

Report to: **Strategic Planning Committee**



Date of Meeting 5 May 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Self-build and custom housebuilding update and monitoring report for 2024-2025

Report summary:

Custom and Self-build (CSB) monitoring figures were last considered by the SPC on the 4 February 2025. That report set out the new method used by officers to 'count' the supply of self-build plots following the introduction of new legislation that took effect from the start of 2024. Using the new method, only plots that show clear evidence of being CSB (e.g. through identification as CSB on the application form, where the owner clearly has primary input into the house design, or where CIL Form 7 Part 1 has been submitted and the CIL exemption granted for CSB).

The monitoring report shows that we are meeting our minimum legal requirements in relation to the supply of plots to meet the demand shown on our CSB register. The supply of 18 plots in 2024 to 2025 is a modest increase over the figure of 15 in 2023 to 2024. However, the figure of 18 continues to fit with the trend of lower levels of supply noted in recent years. This, coupled with the very supportive national policy for CSB, suggest that we need to do more to deliver CSB opportunities.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Strategic Planning Committee:

1. Endorse the draft monitoring report for use in planning decisions (both planning policy and development management) and agree its publication on the Council's website.
2. Note that during the latest monitoring period (31/10/24 to 30/10/25) 8 individuals were added to the self-build register (6 to part 1 and 2 to part 2) generating a need to permission 6 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/25 and 30/10/28.
3. 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:

To ensure that our obligations with regard to self-build and custom housebuilding are met in line with the relevant legislation and national planning policy context.

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
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; Low

Links to background information Links to background documents are contained in the body of this report.

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

Report in full

1 Background to the self-build register

- 1.1 The Government is keen to encourage opportunities for people to build their own homes through custom and self-build (CSB). Some of the advantages of CSB are that 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.
- 1.2 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. We have produced CSB monitoring [reports](#) annually to show the latest demand and supply figures. There is a legal duty to consider the results in our planning, housing, regeneration and estate functions.
- 1.3 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.

- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 Over the years our approach to determining which permissions were 'suitable' for CSB (and should therefore be counted towards the supply needed to meet the demand indicated in 'Part 1' of the register) has evolved. In the first few monitoring reports we included all single plots in our supply. Following the publication of Right to Build Task Force Custom and Self-Build Planning Guidance in 2021 we amended our approach to generally align with that guidance (see Section 3 of our fifth monitoring report). Since that time until the 2022/23 monitoring report our approach was to include in our supply any permissions where a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Exemption Part 1 Claim Form has been submitted (a declaration that the property will be built as CSB). Last year our approach was refined to take account of legislative changes and national guidance so that in our latest monitoring report we only count permissions if they show evidence of being a SCB project by meeting some of the following criteria
- The development has been identified as Self and Custom build on the planning application form;
 - It is clear that the initial owner has had significant input into the design and layout of the scheme;
 - The CIL Form 7 Part 1 has been submitted and CIL exemption granted for the project as a self and custom build development, with evidence of owner design input.

2 Key Points from Monitoring Report

- 2.1 The monitoring report shows that the overall demand for plots indicated on the self-build register was 8, with 6 on 'Part 1' of the register. This continues the reduction in the level of demand noted in the last monitoring report.
- 2.2 To meet the 2024/2025 demand, we will need to permission enough serviced plots to meet the demand indicated on Part 1 (6 plots) between 31/10/2025 and 30/11/28
- 2.3 The previous monitoring report (published February 2025) noted that we met the demand on the register, with a 'surplus' of 3 plots permissioned between 31/10/2023 and 30/10/2024. Surplus cannot be brought forward from previous base periods, and as such cannot be used to cover any of the demand from this or subsequent years.
- 2.4 Supply figures show that we permissioned 18 plots suitable for self-build between 31/10/24 and 30/10/25. As there is no 'residual' demand from previous base periods, this means all 18 plots can be counted towards the 31/10/2023 to 30/10/2024 demand of 8, leaving a 'surplus' of 10 plots (that cannot be 'carried forward' to meet the next year's supply because it predates the relevant base period).

2.5 The number of plots permissioned (18) is a slight increase on the number in last year's monitoring report, however as it is still relatively low this indicates that we may need to encourage more CSB opportunities to meet the minimum legal requirements.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications identified within the report. (AB-21/04/2026)

Legal implications:

There are no direct legal implications identified within the report. (DH/002533-23/04/2026)