MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

A MEETING of the **MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton on Wednesday, 26 April 2023 at 6.00 pm

ALL MEMBERS of the **COUNCIL** are summoned to attend for the purposes of transacting the business specified in the Agenda which is set out below:

[The next meeting is scheduled to be held in Tiverton on Wednesday, 24 May 2023 at 6.00 pm]

Please Note: this meeting will take place at Phoenix House and members of the Public and Press are able to attend via Zoom. If you are intending to attend in person please contact the committee clerk in advance, in order that numbers of people can be appropriately managed in physical meeting rooms.

Join Zoom Meeting Here

Meeting ID: 889 8981 9285
Passcode: 719152

Join by Skype for Business
https://us06web.zoom.us/skype/88989819285

STEPHEN WALFORD
Chief Executive

18 April 2023

Members are reminded of the need to make declarations of interest prior to any discussion which may take place

AGENDA

1 **Agenda Frontsheet** *(Pages 1 - 6)*

Due to a server issue, the Agenda Frontsheet had to be added as an item to be visible. This is a temporary solution while issues are being investigated. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

2 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence.

3 **Public Question Time**

To receive any questions relating to items on the agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.

4 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**

To record any interests on agenda matters.

5 **Minutes** *(Pages 7 - 48)*

To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meetings held on 14 December 2022, 18 January 2023, 22 February 2023 and 8 March 2023.

6 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements which the Chairman of the Council may wish to make.

7 **Petitions**

To receive any petitions from members of the public.

8 **Notices of Motions**

There have been no Motions to Council received.

9 **Reports** *(Pages 49 - 564)*

To receive and consider the reports, minutes and recommendations of the recent meetings as follows:

1. Cabinet
   - 7 February 2023
   - 7 March 2023
   - 4 April 2023

2. Scrutiny Committee
   - 17 April 2023

3. Audit Committee
   - 28 March 2023

4. Environment PDG
   - 14 March 2023

5. Homes PDG
   - 21 March 2023

6. Community PDG
   - 28 March 2023

7. Economy PDG
   - 16 March 2023

8. Planning Committee
   - 1 March 2023
   - 15 March 2023
   - 5 April 2023

9. Standards Committee
   - 8 February 2023

10 **Annual Reports of Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee and the Policy Development Groups** *(Pages 565 - 576)*

To receive the Annual reports (attached) of the Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee and the four Policy Development Groups.

11 **Appointment of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer**

In order to ensure compliance with all requirements relating to electoral activity, it is recommended that the Council appoints Stephen Walford as the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, this decision to take effect on 1st June 2023 following the retirement of Jill May.

12 **Questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 13**

To deal with any questions raised pursuant to Procedure Rule 13 not already dealt with during the relevant Committee reports.

13 **Special Urgency Decisions**

To note any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency.

14 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

To receive answers from the Cabinet Members to questions on their portfolios from other Members.

15 **Members Business**

To receive any statements made and notice of future questions by Members.

Note: the time allowed for this item is limited to 15 minutes.

16 **Invitation for Retiring Members to address the Council**

Members who have chosen not to be re-elected are invited to address the Council.

Meeting Information

From 7 May 2021, the law requires all councils to hold formal meetings in person. The Council will enable all people to continue to participate in meetings via Zoom.

If you want to ask a question or speak, email your full name to Committee@middevon.gov.uk by no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting. This will ensure that your name is on the list to speak and will help us ensure that you are not missed. Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible.

Please note that a reasonable amount of hardcopies at the meeting will be available, however this is a limited number. If you are attending the meeting and would like a hardcopy of the agenda we encourage that you notify Member Services in advance of the meeting to ensure that a hardcopy is available. Otherwise, copies of the agenda can be found on our website.

If you would like a copy of the Agenda in another format (for example in large print) please contact Andrew Seaman on: aseaman@middevon.gov.uk

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 14 December 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present
Councillors R F Radford (Chairman)
J Bartlett, E J Berry, J Buczkowski, W Burke, R J Chesterton, Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L J Cruwys, N V Davey, Mrs C P Daw, R M Deed, R J Dolley (Vice Chairman), J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, Mrs S Griggs, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Mrs E J Lloyd, Miss J Norton, S J Penny, S Pugh, Mrs E J Slade, C R Slade, Mrs M E Squires, L D Taylor, B G J Warren and A White

Apologies
Councillors J Cairney, B A Moore, D F Pugsley, R L Stanley, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright and A Wyer

94 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors J Cairney, B A Moore, D F Pugsley, R L Stanley, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright and A Wyer.

95 Public Question Time

Ian Johnson asked:

1. It was unfortunate that there was a small error in the number of Conservation Areas in the Parish in the published Plan. This was a typographical error and is easily corrected. Can it be confirmed that this has no impact of the Adoption of The Plan and does not affect the implementation of its policies, not as reported in the Cabinet minutes?

2. On a member's comment at the Cabinet meeting that the publicity could have been better, please confirm that this was about MDDC's communications, not those generated by The Plan Team, noting that we put in huge efforts, spent £1,000s on our Communications Plan, and used many local networks to get the message out?

3. The Referendum turnout may have been small, but that is always the way with local polls that are not coincident with other polls, such as district and county ones. Cullompton and others had the advantage of their Referendums in 2021 being at the same time as District elections last year, all postponed by the pandemic. Can the Council confirm that that factor was not taken into account when the comments about turnout were made?

Finally, we wish to record our thanks to the Forward Planning Team for their guidance and support throughout the four years.

In response to the questions asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Regeneration stated:

Answer to question 1:
It is noted that this was a small error and it does not detract from the achievement of the Neighbourhood Plan group in achieving this significant milestone. The factual error does not affect the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan or the adoption of the plan, and where the Neighbourhood Plan Policy T5: 'Design of Development' refers to 'conservation areas' this will apply to all 9 conservation areas in the parish.

Answer to question 2:
I believe that it may have been a reference to Mid Devon District Council's communications, but I can confirm that the Local Authority is restricted in terms of what it is allowed and able to do in terms of supporting communications around neighbourhood plans. In this case, as with other neighbourhood plans, Mid Devon District Council did undertake considerable communications to support the process – including issue press releases and contacting people who had previously made representations about the plan at the submission stage. Mid Devon District Council is aware of the considerable efforts of the Tiverton Neighbourhood Plan Team in terms of supporting communication activity throughout the lifetime of the project.

Answer to question3:
I agree that the referendum turnouts for the neighbourhood plans are often lower than for other types of election or where other elections do not take place at the same time. The turnout – 12.3% - is also not significantly different from other referendums elsewhere in the country in the recent past – for example, I know that recent neighbourhood plan referendums in Henley, Oxfordshire and Harleston, Norfolk achieved 15.3% and 16.4% turnout respectively. I would therefore reiterate and acknowledge the significant achievement of the Neighbourhood Plan Team in reaching the milestone of adoption of the plan.

96 Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct

None declared, Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests when appropriate.

97 Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 26 October 2022 and the minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 1 December 2022 were agreed as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

98 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman had attended the Armistice Day service and Remembrance Sunday Service in Tiverton.

The Chairman encouraged Members to complete the Member Induction Survey.

99 Petitions

There were no petitions presented.

100 **Notices of Motions**

There were none.

101 **CABINET - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Leader presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1 November 2022.

102 **CABINET - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Leader presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29 November 2022.

1. Mid Year Treasury Management Report (minute 92)

The Leader **MOVED,** seconded by Councillor D J Knowles.

THAT the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 92 be **ADOPTED**

Following discussion and upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for the Decision – As stated in the report.

2. NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD (Minute 93)

The Leader **MOVED,** seconded by Councillor R Chesterton

THAT the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 93 be **ADOPTED**

Following discussion and upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for the Decision – As stated in the report.

3. Tiverton Neighbourhood Plan – Decision To Adopt (subject to referendum result) (Minute 94)

The Leader **MOVED,** seconded by Councillor L Cruwys

- Those that were part of the Neighbourhood Plan Team were thanked for their contributions to this project.

THAT the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 94 be **ADOPTED**

Following discussion and upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for the Decision – As stated in the report.

4. HRA CCTV Policy (Minute 98)

The Leader **MOVED,** seconded by Councillor C Daw

THAT the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 98 be **ADOPTED**

Following discussion and upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for the Decision – As stated in the report.

103 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 November 2022.

104 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2022**

The Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 December 2022.

105 **AUDIT COMMITTEE - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Chairman of the Audit Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 November 2022.

106 **ENVIRONMENT PDG - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Vice Chairman of the Environment Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 November 2022.

107 **HOMES PDG - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Chairman of the Homes Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 November 2022.

108 **COMMUNITY PDG - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Chairman of the Community Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 November 2022.

109 **ECONOMY PDG - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Chairman of the Economy Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 November 2022.

It was raised – in regards to minute 25 - that a member of the public was in attendance during this meeting.

110 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 November 2022.

111 **PLANNING COMMITTEE - REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2022**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 November 2022.

112 **Members Allowances and the Recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Council had before it a report of the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer setting out the recommended Members' Scheme of Allowances for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The Leader of the Council explained that Member allowances should be in line with the percentage increase awarded under Local Government Services Pay Agreement and felt that the increase should be an average of the percentage increases that officers received which would be 6.66%. That there was a need for Member allowances not to fall below the average of other districts' Member allowances in Devon.

Councillor R Deed **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Councillor C Eginton that:

Increase the Basic Allowance by 6.66 % (being a figure between the average staff increase of between 6.5% and 7.0%) from the current Basic Allowance of £5,494.68 to £5,857. or in cash terms that is an additional £362. p.a. that was equivalent to £1.00 per day.

The following was discussed:

- Constituents were experiencing a cost of living crisis and if Member allowances were increased this would send the wrong message to the public.
- The Council had previously agreed to increase Member allowances in line with officer pay and that it was the percentage that needed to be determined due to a scaled increase in officer pay.
- Teignbridge District Council had agreed a new Member allowance.
- That this decision should be deferred.
- There might be a need to cut services and increase tax and so should take the lowest figure recommended.
- It was clarified that this was a Council decision and that the decision could be deferred.
- Thanks was given to the Independent Remuneration Panel for their work.
- There was disappointment that only 4 Members had responded.

- That the allowance was optional for Members and that the recommendation should be agreed.
- New Members in the next administration would need to feel there was a reward.

Following the debate, Councillor A White **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.4: that the vote in respect of this **AMENDMENT** shall be by Roll Call. A roll call of Members present at the meeting was then taken.

Those voting **FOR** the **AMENDMENT:** Councillors J Bartlett, W Burke, RJ Chesterton, C A Collis, F J Colthorpe, C P Daw, R M Deed, C J Eginton, D J Knowles, S J Penny, S E Pugh, C Slade, E J Slade, M E Squires

Those voting **AGAINST** the **AMENDMENT:** Councillors J Buczkowski, D R Coren, L Cruwys, R J Dolley, J M Downes, R Evans, S Griggs, P J Heal, B Holdman, F W Letch, E J Lloyd, J Norton, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, A White

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillors E J Berry, N V Davey, R F Radford

The **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED**.

Councillor R Evans **MOVED** the **RECOMMENDATION**, seconded by Councillor B Warren that:

That the Members' Allowances Scheme in Appendix 2 be adopted for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Upon a vote being taken the **RECOMMENDATION** was declared to have **FAILED.**

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor J Buczkowski, seconded by Councillor L Taylor that:

No changes be made to the current Member Allowance scheme for the current financial year and for the financial year of 2023/24.

Councillor R Deed **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Councillor C Eginton that:

This item be deferred to the next Full Council Meeting due to take place on the 22 February 2023.

The following was discussed:

- There was confusion with the report and its interpretation and that this should be deferred.
- It was clarified that it would not be the case that Member Allowances would stop.

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Note: Councillors F Letch requested that their abstention from voting be recorded.

113 **Questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 13**

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 13.

114 Special Urgency Decisions

With regard to any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency taken since the last meeting. The Chairman informed the meeting that no such decisions had been taken in that period.

115 Questions to Cabinet Members

- Councillor F Letch asked whether a Scrutiny Committee was needed as Members had requested items to be added to Scrutiny agenda but were refused, which was against the Constitution.

  The Leader of the Council stated that there was a need for the Scrutiny Committee and that this should be discussed with officers.

- Cllr L Taylor asked if it was appropriate for the Leader to also be the Portfolio Holder for Finance.

  Cllr R Deed explained that it was not his intention to take on the portfolio and that there was only 5 months till the end of the municipal year. That the appointment of a new Cabinet Member in this position required training, it was also considered that the Leader had experience and knowledge in banking and it was felt that it was an appropriate solution at this moment in time.

- Cllr S Pugh wanted to know how successful the recent PDG meetings were in regards to the 2023/24 budget.

  Councillor R Deed stated there had been a meeting with the PDG Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen which concluded that the recent PDG meetings were very successful. The PDGs would continue budget discussions in January 2023.

  The Deputy Chief Executive added that the updated financial gap was circa £1m and that they were waiting for business rate metrics. The total income generation from new fees and charges would be circa £850,000. Savings would be discussed during the next PDG meetings.

- The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change received a written question from Councillor A Moore, which asked if the Cabinet Member felt charges were valid on a leaflet that had been distributed privately, which contained information that related to the 3 weekly residual waste collection.

  Councillor C Slade explained that evidence contrary to the leaflet had shown that the system was working and that street scene had improved. The council had not received money to improve bin services and had not cut services.

- Councillor A White asked if the Leader would be sacking the rest of the Cabinet. In addition, an explanation was sought after, regarding the recent high turnover of Cabinet Members.

Councillor R Deed explained that he would not sack the rest of the Cabinet and that as Leader he had chosen the best available talents for Cabinet. A number of Members were not available at the time Cabinet were chosen but chose the appropriate people, the Leader was content with current Cabinet Members.

116 **Members Business**

Councillor R Evans thanked officers for their hard work and reminded Members that the Council had received funds for modular builds and that this was good for the Council.

Councillor R Dolley emphasised that there was a need to get these modular builds built.

Councillor C Eginton highlighted to Members the importance of keeping their Register of Interests updated.

Councillor R Deed stated that Cabinet had no intention of the 23/24 budget considerations leading to officer redundancies.

(The meeting ended at 7.45 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 18 January 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present Councillors
R F Radford (Chairman)
G Barnell, J Bartlett, E J Berry, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs C Collis, L J Cruwys, N V Davey, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley (Vice Chairman), J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, Mrs S Griggs, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, B A Moore, S Pugh, D F Pugsley, Mrs E J Slade, C R Slade, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, Mrs N Woollatt and J Wright

Apologies Councillors
R M Deed, Mrs E J Lloyd, Miss J Norton, S J Penny, A Wilce and A Wyer

Present Officers:
Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Richard Marsh (Director of Place), and Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager)

117 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors: R Deed, Miss J Norton, S J Penny, A Wilce and A Wyer.

118 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A Question was received and read out by the Chairman from Roger Davey:

In April of last year the overspend on the Riverside development of the unsightly blocks of flats and houses which disfigure the riverside, was quoted as just over three quarters of a million pounds. Given that in September last year the council gave 3 Rivers a further 2.2 million to keep it afloat my questions are :-

No.1
Given the continuing haemorrhage of public funds to 3 Rivers, how many more millions of pounds of council tax payer's money does the council intend to plough into 3 Rivers?

No.2 Given that it is obvious that the council and some of its officers are incapable of controlling the expenditure on 3 Rivers will the council bring in some forensic accountants or other external body to examine all of the accounts , contracts and any other documents associated with this company.

No.3
Of especial concern must be the way in which the original multi million pound contract for the Riverside site was awarded to EBC (who later pulled out) after a cosy chat, without going out to tender. This is a flagrant breach of the public procurement regulations which 3 Rivers are bound by as a company owned by the council. These regulations insist on at least 3 companies being invited to tender. Even if the councils usual contractors do not wish to tender there are many national firms who I am sure would have tendered had they been asked. Instead the contract was awarded "on a design and build contract 2016 following negotiations with a contractor". This is the response from my freedom of information request

to 3 Rivers in 2019. This alone especially as a councillor and a council officer were directors of 3 Rivers at the time, is I believe another breach of the regulations and surely warrants further investigation by an external body. Why was the contract awarded in this way ?

No.4
Given 3 Rivers record thus far how can the council be sure that the costs for the Bampton and Park road developments are realistic and will not lead to the council taxpayers being saddled with yet more debt?

No.5
Given that this meeting is closed to the people who pay, if and when will the council release all of the information regarding 3 Rivers and the ongoing Riverside site fiasco?

The Chairman thanked Mr Davey for their questions and noted that answers would be submitted in writing.

A Question was received from Paul Elstone:

Question 1
There is an increasing level of public concern over the financial arrangement between the Council and 3 Rivers, including the HIGH debt levels and the impairment of loans. These concerns are borne out by the demonstration outside of Phoenix House this evening and recent press articles, Once more, a meeting about 3 Rivers will be held in secret. For transparency, can the voting tonight be conducted in public with individual votes recorded?

Question 2
External Auditors Grant Thornton have just published a report that identifies problems with 3 Rivers. A write-down of work in progress of £1.6 million, an overstated Tax deferment of nearly £500,000 increasing the loss provision on St Georges Court by £222,000. This is in addition to the already declared £790,000 impairment on the Council's books. Why can't Council see this Company is in increasingly serious trouble?

Question 3
Scrutiny Committee on Monday were told that the Council will not now fund 3 Rivers from external borrowing but will continue to do this from Council funds. With the over £900,000 budget cuts being asked for, how can the Council afford this?

Question 4
When given 3 Rivers current project delivery record. Cost exposures, and impaired loans, all available property development loan market evidence shows that the Council are providing highly preferential interest rates and loan terms to its own Company.
That 3 Rivers are unable to lend from the market something confirmed by the then Cabinet Member for Finance at Cabinet on 6 September 2022. Are the Council worried about the risk of being accused of giving 3 Rivers a significant commercial advantage in any tendering process, especially where public money is involved?

Question 5
Can the S151 Officer both confirm beyond any doubt that there will be no risk of a section 114 Notice being issued as a result of the Council's involvement with 3 Rivers?

The Chairman thanked Mr Elstone for their questions and noted that answers would be submitted in writing.

