**

The final stage of the review involved a community consultation exercise to demonstrate that EDDC had considered public feedback and incorporated appropriate changes.

The public consultation exercise was held online via 'Commonplace' in November and December 2025. In addition to the online consultation, two in person sessions were held on November 12<sup>th</sup> and the 27<sup>th</sup> at the Exmouth Pavilion and Exmouth Town Hall.

The methodology for the public consultation used a structured survey, designed to align with each action listed under the plans five Strategic Objectives. Participants were asked to record a response of "agree", or "disagree" for each action. Respondents were then invited to provide optional free-text explaining their views. After the consultation deadline, online and paper responses were collated into a single dataset for analysis.

### Summary of public consultation results:

The consultation received 208 responses, showing broad support for practical improvements to Exmouth's town centre, seafront and gateways.

It is worth noting that respondents expressed their gratitude for the removal of several projects outlined in the pre-March 2024 version of the EPP.

Key responses included:

- People prioritised clearer, safer connections between the Station Gateway, Strand and seafront.
- There was strong backing for affordable business space, better wayfinding, improved public realm and sensitive environmental enhancements.
- Transport was also a key area where respondents suggested that shared pedestrian and cycling environments were frequently described as confusing and required improvement, proposals to reduce traffic were supported in principle only where alternatives, such as 'park and ride' was credible and inclusive.
- Respondents frequently commented that car park capacity should not be reduced or removed from key visitor destinations, such as the Pavilion Theatre, although meanwhile uses could be trialled on occasion.

Other general free-text responses included the need for clearer plain English with examples, that accessibility and inclusive access should be a core consideration. Overall, respondents wanted clear, realistic, value-for-money actions to enhance Exmouth's character and everyday experience. Figure 1 provide an overview of the additional changes to be made to the EPP and SOBC following public consultation.

<b>Figure 1 - Additional changes were made following the final public consultation:</b>	
<b>EPP - concerns</b>	<b>Changes made to EPP &amp; SOBC</b>
Terminology used by professionals not always understood	Glossary added with examples
Not enough mention of sustainability or accessibility	Text added to the appropriate sections to reflect sustainability, accessibility considerations and the need to reduce carbon.
Lack of sensitivity towards the natural environment when describing 'development' opportunities	Text changed to emphasise sensitivity towards development close to protected natural environments
'Update the existing shopfront design guide' considered too simplified	Changed to 'Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced'
Views expressed at the possible rationalisation of car parking on the seafront	Wording changed to reflect that reviews should not reduce capacity or effect local businesses

## **Next Steps:**

Further approval will be sought from:

- Devon County Councils HATOC group 20<sup>th</sup> March,
- Exmouth Town Council members 23<sup>rd</sup> March.
- Cabinet will be requested to adopt the EPP at their meeting scheduled on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2026.

The delivery of the plan will require collaborative working between EDDC, DCC and ETC once fully adopted.

Ongoing public engagement will be required as projects are developed, to ensure that the community are involved in future decision making.

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## **Financial implications:**

If any actions require additional funding to that already approved, then a separate report will be submitted to Cabinet and Council for consideration.

## **Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to add to this report.