A Question was received from Belinda Boyles:

Why are you not busy concentrating on affordable houses for people like myself? Also, I would like to know why it is so hard to be prioritised, I lived in Bampton all my life, 34 years,

I've got 2 children sharing a bedroom, a boy and a girl. I have been on the system for 3 years now and I am finding it very hard to believe that my best chance of being able to bring my children up the right way is to move to all the way Plymouth. Where I am likely to get a 3 bedroom house which obviously I need. I just believe that the system is not running as it should.

Cllr R J Chesterton explained that there was a building programme in place, with a site in Tiverton for 70 council houses to be built for social rent and to passive house standards, with other sites planned. Other sites for small scale development across the Mid Devon were being sought. In addition, there was concern over the weighting for local priority through the Devon Home Choice system. A motion had been raised for the next ordinary Full Council meeting which sought to address the current Devon Home Choice system.

A Question was received from Rachel Kelland:

I don't actually live in a council property I am somebody that obviously earns a substantial amount of money between me and my partner and we live in private rented accommodation which is obviously excruciate as you can imagine. I think its okay you sat there saying about all these developments and everything going up but where is it about the locals staying local? Because apart of housing and as far as I get it from the Devon Home Choice and about the housing that was obviously allocated around local areas it was actually under the assumption that local people could stay local. Whereas obviously Belinda here has obviously been waiting for a property for over 3 years and other properties have become available which she been able to bid on but people in like Taunton or anywhere else has obviously been given these properties over certain people who have stayed local, obviously it is not just Belinda or other people that are obviously in this criteria and obviously I understand that obviously you know other people have different circumstances to why they would need a property over somebody else which is absolutely fine but in the same ball court where is the locals staying local?

Cllr RJ Chesterton explained that it was Devon Home Choice who decide the allocations, with a cascading criteria being used. The motion that had been submitted requested a review which would highlight if enough emphasis was put on local need. If Devon Home Choice had not followed protocol this would also be highlighted in the review.

A Question was received from Philip McShell:

I live in Bampton in a council property, bungalow, I was quite infuriated just a moment ago and thought I have to say something for this lady behind me with her 2 children, one is 5 years of age and one is 13 and I just want to comment to the gentleman who stood up and spoke in regard to what the Council are doing and incentives and things. I just wanted to ask how long does this lady have to wait her children are 5 years of age and her other child is 13, how old will they be when problems like this are fixed? People with a situation like this need support and help now, it's no point them waiting year on year out, you know, what reassurance can the Council give to people like this, a young mum struggling to bring up 2 children. What reassurance can the Council give?

Cllr R J Chesterton explained that it difficult for individual cases to be discussed in a public meeting and that if they wanted issues to be raised they were encouraged to get in contact with their Ward Member and the Cabinet Member for Housing.

119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Cllr R L Stanley declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in that he was a Director of the 3 Rivers Development Company Ltd. And from this it was inferred that should any discussion ensue he would need to leave the meeting.

Cllr Mrs S Griggs declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she worked for Seddons Estate Agents.

120 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

121 ACCESS TO INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following was discussed:

- It was raised that item 6 should be discussed in public.
- The validity of the agenda.
- There was confusion whether Council were to advise or make a decision.
- That the Part 1 elements of agenda item 6 should be discussed in public.

The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer confirmed that the decision making responsibility for 3 Rivers Developments Ltd rested with Cabinet and could not be vested elsewhere. The Council could not agree or disagree the business plans and cases presented, however, the Council could make its views known to the Cabinet by formal recommendation or could request that Cabinet notes the discussion of Council.

In addition, the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer explained that the agenda had not changed, the recommendation had been clarified and that Council were to advise Cabinet as opposed to making a decision.

Councillor B Holdman **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, seconded by Councillor J M Downes that:

The Council stay in part1 for the debate and for the vote and to also request a recorded vote in part 1.

It was mentioned that:

- It was important for this to be discussed in an open forum and to go into part 2 when appropriate.

The **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED.**

The Chairman **PROPOSED** that the meeting go into part 2.

Upon a vote being taken, the proposal was declared to have **FAILED.**

The Chairman explained that the Council would remain in part 1 until it was necessary to move into part 2 for item 6.

122 3 RIVERS DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED - BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2028 AND 2 ASSOCIATED BUSINESS CASES

The Council received a *report from the Deputy Chief Executive which asked Members to review the business plan of 3 Rivers Developments Ltd. As well as 2 business cases for a second development scheme at Bampton and a business case for a 6 unit residential development scheme in Tiverton which were included in the 3 River's Developments Ltd recent Business Plan.

The following was discussed:

- Clarification over the impairment figure was sought, to which the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that the figure had been provided by the finance team and had been audited by Grant Thornton. In addition, Grant Thornton were reviewing the 2021/22 accounts and were happy with what had been applied.

- It was asked where the £1.6m figure came from and what it referred to. The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that it referred to an estimate from the property development company of the likely potential loss on the ST George's Court development.

- Clarification was sought over where funds were coming from to fund 3 Rivers Developments Ltd. The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that it was a treasury investment decision, not an expenditure decision. It would be funded by temporary treasury holdings. The Council had decided that greater returns could be made if invested in a third party property development company.

- The report stated there had been no costs for borrowing, but it was asked if there would be future borrowing costs. The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that all lending had been from temporary treasury deposits. There may be a need to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), but if this were to be the case there would still be an interest surplus margin.

- In relation to risk, it was asked when the level of risk would become unacceptable. The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that it would be down to the Council to decide following advice from officers. It was clarified that the overarching financial strategy was decided by Full Council.

- It was asked if the Council had made better returns when compared to original investments. The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) explained that within the table under 3.6 it could be assumed with a 13% return with an estimated impairment that there had been a projected loss of £1.6m there was a profit position at the moment. It was less than anticipated and was skewed by one project, while all other projects were successful.

- It was challenged that interest had been generated and that this was not profit.

- The performance of the business was challenged.

Councillor Mrs N Woollatt **MOVED** that the meeting should be moved into part 2 and that standing orders be suspended. This was seconded by Councillor B G J Warren.

Upon a vote being taken, the **MOTION** was declared to have **CARRIED.**

The Chairman indicated that discussion with regard to the next item, may require the Council to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision may be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee would need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

THEREFORE it was **RESOLVED:** That, in accordance with Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for item 6 for the reason set out below:

- Information under paragraph 3 (contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).

The meeting then returned to open session

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

1. Council recommends to Cabinet that neither of the business plans or business cases in their current form be supported.

2. Council recommends to Cabinet that it should consider whether it should continue to fund the company and if so to what stage. It further recommends that independent legal and financial advice be sought to help inform those considerations and explore what options are available.

3. That recommendations 1 and 2 be bought before an extraordinary Cabinet meeting no later than the 27 January 2023.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

The following recorded votes were taken during part 2 of the meeting:

Following the debate, Councillor B A Moore **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.4: that the vote in respect of recommendation 1 shall be by Roll Call. A roll call of Members present at the meeting was then taken.

Those voting **FOR RECOMMENDATION 1**: Councillors G Barnell, J Bartlett, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, SJ Clist, L Cruwys, N V Davey, J M Downes, Mrs S Griggs, B Holdman, F W Letch, S E Pugh, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright

Those voting **AGAINST RECOMMENDATION 1**: Councillors R Evans, P J Heal, B A Moore, R F Radford

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillors Mrs C A Collis, Mrs C P Daw, C J Eginton, D J Knowles,

The **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **CARRIED**.
Those voting **FOR RECOMMENDATION 2**: Councillors G Barnell, J Bartlett, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, SJ Clist, L Cruwys, J M Downes, Mrs S Griggs, B Holdman, F W Letch, S E Pugh, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright

Those voting **AGAINST RECOMMENDATION 2**: Councillors R Evans, P J Heal, B A Moore, R F Radford

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillors Mrs C A Collis, N V Davey, Mrs C P Daw, C J Eginton, D J Knowles,

The **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **CARRIED**.

(The meeting ended at 9.38 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 22 February 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present
Councillors R F Radford (Chairman)
G Barnell, J Bartlett, E J Berry, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley (Vice Chairman), J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, Mrs S Griggs, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Mrs E J Lloyd, B A Moore, Miss J Norton, S J Penny, S Pugh, D F Pugsley, Mrs E J Slade, C R Slade, Mrs M E Squires, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, A White, A Wilce, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright and A Wyer

Apologies
Councillors N V Davey and R M Deed

123 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr N V Davey and R M Deed.

124 **Public Question Time**

Kate Clayton-White
Our Comments and questions relate to the minutes of the Economy PDG (EPDG) dated the 12 January agenda item 10 reports (b). We think that the cabinet officers running Mid Devon Council show a complete disconnect from the day to day difficulties faced by the public, we faced inflation busting increases in food and energy bills so the decision to raise car parking charges by eye watering amounts is very hard to swallow and for some people unaffordable.

We rent an allocated space because we live on a town centre street with limited parking our annual rent will be increasing by 115% from £425 to £912.50. We cannot identify the meetings where this increase was discussed and who agreed it. The need for a review of car parking charges was raised by the EPDG on the 12 January but the cabinet seems to have publicised and imposed this huge increase before the recommended review has even taken place.

Their decision making process is hidden behind a veil of secret part 2 discussions, the results of which are unavailable to the press and to us the public. I use the word publicise very loosely, there has been no publicity at all. Communication from the Council has been dire, we only found out through a chance conversation with a neighbour. The Council uses email to remind us that fees are due yet can't seem to use the same simple system to inform us of the increases. We suspect there will be many people who do not even know.

Last week's press release stated that material costs have escalated our car sized piece of tarmac is not swept or tended in any other way by council employees, we cannot see how the higher material costs could possibly lead to this huge increase

which will by the way generate an extra £28k per year from 51 spaces, cabinet meeting minutes from the 29 November contain financial monitoring information from last year which seem to show that the four year forecast for car park income is £30k ahead of budget.

If this is correct the only possible justification of such a huge increase must be to use car park renters and users as a cash cow to sure up financial deficiencies in other areas administered by the council who's unexplained actions, lack of transparency and secretive decisions would seem fit to propel them head long into the rotten borrowed section of a future edition of private eye. So my question is, what was so commercially sensitive about raising car parking charges that the decision making process had to take place under private part 2 rules, i.e. in secret and why has the cabinet increased the charges before the recommended review has even occurred?

Neil Barclay –
I completely second what was said by my neighbour Kate Clayton-White just now, and my feelings and that of many of the residents I've spoken to are exactly the same, regarding the parking.

Paul Elstone –

Question 1
A Local Newspaper has quoted the Leader as asking for an external fraud investigation involving 3 Rivers and this Council. A written reply on Monday to a question I previously asked, states that a Fraud Investigation has not yet been commissioned. The Reply also indicates there is no intention to investigate 3 Rivers. There is Information in the public domain which justifies including 3 Rivers in any fraud investigation:

1) 3 Rivers paid four hundred and twenty thousand pounds (£420,000) for the land at Bampton that a professional land valuer said was only worth Two hundred and Thirteen thousand pounds (£213,000).

2) For their Bampton development, 3 Rivers gave one set of viability figures to the Cabinet in their Business Case asking for Council Loans but gave different figures to the Council's Planning Committee.

3) When building materials were removed from St Georges Court. It is understood that an MDDC Executive Officer wrote an email which it was said these events should be kept confidential.

Will the MDDC Chief Executive Officer implement an external fraud investigation that fully includes 3 Rivers?

Question 2
At the Scrutiny Committee Meeting, that called-in the Cabinet decision to continue to loan money to 3 Rivers, a former Cabinet Member said the cost of winding up 3 Rivers could be as high as Ten Million Pounds (£10,000,000). Detailed asset and liability calculations using the various financial data available reveals the loss would be around Seven Hundred Thousand pounds. Not ten million. Unless there is substantial and serious information being hidden from the public this figure was just scare mongering in an attempt to influence the Scrutiny Committee decision. Any

potential loss to the Council would be public money, not 3 Rivers, so this figure cannot be commercially sensitive and should be made public. Will the MDDC S151 Officer provide a realistic estimate of the true loss figure?

Question 3
The budget proposal before you reveals the intent to mothball the Children's Paddling Pools at Tiverton and Crediton to save money. Paddling Pools perhaps most used by disadvantaged children. Obviously this Council and its Officers have no shame. This given this Council is already writing off loans that 3 Rivers say they cannot repay and have admitted a major loss at St Georges Court, despite this the Cabinet supported by Executive Officers still voted to continue to support this poorly managed, poorly governed, loss making company. I understand the Environment PDG did not approve this action so how is this decision to mothball paddling pools justified?

Jo Webber –
I'm here regarding the proposed increase in car parking charges in around Mid Devon, car park ticket machines proposed 100% plus increase, on street parking permits up to 100% plus increase. Is Mid Devon totally unaware that the UK is going through a cost of living crisis, a car park is the first port of call for any tourist or new shoppers to Tiverton, what sort of welcome is that? Our local population that have stood by our local independents to shop local through these past Covid years, what sort of thank you is that?

The local businesses owned and employing local people would risk reduced footfall due to the higher costs of parking, this will have a domino effect and Mid Devon will have more empty units, is that your plan? We should be so proud of our three market towns situated in the heart of Mid Devon, we should strive to offer an exciting and varied selection of specialist shops and tourist attractions in our area, work together to make Mid Devon a special memorable experience for both tourism and shopping, not remembered for its extortionate car parking charges. Mid Devon have you realised everyone who lives, works in and around Tiverton will be affected by this outrageous proposal. My Question is, Mid Devon have you consulted with businesses or local residents regarding your imminent proposed increases in car parking charges? And if you haven't why not?

Sophia Beard –
This is on the topic of car park charge increases, my name is Sophia Beard and I am speaking as a representative of the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership which represents all businesses within the Tiverton Town Centre. I'm a business owner myself and a resident in the town centre and have been privileged to have been part of this community for over 30 years. In discussion with the other businesses and members of the Town Council I would like to outline the concerns that have been raised over the last week which will conclude with a question for yourselves and will be followed by the submission of a petition at the appropriate point on the agenda.

Having had many, many, many conversations with people, both residents, business owners, members of the Town Council over the past week there is no way for me to impress upon you the strength of feeling that there has been since this news arrived all to the negative, let's be clear, Tiverton being a rural community oh and actually before I continue I would like to hark to the I will add every single sentiment that Kate made, that every single sentiment that Jo made and particularly every single

sentiment that the gentleman before made as well in terms of the transparency because this all comes down to part of the problems that we have.

Inherently, raising car park charges is not the issue, the issues are many fold we understand that prices are rising indeed it is affecting everybody, however, you have a decision made by a Cabinet for which there is no legal quorum currently so how you can justify setting a hare running with a variation notice that is due to expire on the 7th of March without a consultation period is confusing to say the least. Procedure in terms of the actual notice period that any other businesses and residents have had on this as Kate so eloquently put, some are still in the dark about it, many don't know about it but many as I'm sure have come to light but only in the last week.

That is unacceptable, particularly in regards to the disproportionate impact this is going to have, now my colleagues in Cullompton who will deal with one car park rises, my colleagues in Crediton who have 2 car parks affected, Tiverton will be affected with 7 different car parks, so not only is it disproportionate in the percentage rises which it is very difficult to see that any formula has been used across as it has been noted some are going up by 100% some are 200%.

It's a very scatter gun approach as to how you actually worked out these figures in any case and that comes back round to this lack of consultation, lack of transparency, lack of transparency in terms of the procedure for speaking here tonight and submitting our questions and our petitions having only had a weeks' notice, we do have a 1000 names to hand in this evening that have been gathered from local residents, from shoppers, from the local businesses and we have been delighted with the outpouring of support that we have had from all those callers concerned over this issue.

As I said at the headline this isn't about whether or not you put up car parking charges that's fine, the fact is what you're not doing is doing it reasonably, proportionally within procedure possibly without quorum and legality and these are all serious concerns.

Another concern is that asking the business owners, the residents, the staff and their employees to plug up a shortfall of mismanaged funds by Mid Devon District Council in respect of perhaps other projects to do with 3 Rivers or anything else is unacceptable, you cannot justify a cash grab from these communities for that purpose if your budget needs to be balanced and that is something that you need to look at, but I tell you what we're not the ones who are going to pay for it in this way.

I understand that you have a budget that needs to go through on the 11 March I also understand that you have a number of Councillors who have now been misplaced and the agenda for this evening you know goes on and on with other questions as to do with how this has been managed. So my question is and as I say largely I shouldn't have to remind you of the fact that as a rural community servicing the outline villages, every single person in this area and in this district whether in Tiverton, Crediton or Cullompton or any of the surrounding villages, the first thing you do when you need to do anything is to get into your car.

Because the bus services and transport services around here are not reliable enough to support the ageing population, the young population, just generally farmers they are getting in their cars and they are travelling. The issue the town centre partnership

has and the work we are doing to promote Tiverton town centre is to draw people in and stop them because every single time someone from these surrounding villages gets in their car they have a choice, they have a choice whether come into our town centre and support our local businesses or whether they head off to Taunton or they head off to Exeter or whether they head off anywhere else.

The fight that we have ladies and gentlemen is to keep them here in town, your proposal in these increase in charges is so disgustingly disproportionately, arrogantly, counterproductive and counterintuitive to that aim that we really need you to listen the petition that will come in at section 6 has got 1000 signatures on it, we have had less than a weeks' notice to get that together.

And my question is this with specific regard to the wideset concerns and context that are being raised tonight by myself and the others in the room in respect of the quorum, procedure, transparency of process absence of the sufficient consultation and the disproportionate proposal both with the amount and impact on Tiverton town centre, its businesses, its employees, its residents and its customers, will members of the council agree to cease the countdown to the 7 March of the notice of variation and return to the issue with the appropriate mandate following your re-election of the council in May?

Ros Nichols –
I'm a partner in a local business, RoseTime Flowers, but I also represent my colleagues at Westcotts, Chartered Accountants & Business Advisors at the Tiverton and the Crediton offices. I've written to several local councillors already voicing concerns about the increase in parking charges that's already been talked about, for our flower shop we park our delivery van in market place behind the old Halifax in an allocated space because it's near the shop, to learn that this is increasing to £912.50 is somewhat shocking and to put it in context that's like saying our £25 bouquet would cost you £54, we'd be out of business within a month, for my Westcotts colleagues their daily charge in the multi-storey carpark will double, some work 2 days in Tiverton and 2 days in Crediton, so an annual permit isn't an option, many others who are on national living wage can't afford an annual permit, paying in one go.

To give them the option to pay quarterly increases that annual charge to £700 if you pro rota it. Surely a pay for what you use option would be fairer in the multi storey carpark because why should you pay for 10 hours parking when you only want 5.5. More importantly, the increase in the hourly rates in all the town centre carparks will discourage shoppers into the town and footfall will fall again, this is not the way forward to encourage people to use the array of shops and facilities the town has, which is clearly struggling already and if the decision makers bothered to look would know that this town is dying So my question for the council is to justify this ridiculous outrageous increases without surveying the actual users of the carparks, they are your customers, you've got to look after them just like we got to look after ours.

Hon Ald. David Nation –

Question 1
I am very pleased to read the proposal in Motion 591 and hope very much that the Council supports it. Around 20 years ago I was amongst the overwhelming majority of councillors who supported the introduction of the Cabinet system. Some will be aware that I withdrew my support for it after a number of developments indicated that it was not working as I had been led to believe that it would. Cllr Woollatt's words describe exactly the democratically damaging effect of the Cabinet system and I would ask all councillors to accept at last that a committee structure will allow far more members to take an active part in decision-making and begin to restore the faith of the Mid Devon electorate in the significance of their vote.

Question 2
It is apparent from reading the minutes that there is growing concern amongst members about the lack of information available to the public regarding matters dealt with in Part 2 and the enormous financial implications of the decisions made in camera for the Council's, and therefore council tax payers, funds. Coupled with the inability of most councillors to influence these vital decisions, I wonder if the Council Leader would agree with me that this is a situation more suited to autocratic regimes such as that in Russia that our Ukrainian friends are currently paying such a high price to combat?

Ashley Wilce –

Question 1
The officers of this Council added documents to the Agenda for this meeting only hours before the meeting, rather than the 5 days that it should be. Would the person responsible for the decision to do that, please tell me, now, why Parliament would have bothered to have included the prior publishing requirements in both the 72 Act and the 2012 Regulations, and to provide contingency for urgent documents to be considered, if those publication rules did not apply and could be ignored at will, as this Council is doing?

Could the person also tell me how they expect members to read and properly consider the contents of documents, if they have only been sent to them hours before a meeting? Does the person responsible not think that such actions are likely to result in Council decisions being challenged, on that basis alone, especially when there can be 100s of pages, as at least one of the added documents is, this evening. If so, that person should be aware of a Planning Consent granted by Northumberland County Council that was overturned on Appeal to the High Court, on the basis of relevant documents not having been published according to the rules.

A clear example of the need to abide by the rules is the fact Councillor Woollatt has had to have a very late amendment accepted for this evening, which was published only a few hours ago.

Democracy should not suffer just because the Chief Executive is incapable of providing efficient and effective democratic services. I call on Councillors to stand up for democracy and to refuse to consider those items that have been improperly added to the Agenda, both tonight and going forward.

Question 2
I note that there is a Budget Report included in the papers. Does the Council intend to vote on the budget this evening? If so, since there is no Agenda item for that decision, and the law states that there can be no discussion of any item that is not on the agenda, can the Monitoring Officer please tell me how that is going to lawfully take place?

Question 3
The Agenda states that there is a Motion to remove Cllr Deed as Leader and that a vote will follow to elect a replacement. This is an improper motion that should not have been allowed by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Executive, since it is contrary to the Constitution. Under the Constitution, if the Leader leaves office for any reason we will already automatically have a new Leader, and that clearly isn't Cllr Deed.

Further, the Constitution clearly states that an election for a Leader can only take place at the Annual Meeting. It goes on to say that, contingent upon the Leader no longer being Leader, the responsibility for leading the Council must pass to another member of the Executive, until the Annual Meeting; surely, the incumbent Leader until the Annual Meeting must therefore be Cllr Knowles, as the sole surviving Cabinet member? So, why was this Motion allowed?

Question 4
Given all these examples of maladministration, I must ask, what is this Council paying the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for? They are being paid vast sums to make sure that the business of the Council is being run properly - almost £120k a year in the case of the Chief Executive - isn't it time that they were made to do it?

The Chairman, thanked those who spoke and explained that a written response would be provided in due course.

125 **Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct**

The following interests were declared:

- Cllr R Dolley, declared a personal interest that he lived in Tiverton.
- Cllr B G J Warren, declared a personal interest that some residents within his ward own businesses in Tiverton and was aware of parking charges issues.
- Cllr C J Eginton declared a personal interest as he owns a business in Tiverton and had attended Tiverton Town Centre Partnership meetings.
- Cllr Mrs N Woollatt declared a personal interest as she received correspondence that related to the car parking charges.
- Cllr Mrs C Daw declared a personal interest, she had been spoken to by shopkeepers in Tiverton.
- Cllr D J Knowles declared a personal interest as he had received letters and associated with one of the public speakers.
- Cllr S J Clist declared a personal interest that he had received letters and associated with one of the public speakers.
- Cllr F Letch declared a personal interest that he had received a petition in Crediton.

- Cllr J Cairney declared a personal interest that he owns a business in Crediton.
- Cllr B Holdman declared a personal interest as he had been contact by residents to do with matters on the agenda.
- Cllr Mrs E Slade declared a personal interest as she was approached by residents in relations to items on the agenda.
- Cllr Mrs S Griggs – declared a personal interest as she had been contacted by residents to do with matters on the agenda.
- Cllr R Stanley declared a pecuniary interest in that he is a director of 3 Rivers Developments Ltd.

126 **Minutes**

It was **MOVED** by Cllr A Wilce, Seconded by Cllr G Barnell that:

"We move onto the next item of business and the minutes now be referred to the next meeting of the Council"

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

127 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman presented a long service Award to Jenny Kane, the Chairman and Members of the Council thanked her for 25 years of service to Mid Devon District Council.

128 **Order of Agenda Items**

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt, Seconded by Cllr A Wilce that:

"The order of the agenda be changed so that the recommendations of Scrutiny of the 13 February be taken before the recommendations of Cabinet of the 7 February which contains the budget, as the scrutiny recommendations if approved will have an impact on what can be agreed within the budget, in the Cabinet's recommendations within 7 February report. If that isn't done then there will be an undermining of the recommendations from Scrutiny."

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

129 **Appointment of the Leader of the Council**

It was **MOVED** by Cllr G Barnell, Seconded by Cllr B A Moore:

"That we appoint a Leader of the Council."

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

The Chairman sought nominations from Members of the Council, which were as followed:

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs C Daw, Seconded by Cllr Mrs E Lloyd that:

"Cllr B G J Warren be appointed as Leader of the Council"

An **AMENDMENT** was **MOVED** by Cllr R Chesterton, Seconded by Cllr C Slade that:

"Cllr C J Eginton be appointed as Leader of the Council for the remainder of the municipal year."

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED.**

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

It was then:

RESOLVED that Councillor B G J Warren be elected Leader of the Council.

130 **Petitions**

Petitions were received in relation to the increased parking charges.

131 **Notices of Motions**

1. Motion 590 (Councillor S Penny – 16 January 2023)

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

The Council agrees that a review of the current practice of housing allocation by Devon Home Choice takes place. A number of residents have raised concerns over the lack of available social housing opportunities for the people of Mid Devon within the current scheme.

The **MOTION** was **MOVED** by Councillor S J Penny and Seconded by Councillor F W Letch

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council had ruled that this Motion be dealt with at this meeting.

Consideration was given that:

- A review was necessary.
- It was challenging for local people to remain in their local area.
- Mid Devon District Council's own policy needed to be reviewed and it was felt that there was a lack of available social housing opportunities.
- There was a need for affordable homes to be built.

Cllr G Barnell **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, Seconded by Cllr R Evans that:

"The Scrutiny Committee to conduct an investigation both into the allocation policy and into the delivery of social and affordable rented housing by the Council."

Therefore the amended motion would read:

This Council agrees that a review of the current practice of housing allocation by Devon Home Choice takes place, together with a review of the Council's performance and plans in delivering affordable and social rented housing. A number of residents have raised concerns over the lack of available social housing opportunities for the people of Mid Devon within the current scheme. The Council resolves to ask the Scrutiny Committee to commission this review and to report to Council and Cabinet as soon as possible.

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **CARRIED.**

2. Motion 591 (Councillor Mrs N Woollatt – 8 February 2023)

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

That this Council recognises that in order for the taxpayers to have faith in the ability of the Mid Devon District Council to make effective and transparent decisions that there has to be a fundamental change in the decision making process.

That this Council also acknowledges that in a mature democracy there is a need for inclusive government which enables all members to make a valuable contribution in the running of the Council.

Therefore this Council resolves to change from the Cabinet system of governance to a modernised Committee system to be implemented from the Annual Meeting of 2024.

The **MOTION** was **MOVED** by Councillor N Woollatt and Seconded by Councillor L Taylor.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council had ruled that this Motion be dealt with at this meeting.

Consideration was given to:

- On the 17 March 2021, Council voted to retain the Cabinet system. That work was undertaken by the Governance Working Group be noted.
- That the method of governance should not be imposed onto the new administration.
- This resolution would not commit the Council to a Committee system. This motion implied that council moved away from the Cabinet system.
- Should be referred to the Standards Committee.
- Should not go back to the old Committee system style.
- This would be for a modernised Committee system.
- There's the possibility for savings to be made with the Committee system.
- This topic had been discussed at the Standards Committee.
- The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer stated that if members indicate to go to a Committee system we would take this as a steer to go away and start preparing the governance framework for this type of system and that it would need to be brought back to Full Council for a final decision at some point in the future.

Cllr J Downes **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT,** Seconded by Cllr C J Eginton that:

This motion be referred to the Standards Committee to be reviewed.

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED.**

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

3. Motion 592 (Councillor C J Eginton – 9 February 2023)

This motion was withdrawn.

132 **Cabinet - Report of the meeting held on 3 January 2023**

Cllr D J Knowles presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3 January 2023.

1. Council Tax Base (Minute 113)

Cllr D J Knowles **MOVED** Seconded by Cllr E J Eginton:

THAT the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 113 be **ADOPTED.**

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for the Decision: as stated in the report.

133 **Cabinet - Report of the meeting held on 31 January 2023**

Cllr D J Knowles presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 31 January 2023.

134 **Scrutiny Committee - Report of the meeting held on 13 February 2023**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 February 2022.

1. Decisions of the Cabinet (Minute 76)

Cllr S J Clist **MOVED,** Seconded by Councillor G Barnell:

THAT the recommendations 1, 3, 4 and 5 of the Scrutiny Committee as set out in Minute 76 be **AGREED.**

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

135 **Car Parking Charges**

Cllr R Chesterton **MOVED,** Seconded by Cllr R Dolley that:

"Officers are asked by Full Council to stop the process of the parking charges coming in on the 7 March."

Cllr J Downes **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT,** Seconded by Cllr Mrs S Griggs that:

"That we look to take the money out of budget, but the steer is that we'll be taking the Economy PDG recommendation which was in line with inflation, reviewing the excessive that were placed in the budget for extended stay and permits.

"That we put a stop to the process that is happening on 7 March I think that's key to me to be in there and a review an urgent review from the Economy PDG."

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

136 **Cabinet - Report of the meeting held on 7 February 2023**

Cllr A Wilce **MOVED,** Seconded by Cllr G Barnell that:

"That we move on to the next item of business and refer this one that we've been dealing with to the next another meeting of the Full Council."

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

137 **Council Tax Resolution 2023/2024**

The Council had before it a *report of the Deputy Chief Executive setting the Council Tax for 2023/2024.

Cllr G Barnell **MOVED**, Seconded by Councillor B A Moore:

That the Council approve the formal Council Tax Resolution as laid out in Appendix 1, subject to the approval by each Precepting Authority of its own Precepts as included within this report.

With regard to the draft Council Tax Resolution in respect of the year 2023/2024:

The Chairman then **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.7:

"**THAT** the vote in respect of this item shall be by roll call."

A roll call of Councillors present at the meeting was then taken:

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors: G Barnell, J Bartlett, EJ Berry, W Burke, R J Chesterton, C A Collis, F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, C P Daw, R J Dolley, J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, S Griggs, P J Heal, D J Knowles, F W Letch, B A Moore, J Norton, D F Pugsley, R F Radford, C Slade, E J Slade, M E Squires, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, A White, A Wilce, N Woollatt, J Wright, A Wyer.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION:** Councillors: J Buczkowski, J Cairney, S J Clist, L Cruwys, B Holdman.

The **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED** and it was accordingly:

RESOLVED that the recommendations within the report be approved.

Reason for Decision: there is a need for the Council to set the Council Tax for 2023/24.

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to the minutes.

138 **Scrutiny Committee - Report of the meeting held on 16 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 16 January 2023.

139 **Scrutiny Committee - Report of the meeting held on 20 February 2023**

Cllr A Wilce **MOVED,** Seconded by Cllr G Barnell that:

"This item, we move on from this item, and it's referred to the next Council meeting as insufficient notice had been given for the documents."

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have **FAILED**.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 20 February 2023.

140 **Audit Committee - Report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023**

The Vice Chairman of the Audit Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023.

141 **Environment Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 10 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Environment Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 10 January 2023.

142 **Homes Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 17 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Homes Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 17 January 2023.

143 **Community Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Community Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023.

144 **Economy Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 12 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Economy Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 12 January 2023.

145 **Planning Committee - Report of the meeting held on 4 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 4 January 2023.

146 **Planning Committee - Report of the meeting held on 18 January 2023**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 18 January 2023.

147 **Standards Committee - Report of the meeting held on 8 February 2023**

Cllr A Wilce **MOVED,** Seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt:

"That we move onto the next item of business and this matter stands referred to the next meeting of the Full Council as it having been sufficient time for consideration."

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have **CARRIED.**

148 **Members Allowances and the Recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Council had before it a report of the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer setting out the recommended Members' Scheme of Allowances for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The District Solicitor outlined the contents of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Cllr R Evans **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT,** Seconded by Cllr R Dolley that:

"All Members accept no increase in Council allowances or special responsibility allowances for the year 2022/23. This will save the Council approximately £13,000. For 2023/24, a basic allowance of some £6,000 is paid to all Members, then the special responsibility allowances that will allow for. This would be as follows:

"Based on the £6,000 paid basic allowance the Leader, whoever that would be, would receive the basic allowance plus the basic allowance x2; the Deputy Leader, all Cabinet Members, Chairs of Planning and Scrutiny would get the basic allowance plus another allowance x1; 4 PDG Chairs and the Audit Chair would get the basic allowance and the allowance x0.5; Chair of Council would get the basic allowance and the allowance x0.5; and the Chairs of Standards and Licensing would get the basic allowance and the allowance x0.25."

Cllr J Buczkowski **MOVED** a **SECOND AMENDMENT,** Seconded by Cllr B Holdman that:

"No increases are made for 23/24, so there is essentially a freeze on all allowances and the retrospective for 22/23 again is frozen as was in the original proposal."

Upon a vote being taken, the **SECOND AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED**.

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**. (Cllr L Taylor Abstained)

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

149 **Questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 13**

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 13.2.

150 **Special Urgency Decisions**

With regard to any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency taken since the last meeting. The Chairman informed the meeting that no such decisions had been taken in that period.

151 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Cllr C J Eginton asked the Leader if he could ensure that Cllr R Deed would not remain the Cabinet Member for Finance. The Leader of the Council noted that a written answer would be given.

Cllr C Slade asked the Leader when a new Cabinet could be expected and how many Cabinet appointments does he intend to make. The Leader explained that a meeting with the Chief Executive had been arranged and Councillors would be approached and Councillors would be informed accordingly.

Cllr R Chesterton asked the Leader if he would commit to have Cabinet Members ready to be asked questions at the next Full Council meeting. The Leader explained that in the short time available Cabinet Members would still be understanding their remits but would try to answer as best they can.

152 **Members Business**

The Leader thanked Members for their support.

(The meeting ended at 22:20) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 8 March 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present
Councillors R F Radford (Chairman)
G Barnell, J Bartlett, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley (Vice Chairman), J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Mrs E J Lloyd, B A Moore, S Pugh, D F Pugsley, Mrs E J Slade, C R Slade, Mrs M E Squires, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, A Wilce, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright and A Wyer

Apologies
Councillors E J Berry, N V Davey, Mrs S Griggs, Miss J Norton, S J Penny and A White

153 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors: S J Penny, A White, J Berry, J Norton, N V Davey.

154 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Paul Elstone

Question 1
My questions relate to agenda items 8 & 9 - MDDC Budget and in particular revenue and 3 Rivers ability to pay back debt. Questions especially relevant as it is calculated that there is over Four million pounds of bad debt exposure fully related to 3 Rivers that will somehow need to be accounted for going forward. A bad debt that is very likely to increase significantly and with increasing potential for MDDC to be placed in special measures. A Local Newspaper has this week quoted the Managing Director of 3 Rivers as saying.

Quote: “We were thrilled with the overly positive response we received at St Georges Court last weekend”. Unquote, this statement made as a result of a special and well-advertised sales event, but it is widely being suggested that only seven people attended this event. Can the Councillor Director of 3 Rivers fully clarify the position?

Question 2
Even though the St Georges Court property marketing commenced in May 2022 it is being widely suggested that 3 Rivers have sold no properties to date. Can the Councillor Director confirm how many of the 39 properties have had sales contracts fully signed?

Question 3
A press article in the Crediton Courier posted early yesterday including a photograph of a recently dismissed MDDC Cabinet Member states that the New Independent Cabinet are proposing to permanently close the children’s paddling pools at Crediton and Tiverton. Given that it was the very first New Independent Cabinet Meeting yesterday morning and after the article was posted, I question the integrity of this

statement. This as no cabinet decision had been taken. My understanding is that the new cabinet voted for the following.

a) To keep the paddling pools open and to allocate full funds to do so. Is this correct?

b) Additionally, to make serious changes to the previously proposed and excessive car parking charges. Is this correct?

c) Furthermore to support the MDDC Full Council recommendation not to approve the proposed 3 Rivers Business Plans is an attempt to limit further bad debt. Is this correct?

Question 4
At the last Full Council Meeting I asked if the MDDC CEO would implement the Fraud Investigation into 3 Rivers requested by the previous Leader of the Council. A written answer remains outstanding. At this time a simple yes or no answer tonight will do.

Jo Carpenter
I'm Jo I am a founder of Active Parents Tiverton helping families with 0-5 year olds in Tiverton. I have had that role for 6 years in Tiverton voluntarily just to support people. I am here tonight as a deeply concerned parent and I live in the West Exe area. I hope as well that I can speak for some vulnerable families that I am aware of and I have worked with through my voluntary roles and my role with Action For Children.

I know we're here to discuss West Exe paddling pool just wanted to point out things to consider, according to Swim England 1 in 3 children currently can't swim at all, that's a scary thought for me as a parent, they also say that a 7 year old should be able to swim the width of a pool without any trouble. My son is 7 he cannot swim at all. I know for you guys it may just be a paddling pool but I wanted to point out how important this is for local parents. For a parent of a child who cannot swim I think about my opportunities to help him, our own leisure centre is too expensive. For a family of 2 adults and 2 children under 5 it would cost nearly £20 to attend. If I took my son swimming that needs to be consistent, I can't find £20 all the time and I can't do that consistently it's too expensive. The waiting list for swimming lessons itself is 18 months, this is appalling for a 7 year old, I can't get him a swimming lesson.

A private swimming lesson for half an hour would be £20, this is all unaffordable for a parent like me and I'm not the only one. People in Tiverton are 183 in the que for a private swimming lesson, we can't get swimming, so we need swimming confidence that's what this pool does for us. The nearest beach is too far for some families if they can't drive and we're excluding people who can't afford it. So for people of Tiverton we have had 2 years of no swimming due to Covid. A lot of our primary school children cannot swim and are probably 3 years behind now from what I know, for the options that are non-existent when they do become available they're unaffordable. There are families in Tiverton who live in flats, you will be aware of these figures, they have no garden, they have nowhere to play and they have no experience of water play. Water play is proven scientifically to help with mental health and now our only option to build up some kind of water confidence is potentially being taken away. West Exe paddling pool is special to us all, there is already a huge divide for people who can afford to do the basic things. So my question will be what

will you do to support the parents and carers of Tiverton to be able to inclusively access affordable and accessible water confidence going forward if you close this pool?

Tony Savill
If lockdown and Covid-19 has taught us anything it has to be the value of outdoor space particularly for children who need places to play, to unwind and to just be kids. Too often facilities within this group are cut without any real thought on the impact of physical and mental health of the children who use them. If play facilities continue to decline at the current rate our communities could look very different very soon and once they disappear they're usually gone forever. We're in danger of short changing children particularly those from the 1 in 8 households without gardens and those in the most disadvantaged groups.

I would like to know if the Council instead of seeing the pools as a cost, are investigating the possibility of monetising it as a self-funded resource, by either sponsorship, advertising or through the renting the space around the pool for mobile catering facilities, such as a coffee van or an ice-cream van. I'm sure most parents there would appreciate the opportunity to grab a coffee while their kids play, so this could be an attractive proposal for them I'm sure. I'd also like to know whatever saving would be looked at in relation to wastage in the current services the Council deliver. As an example I moved here 7 years ago and was shocked to find that you didn't have wheelie bins, I purchased mine from another local authority and bringing it with me and been using it all this time, this being slightly larger than the Mid Devon bins, been using it and just about, having 2 children in nappies just about copes and fills that bin with the new 3 weekly bin collection.

Last week had a label put on it saying they're not going to empty it anymore because it wasn't issued by the council and that I've got to use the new bin which is too small. So I've now got have another new bin issued. I was considering returning my other bin as I didn't need it, so now I'm actually going to have 2 bins from you and a bin you're going to have to pay to get rid of when I take it to the tip, and it's given me more capacity which is counterproductive on my incentive to recycle. If this has happened to me then there must be hundreds of other example of waste that should be looked at before cutting facilities, and whilst the council is wasting money with computer says no style rules, you surely cannot be comfortable with stealing joy from our children by closing the only paddling pool in the area.

Can you as a group of Councillors genuinely say there's not £8,000 savings to be made in a £417,790 accounting budget? There's £386,700 human resources budget, the £1.26m IT budget, the £306,890 forward planning budget or even the £11,300 printing budget for Phoenix House. Does the council use a zero budgeting method for sussing budgets if they did that might help you to highlight the real costs and not roll on wastage year on year. So to summarise and just to be clear I would like to know if monetisation of the pool has been considered before wastages within the Council has been looked at and that there are no other budgets which morally should be cut first. And if the council are zero budgeting strategy to increase budget transparency.

Danielle Furminger
I'm a local West Exe resident, last summer we had extreme heat in this country and probably due to climate change our summers are getting hotter and longer. The West Exe pool is a vital resource for our community, it allows parents and carers to pick their children up from school, continue to use the park and exercise safely, knowing that they can cool down. So my question is how can it even be considered, how can you justify even considering closing it? There's been talk that the Town Council refused the budgeting. I know that at the time I don't think they were told what it was for, they weren't given a breakdown of the costs at the time of the request so I don't think this is your responsibility and you need to say how you can justify how you can take this away from children.

As a local West Exe resident I'm also concerned about what this will do to the park. Already I get to enjoy the sight of the covered seating area being encased in metal fencing, it's an eyesore, and it could have been converted into a stand for coffees or local ice creams or something like that. That could help provide funding for the pool but instead it diminishes the area and diminishes the value. Are we going to have this to look forward to in the local areas? Is this going to become another eyesore and further demoralise our community? And finally I would just like to ask if the Council has an answer for this, and if they are going to save the pool, have they put it to the top of the agenda so we can all go home?

Oliver Lash-Williams
I'm currently helping my four-year-old son learn to take responsibility for his actions and also to improve his counting. Could MDDC help me explain to him why he and his friends should bear responsibility for adults failing to count properly by losing their paddling pool in West Exe this summer? He will also likely have an immediate supplementary question, formed as a statement "it's not fair".

Andrea Glover
I live within the Lower Culm ward, with Mid Devon struggling to run local services, not being able to keep up with inflation. Can I ask that Mid Devon meet with Local Towns, Parishes to look at services and land that could be passed back and managed? I say this in a way by looking at certain things that the Parish and Town Councils do, having cross overs with what Mid Devon say they do and I think there should be some in-depth discussions going on between the Town and Parish Councils, looking at our budgets on a line by line basis, a more in-depth discussion happens in the future.

Laura Hampshire
I'm a clinical service manager in a child and adolescent mental health service for the South West. The Government 10 year plan is focused on levelling up mental health services with physical health provision. Their plan recognises that Covid has had a disproportionately negative effect on young people's mental health. Given that we know that being outdoors, exercising and socialising is vital to good mental health, please can you tell me how shutting a facility like this fits into the Government plan? And how is the Council looking to address their role in keeping young people well?

Stacey Gray
I am the Town Centre Coordinator for Tiverton, I am actually here as part of the Town Centre Partnership (TCP) and I would like to address the issue of the parking that was addressed at the last Full Council meeting. In light of the public feeling that was expressed very clearly at the Full Council meeting last month, with regards to the planned increase in parking charges, I have been asked by the Town Centre Partnership to request further clarity as to when it's expected that the new parking charges will be decided. It is understood that Councils across the UK are facing financial challenges, but it is my hope and for the TCP and many of our local residents that these new charges will be balanced and fair. As this is seen as crucial for ensuring sustained economic growth, can I ask if Mid Devon District Council will release these new dates to the public in a way that is visible and enables time to respond? Can I also ask that Mid Devon District Council considers looking at the benefit of 30 minutes free parking to allow residents to pop in and use local facilities such as the bank and post office that are so vital to the businesses of this town? And lastly, can I ask that Mid Devon District Council considers the benefits of free parking after 6pm to encourage a broader night time economy that we are so vastly in need of.

Sophia Beard
This also is on the issue of the pool and also on behalf of the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership. So the structure of Tiverton itself, including the one way traffic system through the centre has created quite a fragmented feel to the retail sector within Tiverton. Albeit a small town, the shops are spread on a fairly wide area and it creates difficulty for the flowing of footfall.

We're at a disadvantage in comparison to other towns that have a close knit, easier flowing layout. And as retailers we are however trying to make the best of this. I'm celebrating the fact the town centre is made up of a collection of different areas and part of this includes the naming of individual areas into quarters and we are now referring them to enable us to collectively advertise as a town centre.

However, each quarter faces different challenges and has different attractions and this is why the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership has representatives from each quarter and stresses issues and the priorities for the respective business owners of those different quarters varies significantly. The primary concern of those and my business indeed is also within the West Exe quarter or riverside quarter, is made up of West Exe North and South, Bridge Street, Angel Hill and any other businesses that would sit within that area.

The proposed closure of the West Exe pool would have a direct negative impact on those riverside quarter businesses. Throughout the summer season, we currently benefit from an increase of footfall into the area from Town, otherwise it's an area that'd not ventured into. My business has been there for 4 years at the top of Angel Hill and yet still every day, every week, every Saturday we will get local people or people from outside who didn't know we were there and ask how long have you been here. I actually went shopping during the week, this last week and I was on Gold Street and I was shopping in there because I like to keep it local where I can. To someone from behind a shop counter, I said I got some time off from the shop, they asked what shop is that and I told them and they didn't know because they hadn't been to that side of town.

The problem that we have as a town centre in Tiverton is real, the disadvantage that the West Exe area has is significant and the increased footfall of parents, of grandparents, of tourists because we are a market town and Mondays are pretty quiet. The fact that we can direct them down to the town asset, that is the paddling pool, is an income generating asset to the town and its businesses. We estimate that the economic losses and the impact on that area would exceed the £8,000 proposed in the upkeep investment that you are wanting to take off your bottom line. And the fact is that mothballing that facility in the long term essentially is closure, you're not going to stretch that budget back out and find it. Once it is gone it is gone. So to mirror and add to what has been said by people behind me, you're going to continue to watch the West Exe area degenerate, if people have a positive impact because they're taking their children there because they've grown up and been next to that pool, they will then grow up to respect the area. Will the council recognise that there is an economic as well as a social case against the closure of the pool at West Exe? And cease preposterous proposal of mothballing it or worse.

Clawdette Harrower
Good evening I am Clawdette Harrower, Tiverton Town Councillor for West Exe and this year Deputy Mayor of Tiverton. Following a meeting held in West Exe rec on Saturday the 4 March, Councillors with great respect I bring to you a pray say message of many Tivertonians who vehemently oppose this seemingly outrageous suggestion to close the paddling pool in Tiverton rec. Many ask, why are we not putting the wellbeing of our children at the top of our priority list? Surely, they are a viable investment. I have been approached by grandparents and parents, many of whom regaled me of fond stories of how having themselves played as and later with their own children in this pool. A mother who has an autistic child contributed to some comments I'm about to relay to you: isn't play vital towards mental and physical health, learning to jump into the pool all by yourself helps with building confidence.

Learning to swim in the pool is vital, it's not being frightened to swim in the big swimming pool where continuing to learn to swim could ultimately save a life. Councillors, we too know about budgets and economy, for many of us this year holidays will again be spent at home. School summer holidays are long and not only for our children but for our parents too. Why close one of the very things that brings so many of us outdoors and with such joy? It doesn't just benefit the children it benefits we parents who have a chance to meet up with other parents, make friends and enjoy our community and socialise.

The pool isn't free, we know, because our taxes pay towards it. We also know that this entire iconic facility is well loved and well used. This is evidenced by over 3,000 and counting signatures on a petition that we have collected. And to conclude, on March 27 the Town Clerk tells me that Tiverton Town Full Council will be discussing any way in which we could help this situation resolve, at least starting with this year. And then during this coming year, we Councillors, the public's elected representatives could use some of our energies to find a way forward to support this project for our future generations to enjoy. Parent want to help, to be involved, given a breathing space this year going forward groups could be formed to help support a pool project.

We know that the breakdown operating costs are only estimates and we are hopeful that the costs could be less than anticipated. Other things to be considered later are the toilet block in the park and the shelter. Each no longer in use, due to ill repair and

antisocial behaviour. My question then would be, today is about the paddling pool and our constituents ask for it to be secured for them and their families to continue to enjoy in their future, please will you?

The Chairman thanked those who asked questions and noted that answers would be provided in writing.

155 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Cllr Mrs F J Colthorpe declared a personal interest that they knew some of the public questioners.
- Cllr S Pugh declared a personal interest that they were part of the campaign to save the paddling pool
- Cllr C J Eginton declared a personal interest that they owned a business based in Tiverton
- Cllr D J Knowles declared a personal interest that they knew some of the residents present
- Cllr B Holdman declared a personal interest that they knew some of the residents present and was part of the car parking campaign.
- Cllr L Cruwys declared a personal interest that they had received contact in regards to the paddling pools.
- Cllr Mrs C P Daw declared a personal interest that they had received contact in regards to the paddling pools.
- Cllr W Burke declared a personal interest that they were part of the paddling pool campaign.
- Cllr R J Dolley declared a personal interest that they knew some of the residents present
- Cllr R L Stanley declared a pecuniary interest that he was a Director of 3 Rivers Developments Ltd.

156 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcments were made.

157 **REVISED 2023/24 BUDGET**

The Leader **MOVED,** seconded by Councillor A Wilce:

That the recommendations 1 to 6 of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 160 be **ADOPTED**.

The Chairman **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.7:

“That the vote in respect of this **MOTION** shall be by Roll Call”

A roll call of Members present at the meeting was then taken.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors: G Barnell, J Bartlett, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley, J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Ms E J Lloyd, B A Moore, S E Pugh, D F Pugsley, R F Radford, C Slade, Mrs E J Slade, Mrs M E Squires, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B J G Warren, A Wilce, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright, A Wyer.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTIO**N: None

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: None

.

The **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

The Leader **MOVED** seconded by Councillor Mrs N Woollatt:

That the recommendations 7, 8 and 9 of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 160 be **ADOPTED**.

Cllr C J Eginton **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT,** seconded by Cllr Mrs M E Squires:

"That we take 7, 8 and 9 individually with 9 being the first one to be voted on so that allows then the members of the public to go home."

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

The Chairman **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.7:

"That the vote in respect of this **AMENDMENT** shall be by Roll Call"

A roll call of Members present at the meeting was then taken for recommendation 9 from minute 160 of the Cabinet.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors: G Barnell, J Bartlett, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley, J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Ms E J Lloyd, B A Moore, S E Pugh, D F Pugsley, R F Radford, C Slade, Mrs E J Slade, Mrs M E Squires, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B J G Warren, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright, A Wyer.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTIO**N: None

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillor A Wilce

.

The **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Cllr J M Downes **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT,** seconded by Cllr C J Clist that:

"We take recommendations 7 & 8 on block"

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

The Chairman **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.7:

"That the vote in respect of this **AMENDMENT** shall be by Roll Call"

A roll call of Members present at the meeting was then taken for recommendations 7 and 8 from minute 160 of the Cabinet.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors: G Barnell, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, S J Clist, L Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley, J M Downes, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Ms E J Lloyd, D F Pugsley, L D Taylor, B J G Warren, A Wilce, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright, A Wyer.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTIO**N: Councillors: J Bartlett, R J Chesterton, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, C J Eginton, R Evans, P J Heal, B A Moore, S E Pugh, R F Radford, C Slade, Mrs E J Slade, Mrs M E Squires, R L Stanley,

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: None

.

The **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for Decision – There is a need for the Council to set a balanced budget.

Note – Cllr S Pugh had withdrawn his amendment.

158 **NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES**

The Leader **MOVED,** seconded by Councillor D J Knowles:

That the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 159 be **ADOPTED.**

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Reason for the Decision – This is a statutory function and is a legal requirement. The Council must set its budget annually on the tax base and the NNDR1 projected values.

159 **2023/24 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Leader **MOVED** seconded by Councillor Mrs C P Daw:

That the recommendation of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 157 be **ADOPTED**.

The Chairman **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.7:

"That the vote in respect of this **MOTION** shall be by Roll Call"

A roll call of Members present at the meeting was then taken.

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors: G Barnell, J Bartlett, J Buczkowski, W Burke, J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs C A Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley, J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch, Ms E J Lloyd, B A Moore, S E Pugh, D F Pugsley, R F Radford, C Slade, Mrs E J Slade, Mrs M E Squires, L D Taylor, B J G Warren, A Wilce, Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright, A Wyer.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTIO**N: Councillors: None

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillors: R L Stanley

.

The **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for Decision – There is a need for the Council to set the Capital Programme.

160 **2023/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Leader **MOVED**, seconded by Councillor A Wilce:

That the recommendation of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 158 be **ADOPTED.**

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED.**

Reason for Decision – Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy in line with CIPFA guidance.

(The meeting ended at 7.34 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 7 February 2023 at 10.00 am

Present Councillors C J Eginton (Vice Chairman, in the Chair), R J Chesterton, Mrs C P Daw, D J Knowles, S J Penny and C R Slade

Apologies Councillor(s) R M Deed

Also Present Officer(s): Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Jill May (Director of Business Improvement and Operations), Richard Marsh (Director of Place), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance), Dean Emery (Corporate Manager for Revenues, Benefits and Recovery), Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Fiona Keyes (Operations Manager for Revenues Benefits & Recovery), James Hamblin (Operations Manager for Human Resources) and Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager)

122. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr R Deed.

123. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0:3.29)**

The following questions were received from members of the public:

Paul Elstone:

Question 1
Page 16 of your papers Section 5.2 shows a 3 Rivers overspend of four hundred and one thousand pounds (£401,000) on the knowle lane Development. 3 Rivers do not even have outline planning on this site, so what exactly was this overspend for?

Question 2
On page 17 there is an overspend on the Shapland Place zed pod Modular development of four hundred and sixty seven thousand pounds (£467,000) mostly for planning. Planning changes that have increased the modular unit project budgeted amount by about 25%. Given these planning changes reduce the modular unit foot print by 1.5 meters surely the build cost should go down and not massively up. The MDDC chosen developer is not on the approved South West Procurement Alliance list for constructing enhanced energy performance homes yet their main competitor who is on the list was not asked to bid. Will the Cabinet Member for Housing please implement a comprehensive external audit on the Contract Awards and all costs for the Modular Homes at both the Shapland Place and Cullompton sites?

Question 3
On Page 18 Section 7 covers interest and loan repayments from 3 Rivers. Have 3 Rivers always met their interest and loan payment obligations on all project loans and at the due time?

Question 4
My last question covers Agenda Items 6, 7, 8 and 9 which all deal with lending to 3 Rivers. I was at the last Cabinet Meeting on 31 January and witnessed the public resignation of the 3 Rivers Finance Director. As he left he told me and one other that he was resigning because of the lack of competency of MDDC Officers and Cabinet Members. He is an experienced Commercial Director and I took him seriously and was concerned. Will the Leader of the Council arrange an external investigation into whether there is any basis for this statement?

The Deputy Leader thanked Mr Elstone for their questions and noted that any unanswered questions would be given a written response.

In regards to question 3, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that all payments with 2022/23 had been paid promptly with nothing outstanding.

124. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0:6.26)**

Councillor C J Eginton declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he owned a business that was based in Tiverton under item 17.

125. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0:6.44)**

The minutes of the previous meeting from 3 January 2023 and 31 January were approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader, acting as Chair.

126. **UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (0:13.54)**

This item was deferred to the next ordinary Cabinet meeting.

127. **QTR. 3 BUDGET MONITORING (0:15:16)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which provided a financial update in respect of the income and expenditure so far in the year.

The following was discussed:

- Clarification was sought regarding the £467k cost for the Shapland modular housing. It was explained by the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation & Housing that there had been additional costs due to the planning process as well as required design changes due to the nature of the site. It was added that a breakdown of the costs could be provided.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

a) Note the financial monitoring information for the income and expenditure for the nine months to 31 December 2022 and the projected outturn position;

b) Note the use of Waivers for the Procurement of goods and services as included in Section 10.0;

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

128. **2023/24 BUDGET (0:24.50)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which provided the proposed budgets for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for the year 2023/24 and recommends the Band D Council Tax charge for 2023/24.

It was noted that in table 5.1 a typo would be amended to read “assumptions for fuel, 3-weekly black sack waste”.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet recommend to Council the following:

1. A Council Tax Requirement of £6,724,350 calculated using a Council Tax of £225.40 for a Band D property, an increase of £6.56 or 2.99% from 2022/23 and a Tax Base of 29,832.98, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulation 1992, as amended, after the relevant adjustments in respect of the Council tax support scheme approved by Cabinet on 3 January 2023;

2. The overall budgeted Cost of Services within the General Fund of £16,720,364 for 2023/24 is approved as detailed across Appendices 1 – 2 and inclusive of the adjustments included within Table 1 in paragraph 5.1;

3. The 2023/24 budget requires no transfer from the General Fund Balance and a further temporary transfer of £57,657 from the New Homes Bonus EMR in order to balance and agree all of the transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves as detailed in Appendix 3;

4. HRA budget for 2023/24 be approved – Appendix 4;

5. HRA fees/charges are approved based on the attached Appendix 5;

6. Work on strategic planning for delivering a balanced budget for 2024/25 is commenced immediately.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

129. **2023/24 CAPITAL STRATEGY (0:33.24)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which proposed the 2023/24 Capital Strategy which also sought approval of the 2023/24 Capital Programme and requested the Cabinet noted the indicative Capital Programmes for 2024/25 to 2027/28.

The following was discussed:

- It was confirmed that the proposed lending to 3 Rivers Developments Ltd was included within the figures in recommendation 3 of the capital strategy.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet recommend to Council the following:

1. That the proposed 2023/24 Capital Strategy is approved.

2. To approve in principal the current estimated amounts of Slippage of £6,201k from the 2022/23 Deliverable Capital Programme and £33,231k of 2022/23 Capital Programme expenditure profiled over the life of the MTFP. This will be finalised and formal approval sought as part of 2022/23 Outturn report.

3. The overall Capital Programme for projects commencing in 2023/24 of £98,375k be approved and the indicative Capital Programmes across the four remaining years of this Medium Term Financial Plan covering 2024/25 to 2027/28 be noted.

4. To approve the 2023/24 Deliverable Budget based on the forecast spend profile of £64,826, this will include elements of amounts detailed in recommendations 2 & 3 above and will form the budget to monitor against in 2023/24, subject to any changes referred to in recommendation 2 at Outturn.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

130. **2023/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (0:39:16)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which presented the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24.

The following was discussed:

- This report provided the outcomes of the capital programme and had shown that the Council were under borrowed, using internal balances where possible.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet recommends to Full Council

That the proposed Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24, including the prudential indicators for the next 3 years and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (Appendix 1), be approved.

(Proposed from the Chair)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

131. **2023/24 – 2026/27 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY (0:43.46)**

The Cabinet received a report* which introduced the draft new Procurement Strategy covering the period 2023/24 to 2027/28.

The following was discussed:

- Partnership with Devon County Council in order to support Mid Devon District Council's procurement arrangements and had made strategies more aligned.
- Asked if other authorities were involved, it was confirmed that East Devon District Council and the national parks of Exmoor and Dartmoor.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet approve the attached Procurement Strategy.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

132. **THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME & EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP POLICY (0:48.20)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which sought to amend the current scheme in order to expand the assistance for customers.

The following was discussed:

- Was important to help those in need during this cost of living crisis.
- This would come at a cost to the Council, circa £50k for Mid Devon District Council.

RESOLVED:

1. To increase the maximum reduction from 85% to 100%.

2. Disregard the housing element of universal credit in the calculation.

3. Increase the income bands by inflation each year.

4. Any income from welfare provision to be disregarded.

5. That this policy is adopted by Mid Devon District Council Cabinet.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

133. **PAY POLICY (0:55.43)**

The Cabinet were presented the annual pay policy report* which complied with the legislative requirements of the Localism Act 2011 relating to senior pay in particular the role of the Chief Executive, Directors and other senior officers.

The following was discussed:

- For 2022/23 Mid Devon District Council employees received a cost of living wage rise. With talks for 2023/24 expected to commence significantly earlier, this would hopefully help with the retention and recruitment of staff.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet recommend to Council the Pay Policy 2023.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

134. **ESTABLISHMENT (0:58.54)**

Cabinet were presented a report* which provided an update on both the Establishment of the Council together with its performance. It was noted that this report should be read in conjunction with the functions of individual officers highlighted in the Constitution. This built upon information shared in February 2022 and September 2022.

The following was discussed:

- In June 2022 Mid Devon District Council received the Petroc Employer of the Year award.
- The Council had experienced higher levels of sickness absence with Covid-19 being a factor.
- Turnover for the start of 2022/23 had seen an upward track however this had dropped off since September.
- Digital exit interviews had been launched.
- Asked why staff were not attending exit interviews, it was explained that a digital exit interview format had been launched which should mitigate this.
- It was noted that some employees may not want to leave comments and it would be reasonable for an exit interview to not be carried out.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet recommends to Council the contents of the report.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

135. **NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES (NNDR1) (1:07.05)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which provided an update of the income generation and financial implications of the number of Business Rate properties in Mid Devon. The report sought to approve the NNDR1 (estimated income to be generated in 2023/24 from business rates). There was a statutory deadline for notifying Precepting Authorities and the Government by 31 January 2023 of their appropriate shares in accordance with the Non Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 Regulation 2(b). The Government return had been submitted and Preceptors informed of the estimated income.

RESOLVED: The Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council the contents of the report.

1. That the calculation of the NNDR1 net yield of £16,921,552 from 3,519 Business Rated properties is noted for 2023/24;

2. That the proportions distributed to the respective authorities and Central Government be allocated as per the statutory regulations; and

3. That Members note that Central Government will reimburse the Council through a Section 31 grant to compensate it for the reduction in collectable business rates as a result of introducing various reliefs under section 47

(Proposed by from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

136. **SHARED PROSPERITY FUND AND THE RURAL PROSPERITY FUND (1:13.22)**

The Cabinet received a report* which provided an update on the proposed delivery plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), the report sought approval for the year 1 spend (2022/23) and delegated authority to the Director of Place, in conjunction with Cabinet Members, to approve the detailed SPF Policy and any accompanying guidance materials.

The following was discussed:

- That MDDC had received funding on the 31 January 2023.
- There had been positive engagement with local businesses.

RESOLVED That Cabinet:

1. Approve the UKSPF expenditure & Delivery Plan for Year One (2022/23) as outlined throughout the report.

2. Approve delegated authority to the Director of Place, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to finalise the detailed SPF Policy & grant arrangements;

3. Approve delegated authority to the Director of Place, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration, to approve variations to the Delivery Plan, Investment Plan and/or grant scheme criteria;

(Proposed by Cllr R Chesterton and seconded by Cllr C Slade)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

137. **CULLOMPTON TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN (1:21.25)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which sought approval for the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Delivery Plan.

RESOLVED:

1. That Members note the comments received at the Stage 2 public consultation (Appendix 1 and 2) and the proposed changes as set out in Appendix 2;

2. That the Cabinet recommend to Council that:

i) Subject to the updates, detailed in Appendix 2, that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 3) and Delivery Plan (Appendices 4 & 5) be adopted; and

ii) Delegated authority be given to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration prior to publication to make any typographical, grammatical, imagery and formatting changes to the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document; and

iii) That Cabinet note the Strategic Environmental Screening Report (Appendix 6) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (Appendix 7).

(Proposed by Cllr R Chesterton and seconded by Cllr S Penny)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

138. **TIVERTON TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN (1:26.52)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which updated Members with recommendations in association with work undertaken by the Coastal and Market Towns Initiative, Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report is noted;

2. That:

i) A budget of up to £60k is set aside from the Brown Field Register Fund (up to £35k) and Custom and Self Build Burdens Fund (up to £25k) for the completion of the Draft Masterplan SPD and accompanying Delivery Plan;

ii) That Officer's commence the process to engage consultants to complete the Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan process including commissioning assessments as required; and that

iii) The timetable for the adoption of the Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Plan be agreed.

(Proposed by Cllr R Chesterton and seconded by Cllr C Slade)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

139. **EAST CULLOMPTON (CULM GARDEN VILLAGE) MASTERPLAN SPD (1:31.07)**

Members were presented a report* which informed Members of the outcome of the public consultation and asked Cabinet to consider the draft masterplan that has subsequently been produced taking these comments into account, the report also sought the a recommendation be made to Council to adopt the revised East Cullompton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RESOLVED:

1. That Members note the comments received at the Stage 2 public consultation (Appendix 1) and proposed changes set out in Appendix 2.

2. That the Cabinet recommend to Council that the Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document for East Cullompton (Appendix 3), which incorporates changes made following the Stage 2 public consultation, be adopted.

3. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to amend and finalise the document to reflect any agreed changes following Planning Policy Advisory Group and Cabinet meetings.

(Proposed by Cllr R Chesterton and seconded by Cllr S Penny)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.
Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

140. **HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY (1:35.44)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which provided a revised Housing Assistance Policy under Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, following a review of the current Housing Assistance Policy 2019-22.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet approve the revised Housing Assistance Policy 2022-2025 attached in Annex A.

2. That delegated authority is given to the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to make minor adjustments to the policy based on demand and local priorities.

3. That delegated authority is given to the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to suspend some or all non-mandatory parts of the revised Housing Assistance Policy attached in Annex A (all elements of the Policy other than Section 4 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants) if adequate funding is not available.

(Proposed by Cllr S Penny and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Daw)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

141. **REPLACEMENT ROOFING 2023 – 2026, AWARD REPORT (1:39.38)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which advised on the results for the tendering of the Replacement Roofing Programme 2023 – 2026.

RESOLVED:

1. That the new three year Replacement Roofing Contract be awarded to Contractor 1.

2. Delegated authority be granted to the S151 Officer (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Property Services) to complete the associated Replacement Roofing Contract.

(Proposed by Cllr S Penny and seconded by Cllr D J Knowles)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

142. **POLICY FRAMEWORK (1:42.02)**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which sought that Cabinet recommend to Council that the Policy Framework be adopted. This was an annual report that defined the policy framework for Mid Devon District Council.

RESOLVED:
That Cabinet recommend to Full Council that the Policy Framework be adopted.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

143. **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023-2024 (1:43.50)**

The Cabinet were presented the schedule of meetings* for the next municipal year (2023/24).

RESOLVED:
That Cabinet recommend the schedule of meetings to Full Council. With an amendment that the 4 October 2023 Economy PDG meeting should be 5 October 2023 and that the 17 November 2023 Economy PDG meeting should be 16 November 2023.

(Proposed from the Chair)
Reason for Decision: As stated in the report.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

144. **NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS (1:44.50)**

The notification of key decisions were noted.

(The meeting ended at 11.50 am) **CHAIRMAN**

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CABINET
FEBRUARY 7 2023

PAY POLICY

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Bob Deed
Responsible Officers: Matthew Page, Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste
James Hamblin, Operations Manager Human Resources

Reason for Report: To comply with the legislative requirements of the Localism Act 2011 relating to senior pay in particular the role of the Chief Executive, Directors and other senior officers. The Localism Act 2011 requires an annually published Pay Policy which has been adopted by the full Council.

Recommendation: The Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council the Pay Policy 2023.

Financial Implications: None arising from this report which aims to ensure that the Council pays enough to recruit and retain senior staff, but avoids excessive pay levels.

Budget and Policy Framework: This policy sits within the current budget and policy framework.

Legal Implications: None directly arising from this report. The Head of Paid Services (Chief Executive) is required by Article 14 of the Constitution to keep under review the number, grade and organisation of officers, as well as the manner in which the Council's functions is coordinated and discharged. Further, the overall developmental and management structure, as well as the deployment of officers, is to be published.

Risk Assessment: The risk to the Council of not complying with the legislative requirement is mitigated by this report and having a robust performance management system.

Equality Impact Assessment: Equality of pay is a legal requirement and while no specific issues arise from this report, it should be noted that the pay policy contains the annual gender pay gap reporting (as required by law).

Relationship to Corporate Plan: To have a robust Pay Policy which ensures good use of public money in respect of the salaries of the most senior employees of the Council that is both transparent and visible. To ensure the Council is able to recruit and retain staff of a sufficiently high calibre who are able to deliver the objectives of the Corporate Plan.

Impact on Climate Change: No climate change issues highlighted in this report.

1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 The localism bill required that all local authorities publish a Pay Policy on an annual basis. The Policy should be agreed by a meeting of the Council and be published on the Council's website.

1.2 The purpose of having a Pay Policy is so that the pay and related awards structure of the Council are transparent. The Pay Policy is detailed in Appendix 1.

1.3 At the present time, the Chief Executive is appraised on an annual basis by a group of Members as set out in the Constitution. The Leader consults a review panel which includes the Deputy Leader, the Chairman and Chair of Scrutiny on the objectives to be set and these are agreed with the Chief Executive.

1.4 Cabinet and Leadership Team meet on a monthly basis to monitor progress within each service area. Cabinet members can raise issues with the Chief Executive and Directors on performance in any area of the Council.

1.5 In discussion with the Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services, a commitment was given last year to regularly review the content of the Pay Supplement Policy. It is attached in Appendix 2 for information.

1.6 In addition, we have also attached a scheme of delegation as required by law to agree potential settlement agreements should a situation arise where they be seen as necessary.

1.7 The Cost of Living rise agreed between the LGA and the Unions gave each employee a rise of £1, 925 regardless of their role or grade. This was awarded at the start of November and was paid on the 22 November 2022.

1.8 This increase has resulted in the annual mean pay of all employees increasing from £25, 415 in 21/22 to £27, 724 in 22/23. It has also resulted in the pay multiple of the Chief Executive for 22/23 to both the mean salary in the Council and the lowest paid FTE employee decreasing from 21/22.

1.8 The pay talks for the 23/24 cost of living rise are due to commence in early February 2023 and so a settlement could be achieved a lot earlier than usual which would be beneficial for both the recruitment and retention of staff. I will keep members updated on the progress of these negotiations.

2.0 Recommendation/Action

2.1 The Council is asked to note and approve the attached Pay Policy and its contents regarding the establishment and its pay.

Contact for more Information: Matthew Page, Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste, James Hamblin, Operations Manager Human Resources, Cllr Bob Deed Leader of the Council

Circulation of the Report: Cabinet Member seen and approved yes – Cllr Bob Deed, Cabinet, Leadership Team seen and approved yes

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Human Resources Policy

Version Control Sheet

Title: Pay Policy 2022

Reference No: **HR/**

Purpose: The Localism Act requires that all local authorities publish a Pay Policy on an annual basis. The Policy should be agreed by a meeting of Council and be published on the Council's website.

The purpose of having a Pay Policy is so that the pay and related rewards structure of the Council is transparent.

Owner: **Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste**
mpage@middevon.gov.uk

Date: Feb 2023
Version Number: 7

Status: **Final**

Review Frequency: **Every year**

Next review date: **February 2024 to be published by March 2024**

Pay Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Local authorities must publish a pay policy statement for each financial year. This must be approved by a Council resolution before 31 March each year. The Act specifies a number of elements that must be covered by the statement including: the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer, remuneration of chief officers on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration for each chief officer, the use of performance-related pay for chief officers, the use of bonuses for chief officers, the approach to the payment of chief officers on their ceasing to hold office under or to be employed by the authority, and the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of chief officers.

The specific part of the Localism Act 2011 relating to a pay policy is Section 38 (1). Pay is an emotive issue for staff, Councillors and also for the public at large. Transparency in what and how we pay our senior staff particularly, but also all Council employees is of paramount importance.

A pay policy statement will be updated and taken to full Council each year in February, in this way a clear view of the salaries and benefits paid to the most senior staff at the Council can be tracked.

2. REFERENCES

Equal Pay Act 1970
Equality Act 2010
Localism Act 2011

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to:-

- Chief Executive Officer including Head of Paid Service responsibilities
- Directors, Corporate Managers and Operations Managers/Strategic Managers including Monitoring Officer responsibilities and Section 151 Officer responsibilities

4. POLICY

Clarity in the provision of pay and other benefits is essential to ensure that the Council can attract and retain good calibre employees at all levels but particularly at the most senior level.

In the context of managing scarce public resources, remuneration at all levels within the Council needs to be adequate to secure and retain high-quality

employees dedicated to the service of the public, but at the same time needs to avoid being unnecessarily generous or otherwise excessive.

This pay policy statement applies specifically to chief officers (a term which includes both statutory and non-statutory chief officers which for the purposes of this policy are the Directors, Corporate Management Team, Monitoring Officer) and addresses the legal requirement to set out how the policy for agreement of chief officer remuneration differs to that of other Council employees. For the purposes of this statement this includes:

- **Chief Executive Officer (Head of Paid Service)**
- **Deputy Chief Executive (151)**
- **Director of Corporate Affairs & Business Transformation**
- **Director Of Place**
- **District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer**
- **Corporate Management Team**
- **Operations Manager/Strategic Manager**

The definition of chief officers (as set out in section 43(2) of the Localism Act 2011) is not limited to Directors, Heads of Paid Service or statutory chief officers. It also includes those who are their direct reports (who may or might not be statutory chief officers and those who report directly to non-statutory chief officers (deputy chief officers)).

The metric used for pay dispersion is the multiple of Chief Executive to mean earnings. Tracking this multiple will ensure public service organisations are accountable for the relationship between the pay of their executives and the wider workforce. Through this pay policy statement Mid Devon will track this multiple annually. **(This is shown as Officer Remuneration in the accounts).** This will include;

- the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer
- the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
- the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers
- other specific aspects of chief officer remuneration.

In respect of Officer Remuneration Note in the accounts: It should be noted that this information will relate to the previous year as shown in the annual accounts. This will include;

- Salary, fees and allowances
- Bonuses
- Expenses allowance

- Compensation for loss of employment
- Employers pension contribution
- Any other emoluments

Pay multiple
This is calculated by comparing all taxable earnings for the given year (including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances and the cash value of benefits in kind) for the Chief Executive compared to mean earnings and the lowest paid in the organisation.

Specific Policy Areas
The National Joint Negotiating Committee has previously emphasised that 'it is good governance that local authorities can demonstrate that decisions on pay and reward packages for Chief Executives and chief officers have been made in an open and accountable way.'

The Leader of the Council may recommend to Full Council changes to the remuneration package following an annual review. Any structural changes to the remuneration packages of the Chief Executive or Directors will be subject to Full Council approval.

Salary increases in relation to cost of living will be made in line with National Joint Council recommendations.

The cost of living increase does not apply automatically to the Chief Executive and the Director roles as of 1st April each year. Any increase given to them will take into account the national pay award and will be agreed by the Leader of the Council, having sought the views of the Cabinet, and will be based on performance. The annual assessment/pay award for the Chief Executive and Directors is implemented from 1st July each year in order to allow for reflection on the previous year's performance (salary increases for all other employees continue to take effect from 1st April each year).

The use of market supplements may be applied in certain circumstances but at present are not considered necessary for any senior role.

At present, there are no additional payments made to senior officers which specifically relate to performance such as performance bonuses; neither is there an element of pay which can be enhanced for performance, other than those already mentioned in respect of the Chief Executive and Director roles. Performance issues will be dealt with through the achievement of agreed objectives and appraisal review process.

Any termination payments to chief officers on ceasing office will comply with Mid Devon District Council's Redundancy Policy and no additional payments will be made without the express approval of Full Council.

Through this policy the pay multiple of the Chief Executive will be monitored annually. Should the multiplier between the annual salary paid to a full time employee on the lowest spinal column point and the annual salary paid to the Chief Executive be greater than 10, this will be reported by the Leader of the Council to Full Council for consideration.

Our support for apprenticeships, which may be considered a temporary employment, will not be used to skew the pay multiple metric and will therefore be excluded from the calculation. In order to ensure complete transparency however we have also included the salary of apprentices.

There are no arrangements currently in place for tax and national insurance payments to be paid other than through the normal channels, i.e. through the normal PAYE route for all officers of the Council.

5. PAYMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER

Additional payments are set and made by Central Government to officers carrying out additional duties at elections. These payments will only be received when elections take place and although fixed, do vary according to the type of election for which the payment is made. These payments are not within the scope of this policy.

6. OUTCOMES

In having this policy Mid Devon District Council will ensure that the process for setting pay at a senior level is transparent. This policy will be reviewed annually to track the relationship of chief officer pay with the rest of the workforce.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Annual monitoring of this policy will take place in February. Monitoring of the Chief Executive's performance takes place through an annual appraisal process. This is supplemented by mid-year reviews.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY CONSULTATION

This policy will be agreed with the Council's Leadership Team, Cabinet and Full Council.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS

The principles of equal pay are integral to this policy. 'Equal work' is defined as:

- Like work where the woman and the man are doing the same job or
- Work rated as equivalent where the 2 jobs are different but have been evaluated by the employer's job evaluation scheme (JES) at the same level/grade or
- Work of equal value where the jobs are again different but an argument is made that both jobs should be regarded as being of equal value or worth.

10. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste will be responsible for this policy and for updating information on an annual basis.

11. RECORDS

Documents and records generated as a result of the application of this policy will be held electronically and retained as legally required.

All records will be maintained and processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

12. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Version	Update
10/02/2017	1	Pay Policy
05/04/2018	2	Pay Policy
07/02/2019	3	Pay Policy
13/02/2020	4	Pay Policy
Feb 2021	5	Pay Policy
Feb 2022	6	Pay Policy
Feb 2023	7	Pay Policy

1. The level of remuneration for all officers earning over £50,000 is shown below:

Post Title	Remuneration	
	2022/23	2021/22
Chief Executive	£118,549	£116,624
Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	£87,027	£85,102
Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation	£85,358	£83,433
Director of Place	£85,358	£83,433
District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer	Grade P £68,687 to £72,773	Grade P £66,672 to £70,848
Corporate Manager Public Health, Regulation & Housing	Grade N £58,904 to £62,392	Grade N £56,979 to £60,467
Corporate Manager People, Governance & Waste	Grade N £58,904 to £62,392	Grade N £56,979 to £60,467
Corporate Manager Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement	Grade N £58,904 to £62,392	Grade N £56,979 to £60,467
Corporate Manager Property, Leisure & Climate Change	Grade N £58,904 to £62,392	Grade N £56,979 to £60,467
Corporate Manager Income, Benefits & Recovery	Grade N £58,904 to £62,392	Grade N £56,979 to £60,467
Corporate Manager Financial Services	Grade N £58,904 to £62,392	Grade N £56,979 to £60,467
Operations Manager Property Services (From 14/12/2022)	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	
Operations Manager StreetScene and Open Spaces	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609
Operations Manager Housing Services	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609

Post Title	Remuneration	
Operations Manager Human Resources (From 01/05/2022)	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	
Operations Manager Performance & Governance (From 10/10/2022)	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	
Operations Manager Revenues Benefits & Recovery	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609
Operations Manager Building Services	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609
Operations Manager ICT Services	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609
Operations Manager Public Health	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609
Operations Manager Leisure Services	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609
Strategic Manager Growth, Economy & Delivery	Grade L £50,579 to £53,534	Grade L £48,654 to £51,609

2. The full time remuneration of the lowest paid employee.

Post Title	Remuneration		Other Allowances	
	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22
Recreation Assistant (FOH)	£21,575	£18,562	None	None
Apprentice	£16,206	£14,277	None	None

The lowest paid employees in the 21/22 tax year were the Recreation assistants in the Leisure Service. During the 22/23 tax year, these roles have been re-evaluated and are now graded the same as a refuse loader.

The apprentice rate has been uplifted to £8.40 per hour for the 2022/23 tax year.

3. The multiplier of the remuneration of the Chief Executive based upon taxable earnings.

Category	Total Remuneration	
	2022/23	2021/22
Pay multiple of Chief Executive to Mean	4.28	4.35
Pay multiple of Chief executive to lowest paid FT employee	5.49 (based on Recreation Assistant) 7.32 (based on apprentice rate)	6.19 (based on Recreation Assistant) 8.05(based on apprentice rate)
Annual Mean Pay of all employees (Total Salaries/Number of contracts)	£27,724	£25,415

Officer Remuneration Note in Accounts

Publication of Officers Remuneration
We are required to publish the following information in respect of officer remunerations:

a) The number of employees whose remuneration in the year was greater or equal to £50,000, grouped in rising bands of £5,000.

b) An analysis by job title of the remuneration and employer's pension contributions in respect of senior employees whose salary is £50,000 or more per year (or by name and job title where the salary is £150,000 per year)

4. Officers' Emoluments

This table includes all statutory and non-statutory posts whose overall remuneration exceeds £50k excluding pension contributions and non-taxable allowances as published in MDDC Statement of Accounts - Draft (Pre Audit) 21-22 (middevon.gov.uk)

	2021/22		2020/21	
Remuneration Band	**Number of Employees**	**Left During Year**	**Number of Employees**	**Left During Year**
£50,000 - £54,999	**5**	**0**	**3**	**0**
£55,000 - £59,999	**2**	**0**	**4**	**0**
£60,000 - £64,999	**4**	**0**	**1**	**1**
£65,000 - £69,999	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**
£70,000 - £74,999	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
£75,000 - £79,999	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
£80,000 - £84,999	**2**	**0**	**3**	**1**
£85,000 - £89,999	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
£95,000 - £99,999	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
£100,000 - £104,999	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
£105,000 - £109,999	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
£110,000 - £114,999	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
£115,000 - £119,999	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**

The above table includes two employees who received a termination payment in 2021/22. These employees are included in the Termination Benefit note. Nine employees in the above table are not Senior Officers so have not been included in the Senior Officers table, all other employees are included.

In completing the 2021/22 Accounts we have complied with the statutory instrument regarding officer emoluments. The statutory instrument requires the individual naming of any Officers with an annual salary of £150,000 or more and the post title of any officers earning £50,000 or more who occupy statutory roles or are responsible for managing the strategic direction of services.

The Council had no officers earning at or in excess of £150,000 in 2021/22.

5 Termination Benefits

2021/22	Number of	Number of	Total number	Total cost of

Exit Package Cost Band	Compulsory redundancies	Other Departures Agreed	Of exit Packages by Cost band	Exit packages in each band £'000
£0 - £19,999	2	9	11	65
£20,000-£39,000	-	0	0	0
£40,000-£59,999	0	0	0	0
£60,000-£79,999	0	0	0	0
Total	**2**	**9**	**11**	**65**

During 2021/22 a number of settlement agreements were made. These were associated with service restructures and changes in order to reduce future employee costs. This helps match ongoing expenditure against the well documented cuts in Central Government funding.

6 Gender Pay Gap

6.1 Pay quartiles by gender

The Mid Devon District Council figures set out below have been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Under the law, men and women must receive equal pay for:

- the same or broadly similar work;
- work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; or
- work of equal value.

Quartile	Males	Females	Description
1	60%	40%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them at or below the lower quartile
2	36%	64%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the lower quartile but at or below the median
3	44%	56%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the median but at or below the upper quartile
4	46%	54%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the upper quartile

6.2 Mid Devon District Council's Gender Pay Gap

	Mean Average Hourly Rate	Median Average Hourly Rate
Male	£14.38	£12.92
Female	£14.36	£12.92

HMRC % gap	**0.139082%**	**0%**

The mean gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to the October 2022 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) figures) is 15.4%; at 0.139082% Mid Devon District Council's mean gender pay gap is, therefore, significantly lower than that for the whole economy.

PAY SUPPLEMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy contains the agreed approach to be taken in the application, monitoring and review of pay supplements within Mid Devon District Council.

Pay supplements incorporate mechanisms for managing recruitment, retention and market related issues by temporarily increasing the total pay awarded to a post (without altering the job evaluation determined grade for that post) when it can be shown that the salary range attached to the grade is significantly lower than those offered by a competitor and therefore it impacts adversely on the ability to recruit or retain staff. They also cover methods of recognition and reward.

During times of specific upheaval and change, it may be necessary to secure the delivery of key services and moreover, to retain a particular skill set within the authority using retention payments, market supplements, acting up payments and honorarium.

The objectives of this Policy are:-

- To recruit the best possible staff for each post and enable the Council to mitigate against any adverse impact on its ability to compete in the local labour market by looking at pay supplement payments

- To facilitate flexibility to resource the Council whilst ensuring compliance with equal pay legislation, achieving transparency and adopting best practice.

- To secure the consistent delivery of key services to the public that may be at risk by giving the ability to retain key post holders.

- To manage the usage of pay supplements responsibly with an aim to ensure that it does not create excessive or unnecessary pay disharmony.

This policy will be attached to the annual Pay Policy which is a statutory submission each year to be approved by both the Cabinet and Full Council.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Mid Devon District Council employees. Supplements are only considered where all reasonable methods to improve recruitment or

retention have been exhausted, and / or there is considerable risk to service delivery. Pay supplements will always be considered against the needs of the specific role as opposed to the post holder.

3. MARKET SUPPLEMENTS

A market supplement payment is paid in addition to basic salary for a specific individual post or cluster of identical posts. It may be paid where a post has been identified as 'hard to fill' and the Council is prevented from being able to recruit and/or retain existing staff on the salary determined by the Council's job evaluation scheme.

Payment will be:

- used in exceptional circumstances only
- mindful of any equal pay/value considerations, in order to avoid/minimise the potential for challenge on this point
- made as a clearly identified supplement with properly documented supporting reasons, for the amount of payment
- time limited in its application ie the guaranteed period will be up to a maximum of 12 months
- subject to regular monitoring and review
- pensionable
- applicable to all individuals appointed to the post

Any case for the payment of a market supplement must be properly justified, with supporting evidence from the following range of criteria:

- Evidence of a difficulty to recruit or pay related retention difficulties, together with market pay data
- Turnover rates
- Market based salary comparisons with competing local/regional/national employers (both public and private sector)
- Evidence that other retention initiatives have been explored/exhausted (e.g. learning and development opportunities, promoting non-pay benefits)
- Assessment of the impact of a failure to maintain adequate staffing levels in order to ensure service delivery requirements are met
- Consideration of the impact on other existing staff within the defined job group
- Robust budget impact assessment

In addition to the criteria above, account should be taken of the wider employment context applicable to the occupational group and whether the payment of the market supplement will address the particular issues underlying the retention difficulties, or whether alternative/additional actions are required.

For example:

- Are the difficulties an indicator of other issues of concern within the service/occupational group, which can be more appropriately resolved by other management action and/or non-pay measures?
- Is there a regional/national shortage for which new/alternative training schemes would be a more appropriate solution?
- Are there more appropriate ways of resourcing/delivering the service rather than through an in house workforce?

The amount of the market supplement will not be greater than 15% of the top of the salary range for the post.

Market supplements, and the conditions applicable to them, shall be clearly set out and separately identified in any job advertisement and offer/appointment letter.

Market supplement reviews will be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- At least three months prior to the end of the guaranteed period, Human Resources will instruct the Line Manager to commence the review of the market place related to that post and present the findings to the Pay and Grading Group no later than six weeks prior to the end of the guaranteed period.
- If a review indicates that the market supplement is no longer justified, it will be withdrawn. Employees will receive a minimum of one months' notice if the market supplement is being withdrawn and the reasons for this decision.
- Failure to present the findings of the review to the pay and grading group within six weeks of the end of the Guarantee Period will result in the withdrawal of the pay supplement with 1 months' notice.

4. RETENTION PAYMENTS

Deferred retention payments are paid after an agreed period of employment has been completed, and will only be authorised on the basis of the provision of robust evidence amounting to a material factor (suitable for defending any potential equal pay claims). The following evidence will be required as a minimum:

- defined skills or knowledge of an individual not available elsewhere within the authority which are deemed essential to service delivery, or other equitable material differential
- a written offer of employment with another employer, including details of the terms and conditions being offered
- reasons for leaving are clearly related to remuneration / job security, and not other factors such as dissatisfaction with role, manager, team or organisation
- evidence that other measures have been explored, together with the impact on the team.

Payments may be made at the end of a given period, or staggered throughout the specified period of retention.

Requests can only be brought by management, and will have to satisfy the Pay and Grading Group that there is not an Equal Pay issue. A clear business case detailing the significant impact on service delivery will be required for submission to the Pay and Grading Group following authorisation by Director or the Chief Executive.

Managers will also need to include information in their business case as to why a retention payment is more applicable than a market supplement before any payment can be approved.

Retention payments will be subject to the appropriate contractual conditions being met, e.g. remaining within the Council's employment for a specified period and/or the completion of specific tasks. Individuals will be required to sign an agreement to this effect.

The amount of a deferred retention payment will not be greater than 10% of substantive salary.

These payments will made in addition to the individual's normal salary but will be subject to the normal income deductions in respect of tax and National Insurance. They are not pensionable.

If a deferred payment is made in stages and not at the end of the period and an individual leaves the Council within the agreed period of operation of the payment, the individual will be required to pay back all monies received under the scheme, except in the circumstances set out in below.

If an individual leaves the Council because of illness, injury, disability or redundancy, the member of staff will not be required to refund payment

During the specified period when a retention payment is being made a Manager will be required to manage the risk of the employee leaving by undertaking the necessary measures such as ensuring the employee shares their knowledge with other colleagues and/or undertaking recruitment to the role.

If a retention payment is being proposed that relates to a Director then the CEO, the Leader of the Council, the relevant Cabinet Member and the Corporate Manager with responsibility for People will need to agree and sign off any proposal. This will then be sent to SW Councils for independent evaluation and ratification.

If a retention payment is being proposed that relates to the CEO, then the Leader of the Council, the relevant Cabinet Member, Chairman and the Corporate Manager with responsibility for People will need to agree and sign off any proposal. This will then be sent to SW Councils for independent evaluation and ratification.

Payments, their structure (e.g. payment before or after the retention period) and the criteria are subject to the needs of the authority. Therefore discretion can be

exercised by the relevant service director, such as proposing payments, in limited scenarios (e.g. the risk faced by the Council in not acting) whereby not all criteria are met.

6. INCREMENTAL PROGRESSION

The Council's financial rules provide Operational Managers and above with delegated powers to place an individual on the spinal column point of their choosing, provided it is within the evaluated grade for the post, and follows satisfactory performance.

In support of this delegated authority, and in order to ensure that equal pay is maintained the determination of an individual spinal column point either at the commencement of employment in the job role or at any other time will be based on objective material factor criteria as follows:-

- Possession of skills, knowledge, experience or qualifications beyond those which are essential to the job which will enhance performance in the role
- Demonstrable accelerated growth in the role beyond that expected (attainment of skills/knowledge/experience).
- An alternative to a retention payment or market supplement where the criteria for such payments is met.

In the event that an employee has not met their performance targets in line with their annual appraisal or has not been working to the required standard of work they will not be awarded a pay increase, and this will be reviewed again in the following year.

For appointments effective between 1 October and 31 March inclusive, the next increment will be six months after the effective date and then 1 April thereafter.

Subsequent increments are achieved when there has been a demonstration of high performance against the expectations of the role. Any incremental pay progression will be awarded to employees once this has been evidenced through the annual pay review.

The annual performance review is an opportunity for managers and their staff to review performance throughout the year and make a judgement as to whether a pay increase will be awarded. If a pay increase is not awarded then the manager will be required to give specific details about any performance shortfalls, and provide the employee with specific targets and support. In certain circumstances where an informal process has not reached a solution this may proceed to a capability process.

Any incremental pay increases will be payable on 1 April. Pay increases will no longer be awarded once the employee has reached the top of the pay scale for their role.

7. HONORARIUM PAYMENTS

An honorarium payment may be made to an employee who is undertaking duties of a higher level than those for which they are graded. This can be related to:

- covering a vacancy
- covering an ongoing absence within the department (such as long term sickness, but not annual leave)
- undertaking work on an ongoing basis which is over and above that expected for the grade of the post
- *a special project/activity – work outside normal scope of duties*

Any honorarium paid should not only be for a justifiable reason, but also clearly calculated. The payment, which is pensionable, should be calculated as follows:-

Extra responsibilities for between 6-8 weeks
For the first 6-8 weeks this is considered as a development opportunity offered without payment. As with any request for a staff member to take on extra responsibilities the extent of the duties will need to be clearly confirmed, and the member of the staff has the right to decline the opportunity. It is crucial that this aspect is confirmed in advance of any extra responsibilities being proposed.

Extra responsibilities for over 8 weeks
Any staff who have responsibilities longer than 8 weeks should receive an acting up allowance to the equivalent of 10% of their current salary if it is work at their grade. If duties are belonging to a role of a higher grade the staff member will receive 10% of the salary of the role being covered.

*Payments being awarded in respect to the above should be for no longer than 12 months as per the CMT principle adopted in 2020.

Extra responsibilities for a period longer than 12 months
If there is a requirement for additional duties to be taken for a period longer than 12 months then a formal evaluation of the staff members role will need to be considered which may lead to a formal restructure within the department.

In accordance with the Council's financial rules, the Line Manager must obtain approval prior to the confirmation of any honorarium by making a request using the Honorarium Payment Approval Form, which must be completed and signed off by themselves and the Operational Manager/Director. This should then be forwarded to Human Resources. Staff are not able to put themselves forward for an honorarium.

8. PROCESS FOR APPROVAL

In order to maintain the integrity of our Job Evaluation scheme, requests for market supplements, retention payments, and honoraria are all subject to additional approval by the Pay and Grading Group. Any such requests will be

submitted for consideration at the next available meeting of the Pay and Grading Group following receipt of the authorised request.

All requests must be made on the appropriate application form and all supporting documentation must be attached. Business cases which propose market supplements, retention payments and honorariums must be robust in order to provide a defence against an equal pay claim.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers are responsible for making the business case, including carrying out any research, completing the necessary application form and obtaining the necessary level of authorisation prior to submitting the request to Human Resources.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that any proposals in respect of incremental progression and honoraria can be met from their own budget. There will be a central budget for market supplement/retention payments, which will be controlled by Human Resources.

The Pay and Grading Group are responsible for approving market supplements, retention payments and honoraria.

Human Resources will ensure that all the necessary paperwork and information has been submitted, provide the check and balance arrangements in respect of that supporting evidence, ensure that any payments are supported with an objective justification, and will specifically be responsible for identifying reasons for leaving upon receipt of requests for retention payments. Human Resources will review this policy annually to ensure continued relevance.

Human Resources will be responsible for providing an annual summary of:

- the number of applications under each strand of this Policy
- the number of applications approved under this Policy
- the breakdown of applications approved by gender

to the Pay and Grading Group. Data monitoring the application of incremental progression will be reported to each Pay and Grading Group meeting, and annually to the Corporate Negotiation and Joint Consultative Committee.

10. RECORDS

Documents and records generated as a result of the application of this policy will be retained permanently on the individuals personnel file.

Records of will be held permanently on the Council's HR and Payroll information systems.

All records will be maintained and processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

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Appendix 3 – Scheme of Delegation

Special Severance Payments

In line with guidance published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, Mid Devon District Council has the following approval process for payments deemed 'Special Severance Payments'.

Monetary Amount	**Approval By**
> £100,000	Approved by a vote of full council, as set out in the Localism Act 2011
> £20,000 but < £100,000	Must be personally approved and signed off by the Head of Paid Service, with a clear record of the Leader's approval and that of any others who have signed off the payment
< £20,000	Must be approved according to the local authority's scheme of delegation. It is expected that local authorities should publish their policy and process for approving these payments

At MDDC our local scheme of delegation for Special Severance Payments requires approval and sign off by our Head of Paid Service and S151 Officer, with advice sought from the Monitoring Officer where appropriate.

Where the proposed payment is to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), to avoid a conflict of interest it is expected that the payment should be approved by a panel including at least two independent persons.

As part of their duties, an authority's s151 Officer, and where appropriate, the Monitoring Officer, should take a close interest in and be able to justify any special severance payments that are made by that authority and in particular any payments made that are not consistent with the content of this guidance.

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CABINET
7 FEBRUARY 2023

ESTABLISHMENT

Cabinet Member:	Clive Eginton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services
Responsible Officer(s):	Matthew Page, Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste James Hamblin, Operations Manager Human Resources

Reason for Report: To give Members an update on both the Establishment of the Council together with its performance. This report should be read in conjunction with the functions of individual officers highlighted in the Constitution. This builds upon information shared in February 2022 and September 2022.

RECOMMENDATION: The Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council the contents of the below report.

Financial Implications: Financial risk will only occur where the structure of a service changes without adherence to allocated budgets.

Budget and Policy Framework: This report sits within the current budget and policy framework.

Legal Implications: In accordance with Article 14 of the Constitution.

Risk Assessment: If the Establishment is not appropriately managed and reviewed then service delivery may be put at risk.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues are highlighted in this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: This report highlights the Establishment figures and, as such, supports our aim to reduce costs without affecting service quality and continuity.

Impact on Climate Change: No climate change issues are highlighted in this report.

1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the performance of our workforce as we continue to move out of the COVID-19 pandemic and into Spring 2023.

1.2 These items include updates on the key Establishment indicators of sickness and agency expenditure, turnover and the impact of COVID-19 on our workforce.

1.3 Scrutiny of this data has been enhanced throughout 2022 as we developed the service quarterly performance review report and subsequent meeting. As outlined in the February 2022 Establishment Report, these meetings are attended by the Corporate Manager, Service Lead (if applicable), HR Business

Partner and Accountant. These meetings are also supported by monthly updates on workforce data provided at our Corporate Performance Meeting and shared with both the Corporate Management and Leadership teams.

2.0 Sickness Absence, Agency Expenditure and Establishment

2.1 Last year (2021/2022) MDDC had an average of 7.82 sickness days per FTE. This compares to 5.58 sickness days that were lost per FTE in 2020/21 and 8.10 sickness days that were lost per FTE in 2019/2020. Within our current policy, the aim set for each employee is not to exceed 6 days of absence in a rolling 12 month period. It should be noted that there will be a difference between FTE and per employee statistics, however the statistics show a dip in sickness during the pandemic. See Graph 1.

2.2 Acknowledging absence levels since 2019, an updated policy and training for managers is due to be rolled out in 2023. However it should be noted that absence levels faced at the Council track closely with both local and national feedback on sickness absence levels. As predicted in the September 2022 Scrutiny Report, an increase in absence is unsurprising as the workforce have not been exposed to illnesses which have been supressed over the last 2 years.

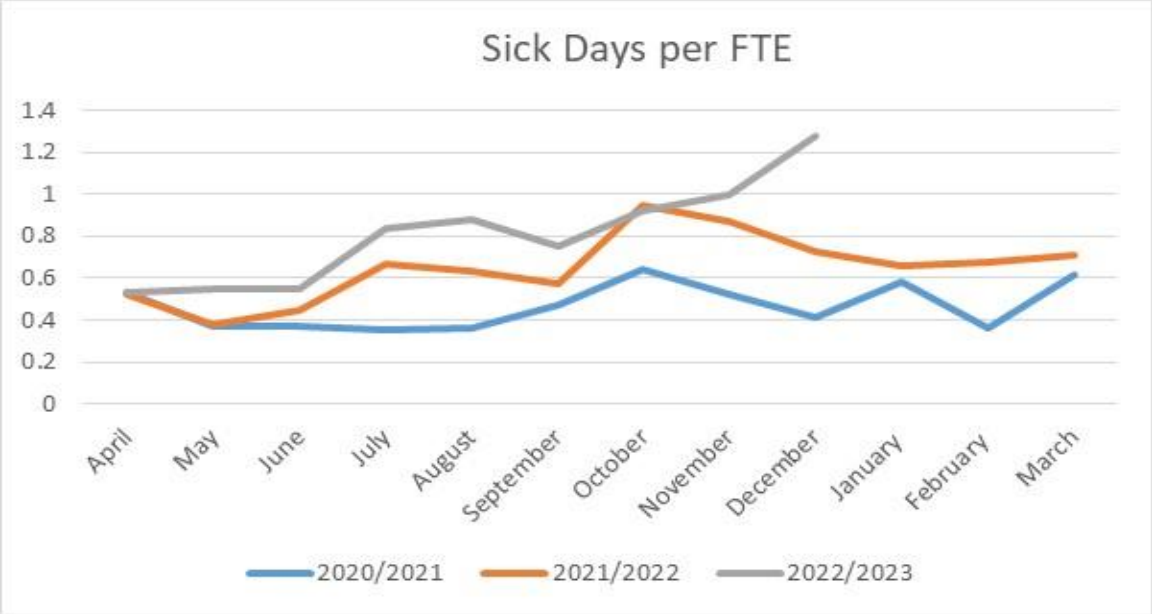
2.3 In house management training has been rolled out in 2022, with managers able to access both live and recorded sessions on the following: 'Managing Difficult Conversations', 'Managing Poor Performance' and 'Investigations, Disciplinaries and Grievances'. Feedback from the sessions has shown content has been well received with confidence in managers increasing as a result of the information provided. An underlying theme of all training provided in house is to encourage early intervention by managers.

2.4 In the first three quarters of this financial year we recorded 7.30 days sickness absence per FTE. As a result we are currently in line to see sickness absence levels this year in excess of 2019/2020. Projections would suggest we end 2022/2023 with approximately 9.73 days lost per FTE. Our sickness absence is usually less in the first two quarters of the financial year than in the last two due to the Autumn and Winter seasons and we are still seeing substantial employee absence due to COVID-19 and related infections (referenced in Section 4.0).

2.5 Wellbeing and supportive measures for employees have been highlighted throughout 2022, as we look to encourage employees to take positive action. A heavily discounted Leisure membership has been rolled out to employees at the Council (circa 50% of the public fees), as well as, a one off wellbeing day and there being increased communication regarding our Employee Assistance Programme. A review of our Wellbeing Ambassador initiative is due in 2023 as we look to provide clarity on the support we have in place for employees, alongside the existing mental health first aider scheme, Employee Assistance Programme and occupational health support.

2.6 The Council offered all staff under 50 a free voucher for a flu vaccination, acknowledging the current sickness levels and in order to prevent future sickness absence in the workforce. Despite regular advertisement of the benefit, uptake has been low to date.

2.7 Following the all staff survey in Autumn 2021 to gauge opinion and feedback on key organisational performance indicators including communication, leadership, development and wellbeing, the subsequent action plan is still in focus with the next round of all staff briefings due in early 2023. A further all staff survey is scheduled for Summer 2023.



Graph 1. Sickness at MDDC 2020 - 2023

2.8 In October 2022 a benefits survey was rolled out to employees at the Council. The aim was to understand what benefits employees currently value and understand, as well as, what benefits they would like the Council to consider in the future. As a result of the survey, a 'Benefits Overview' is being published in January 2023. This will highlight the existing benefits employees at the Council can already access and it will be used as part of our recruitment literature.

2.9 An ongoing challenge, further cemented by the impact of sickness absence levels, has been our access to temporary/agency workers. Costs of temporary/agency workers has been steadily increasing, as nationally we see high levels of employment against a backdrop of record high levels of vacancies.

2.10 During the first three quarters of 2022/23 the organisation spent £723,879.98 on agency workers. This compared to a total spend in 2021/22 of £823,288.55, £576,368.28 in 2020/21 and £534,378.49 in 2019/20. Projections using our existing figures would suggest we end 2022/2023 with approximately £965,173.31 in agency spend. Table 1 outlines agency spend since 2019.

2.11 There is an underlying theme within our agency make up, as we move away from 'lower cost/higher volume' agency workers (e.g. Waste and Recycling) to 'higher cost/lower volume' agency workers (e.g. Planning). The use of agency workers has been brought under further scrutiny as we continuously review our Establishment and seek to improve processes to allow for greater rigour and

challenge regarding staffing (e.g. the updated Vacancy Approval Process and Workforce Review Group rolled out in December 2022).

Year	Agency Spend	YOY Change (+/-)
2019/2020	£534,378.49	
2020/2021	£576,368.28	+7.56%
2021/2022	£823,288.55	+35.28%
2022/2023	£965,173.31*	+15.87%*

**9 months data grossed up to 12 months*

Table 1. Agency Spend 2019 - 2022

2.12 Table 2 compares the Establishment for the Council and the associated costs from 2019/2020 to 2022/2023. Costs for 2022/2023 will include the flat payment made to employees following the completion of Pay Award negotiations that was confirmed in November 2022. Work is already underway for the 2023/2024 Pay Award, with Unions expected to confirm their expectations at the end of January 2023. This comes against a backdrop of increased industrial action across sectors in the UK and ongoing negotiations highlighted within the media.

	2019/2020	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23*
Total number of employees /workers paid	718	697	728	698
Establishment FTE	422.11	422.79	426.43	431.02
Total Taxable Gross Pay	£11,170,336.78	£11,515,324.63	£12,197,334.88	£12,802,503.87*
Employers NI	£1,024,710.32	£1,038,135.28	£1,126,244.53	£1,288,737.39*
Employers Pension	£1,595,839.06	£1,832,713.73	£1,938,973.16	£2,103,271.45*

**9 months data grossed up to 12 months*

Table 2. Establishment 2019 - 2023

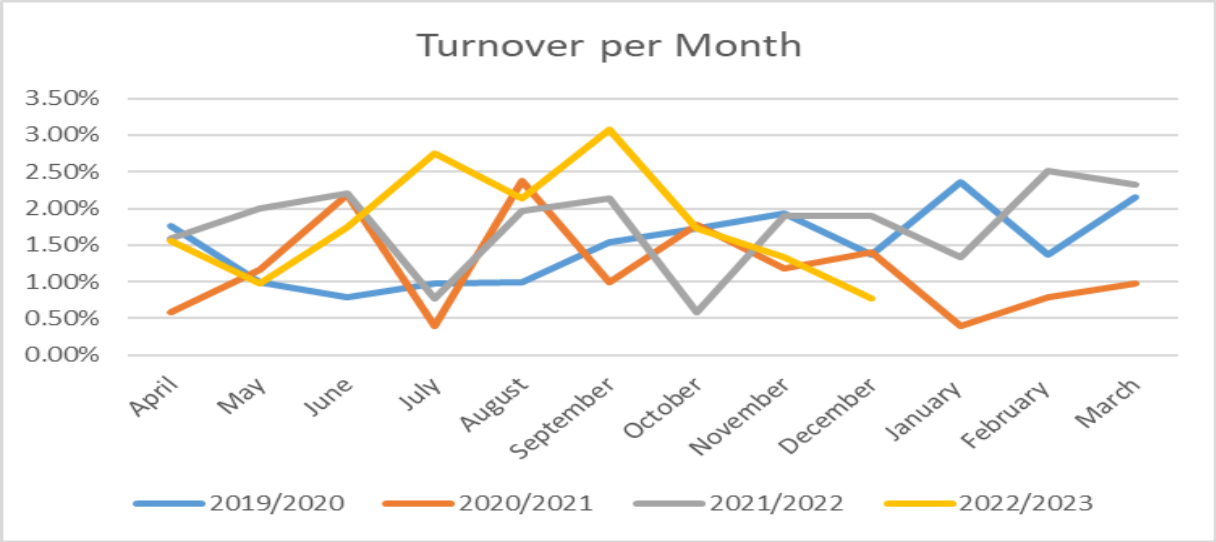
3.0 Turnover

3.1 Turnover for the first three financial quarters (1 April to 31 December 2022) stands at 16.07%. This compares to a turnover of 2021/22 in 21.25%, 14.23% in 2020/21 and 17.98% in 2019/20. Graph 2 highlights turnover per month since 2019 with estimates, based on current turnover, suggesting we end the current financial year with a turnover of 21.42%.

3.2 A full breakdown of all leavers and data collected during exit interviews for the last financial year is shown in Appendix 1. For those that completed the exit interview, career progression was cited as the main reason for leaving. Appendix 2 highlights the reasons for leaving during quarters 1 to 3 of 2022/2023.

3.3 A new exit interview format is launching in February 2023, with a focus on collating data in a more efficient and effective way. The new exit interview will allow for greater learning from those that are departing the Council and this, in turn, can help formulate more informed decision making and action planning.

3.4 Mid Devon, like other local authorities, has faced increasing challenges over turnover due to a number of different external factors. In terms of manual work the lack of supply of European workers has hit different industries hard which has had the result of increased competition for drivers, loaders and other types of worker amongst different sectors. In some sectors a movement towards 'contractor' work rather than 'employed' work has been supported by record levels of vacancies across the UK as workers attempt to earn more money in the current cost of living crisis.



Graph 2. Turnover at MDDC 2019 - 2023

3.5 These challenges have brought into sharp focus the need to consider our longer term employment offer for potential applicants. Key aspects include promoting our benefits (as will be seen with the 'Benefits Overview' document in January 2023) and encouraging greater flexible working where it is possible to do so (as has been seen in our roll out of hybrid working in 2022). Whilst delayed, the launch in 2023 of the skills review will allow for the Council to understand the skills and knowledge gaps within services and contribute to succession planning.

3.6 Apprenticeships across services are supporting the 'grow your own talent' initiative at the Council. The Council supported the 'KickStart' initiative in 2022, however this government scheme has subsequently come to a conclusion. The Council continues to maximise the apprenticeship levy by utilising this for both those joining the Council as an 'apprentice' and those currently employed by the Council but who are developing further skills/knowledge through training accessed via the levy.

3.7 In June 2022 the Council was award the Petroc Employer of the Year Award. This reflects the ongoing work with educational providers to ensure the Council is an employer of choice for those entering the workplace.

3.8 Our work around the Evolve learning and development project continues to develop. This round of Appraisal/PDR has been completed with a 94% response rate achieved. Guidance on the new appraisal process has been shared with our Leadership Team, Corporate Management Team and Service

Leads, as we extend the appraisal window this year due to significant events scheduled later this year (e.g. local elections).

4.0 COVID-19

4.1 The Council continued to enforce protective measures in line with the Government guidance. As these were phased out in 2022, employees returned to their 'normal' place of work. Feedback, as highlighted in the all staff survey, has been largely supportive of the communication and measures put in place to protect staff during the pandemic.

4.2 As is referenced within the sickness absence reporting in Section 2.0, COVID-19 does still significantly contribute to sickness absence. In December 2022, 92 days were lost due to COVID-19 accounting for 14.9% of all absence in the month. As responsibility for testing and the associated costs are held by the employee, the actual amount of sickness absence due to COVID-19 is likely to be higher.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 There are a number of priorities which the Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste wants to focus on in terms of our Establishment performance.

5.2 It is vital that we continue to plan, review and scrutinise business continuity plans in the face of the challenges brought by the high levels of sickness absence. This should run in parallel with continued scrutiny of our Establishment through mechanisms such as the Workforce Review Group.

5.3 We continue to instil best employment practice and benefits, using the information obtained through the all staff survey action plan and findings from other surveys (e.g. Benefits Survey). We are committed to communicating with employees to keep them updated with business developments and changes.

5.4 We will review the skills analysis once completed to understand the gaps we have as an organisation and use this data to support long term succession planning at the Council. This needs to run in parallel with our focus on growing our own talent (e.g. apprenticeships) vs hiring talent vs developing existing talent.

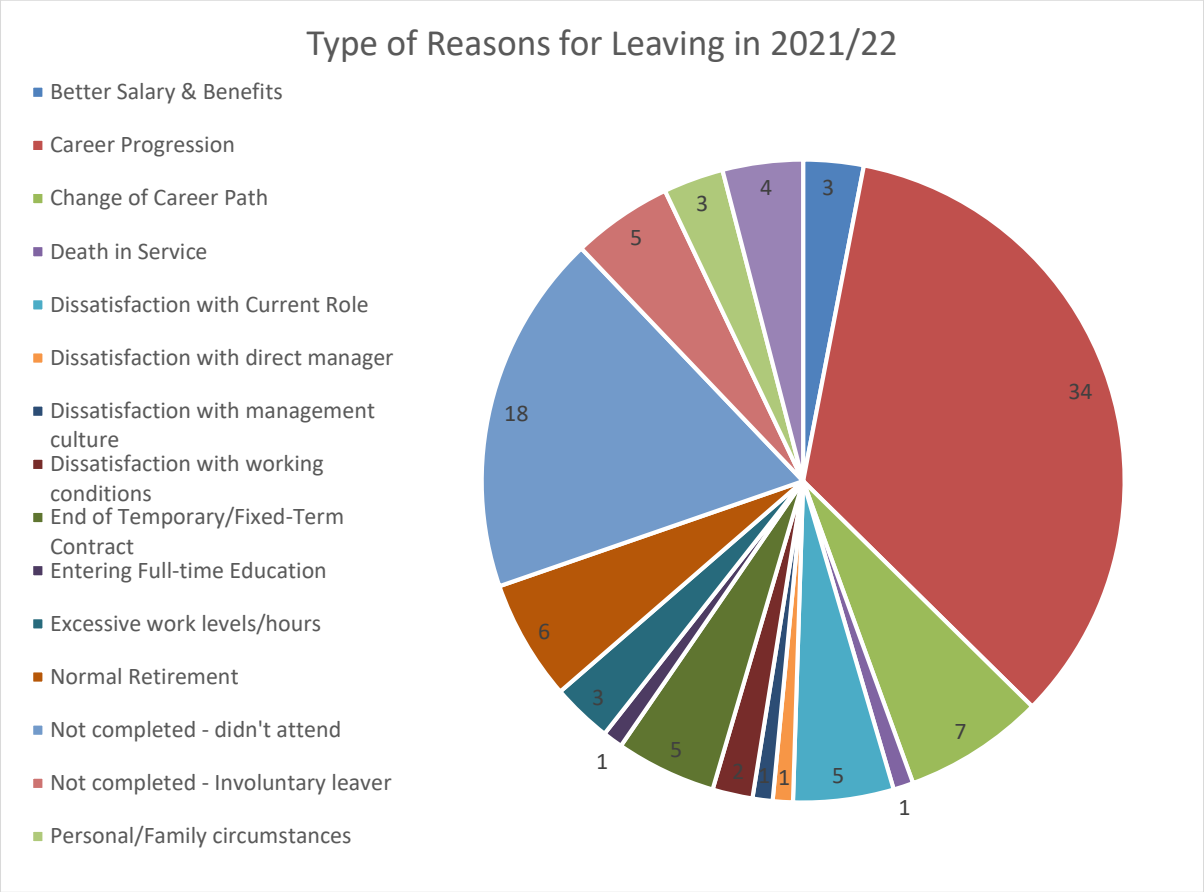
5.5 As a result of the above our overarching long term focus is simplified as follows: Getting the right people, with the right skills, in the right roles, performing at the right level at the right time.

Contact for more Information: Matthew Page, Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste (MPage@middevon.gov.uk), James Hamblin, Operations Manager Human Resources (JHamblin@middevon.gov.uk)

Circulation of the Report: The Cabinet Member has seen and approved the report. Cllr Clive Eginton Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services

List of Background Papers: Previous Establishment Reports taken to both Scrutiny and Cabinet in 2020, 2021 and 2022

Appendix 1



Type of Reasons for Leaving 2021/22	
Better Salary & Benefits	3
Career Progression	34
Change of Career Path	7
Death in Service	1
Dissatisfaction with Current Role	5
Dissatisfaction with direct manager	1
Dissatisfaction with management culture	1
Dissatisfaction with working conditions	2
End of Temporary/Fixed-Term Contract	5
Entering Full-time Education	1
Excessive work levels/hours	3
Normal Retirement	6
Not completed - didn't attend	18
Not completed - Involuntary leaver	5
Personal/Family circumstances	3
Travel	4

Appendix 2

Quarter 1 to Quarter 3 2022 – Reasons for Leaving

Reason	Total	%
Better salary & benefits	1	1.19
Career Progression	19	22.62
Change of Career Path	2	2.38
Dissatisfaction with current role	2	2.38
Dissatisfaction with management culture	1	1.19
Dissatisfaction with working conditions	2	2.38
End of Temporary/Fixed Term contract	1	1.19
Excessive work levels/hours	2	2.38
Normal Retirement	3	3.57
Not completed - didn't attend	37	44.05
Not completed - didn't return from sick	1	1.19
Not completed - involuntary leaver	5	5.95
Other.	2	2.38
Personal/Family circumstances	6	7.14
Grand Total	**84**	**100**

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Agenda Item

CABINET REPORT

7th February 2023
CULLOMPTON TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN SPD AND DELIVERY PLAN

Cabinet Member	**Cllr Richard Chesterton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration.**
Responsible Officer	**Mr R Marsh, Director of Place.**

Reason for the Report: To approve the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **That Members note the comments received at the Stage 2 public consultation (Appendix 1 and 2) and the proposed changes as set out in Appendix 2;**

2. **That the Cabinet recommend to Council that:**

    i) **Subject to the updates, detailed in Appendix 2, that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 3) and Delivery Plan (Appendices 4 & 5) be adopted; and**

    ii) **Delegated authority be given to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration prior to publication to make any typographical, grammatical, imagery and formatting changes to the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD; &**

    iii) **That Cabinet note the Strategic Environmental Screening Report (Appendix 6) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (Appendix 7).**

Financial Implications: The consultant contract for the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan was awarded 10th July 2019 under delegated authority following a procurement process. Prior to that a budget of £60,000 had been approved, funding for which was identified in the 18/19 service budget.

The financial implications in the delivery of the projects and strategies identified within the Draft Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will need further consideration in light of service budget, whether they can be managed and delivered in house or will require further work through external commissions. As each particular project is 'worked up', each will be subject to financial costings and to Cabinet consideration and approval (where applicable). Funding for these projects is likely to involve a range of public and private sector investment.

No other financial implications are anticipated at this time. The Council made a successful bid for regeneration funding under the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) as part of the Future High Street Fund.

Budget and Policy Framework: The budget for the production of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Plan was agreed at a previous meeting of Cabinet. The Draft Masterplan SPD identifies strategies and projects for implementation. With the support of a Delivery Plan that will sit alongside the Masterplan and, in time, a business case for each of the strategies and projects, this will ensure each scheme will be in a state of readiness should future external funding opportunities arise. No other budgetary implications are anticipated at this time.

The Policy Framework consists of both statutory documents that have to be adopted or approved by the Council as well as locally determined policies and strategies that form an integral part of the decision making process. Once adopted, the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Plan would have Supplementary Planning Document status and be a material consideration for planning decision making purposes. No direct impacts on the policy framework are anticipated at this time.

Legal Implications: The process for preparing and adopting the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD will need to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Whilst the Adopted Masterplan SPD will not form part of the Development Plan, it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the town centre.

The Delivery Plan will include a set of indicative key milestones. These will be kept under review and will be reported back to Members at key milestones or as individual projects progress which require their own decisions.

There are no other legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Assessment: Failure to support the regeneration of Cullompton town centre would in itself lead to deterioration in commercial activity, a less vibrant centre, less coordinated development and uncertainty over essential infrastructure; this being recognised by the bid to the levelling Up Fund and the successful HAZ bid. The Draft Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will be focused on mitigating risk to aid regeneration.

As strategies and projects from the Draft Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan are 'worked up' an assessment of risk will be undertaken as part of project development.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues are identified for this report. Nonetheless, an Equality Impact Assessment is attached as **Appendix 8**.

Impact on Climate Change: A core principle within the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan is the achievement of net zero carbon emissions by 2030 through design and timely delivery of infrastructure, dwellings and employment. Revitalising Cullompton town centre and encouraging local residents to

'buy local' and undertake trips by more sustainable means including walking and cycling will assist in reducing the area's carbon emissions.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD will provide guidance on the planning and delivery of development within Cullompton. A Delivery Plan is produced separately, as an addendum to the Masterplan, allowing for re-appraisal and updating as projects progress and develop. Together they will contribute to the delivery of the 4 key priorities as relating directly to the Corporate Plan 2020-24 including housing delivery, caring for the environment, supporting a thriving economy and local communities.

1.0 BACKGROUND.

1.1 The Council resolved to produce a Masterplan and Delivery Plan for Cullompton Town Centre as a Supplementary Planning Document. Work on the document commenced in 2019. The Draft Masterplan and Delivery Plan seek to enhance the economic prospects of the town centre including its look and the user experience. Its scope is broader than a purely spatial plan and includes wider spatial strategies such as the role and function of the town centre, Cullompton's identity and its unique selling points.

1.2 The Masterplan and Delivery Plan will form a key document for the regeneration of the town; enhancing the town's economic prospects and providing a clear strategy to ensure the town meets its full potential as an attractive and thriving town. It provides the umbrella framework within which the HAZ works will be delivered and is likely to also support progression and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund workstreams.

1.3 The Draft Masterplan was developed in the context of the strategic projects planned in and around Cullompton, including the North West Cullompton urban extension, the proposed Culm Garden Village, the proposed new Cullompton Relief Road, the re-opening of Cullompton railway Station and the successful HAZ submission. It was also developed within the context of the Cullompton Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan now adopted (Feb 2022).

1.4 In accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, the Draft Masterplan SPD has been subject to two stages of public consultation; Stage 1 to scope out the proposed contents of the masterplan and present the options that might be included and Stage 2 to present the draft masterplan itself. Following a Stage 1 public consultation that was held during 2020 a Stage 2 public consultation was held between 28th June and 13th August 2021 including two staffed events, a letter drop to approximately 1600 homes and businesses in addition to emails, press releases and social media announcements and the posting of public notices in and around the town centre. Permanent exhibitions were made available at the Cullompton Community Centre and the Hayridge Centre (with the ability to submit

questionnaires / observations). All the associated documentation (including a copy of the draft masterplan, exhibition boards, baseline report, online questionnaire and interactive map) were made available on the Council's website for viewing, downloading or for submitting comments. The public were also able to make direct contact (email and telephone) with the lead Officer.

1.5 The Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD was presented to PPAG on the 29th November 2021. PPAG Members requested:

- Clarity between Appendix 1 (on line survey findings) and the number of responses submitted through the interactive map (detailed within the report below);
- A further review of the Draft Masterplan SPD for typographical errors; &
- That the report be brought back to a future PPAG ahead of Cabinet resolution.

2.0 Summary of Public Consultation

2.1 The Stage 2 public consultation invited feedback on 5 distinct themes:

1. The proposed vision for the town centre including the enhancement of historic buildings and public spaces, opportunities for work and visitor destinations and the provision of homes, community and recreational facilities;

2. Enhanced walking, cycling and public transport opportunities in combination with improved public spaces, a greater variety of town centre uses, employment opportunities and digital connectivity.

3. Using the historic character of Cullompton as a foundation to shape a distinctive identity for the town.

4. Identification of key opportunity sites (8 in total) – including

    i) reinstatement of the railway station,

    ii) enhancement of Fore Street,

    iii) the Tannery site

    iv) improved cycle links along Station Road,

    v) enhancement of the Higher Bull Ring,

    vi) enhancement of Alexandria Industrial Estate,

    vii) bringing the Old Cinema back into use, and

    viii) reinstating the former Iron Bridge leat crossing.

5. Responding to climate change including enhanced biodiversity, sustainable modes of transport and carbon neutral ways of construction.

2.2 In total, 73 on-line survey responses and 15 paper copy responses were received. The on-line interactive map proved particularly successful. The interactive map invited comments on the 8 key opportunity sites. The number of responses added to the interactive map totalled 449. Whilst this is not individual responses (a single individual may have commented on a number of the individual opportunity sites) it nonetheless indicates a good level of response. An analysis of the consultation responses to the on-line survey including demographic breakdown is provided at Appendix 1. An analysis of statutory and other consultee responses received by email is provided at Appendix 2.

3.0 Summary of Findings

3.1 Appendix 1 and 2 provide a detailed analysis of the feedback received to the on-line survey and email responses. The key findings that have emerged through either the email responses or to the on-line survey are as follows:

a) Enhanced and restored historic town centre
The on-line survey (Q3) invited comments on the historic character of Cullompton being used as a foundation to shape a distinct identity for the town. Q1(1) of the on-line survey asked if Cullompton's historic buildings and landscape should be enhanced and restored.

91% of on-line survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Cullompton's historic buildings and landscape should be enhanced and restored (Appendix 1). Specific comments made reference to:

1. A need to encourage and support owners to keep the buildings in good condition and use.
2. A need to embrace new buildings and construction techniques with a view to climate change.
3. Cullompton's history lends itself to arts and crafts.
4. Greater emphasis of St Andrew's Hill Roman Fort and its inclusion within the themes and objectives for new green space, enhanced pedestrian access and visitor attractions.

The specific comments above are generally accepted with the masterplan seeking to support the town's economic prospects and regeneration within a recognition of its historic past. The HAZ project supports the use and maintenance of historic buildings. Comments associated with the Roman Fort are detailed more fully in Appendix 2 with recommendations for change to the masterplan.

b) Enhanced pedestrian and cycle links.
The on-line survey (Q2(2)) asked if there was support for enhanced cycle and pedestrian provision throughout the town. 81% of respondents indicated support for its enhancement with 81% of respondents indicating support for pedestrian and cycle improvements specific to Station Road (Q2(3)) and 73% for improved pedestrian and cycle links between the town centre and the CCA fields (Q2(7)).

The response indicates an over-whelming level of support. As such, the proposals outlined in Chapters 4.2 Routes and Movement will be retained.

c) Town centre uses, services and facilities.
Q2(9) of the on-line survey asked if respondents would like to see a greater variety of town centre uses including leisure, food and drink, retail, residential and employment. 83% of respondents indicated a level of support. 55% of respondents indicated support for more flexible work space in the town centre where workers could access office space, equipment and training while 17% disagreed and 28% were of no opinion. 78% of respondents were in support of initiatives to encourage visitors into the town centre, while 60% of respondents recognised the value of enhanced town centre digital connectivity to promote local business and visitor experience.

Whilst it is acknowledged that there were a number of respondents who did not value or had no opinion with regard to enhanced employment space in the town centre a greater number of respondents were able to support this as a means to enhance town centre activity and footfall. For this reason, the initiatives outlined in Chapter 4.4 Activity and Land Use will be retained.

d) Historic Environment
Care of the historic environment and buildings is considered an essential element to the re-imagining of the town centre. The significant benefits it can bring to the perception of the town centre are recognised throughout the comments received on the on-line survey.

e) Re-opening of the railway station.
The on-line survey (Q2.5) asked if a new railway station would be beneficial. 88% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the railway station would be beneficial while 4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. When asked (Q4(1) of the on-line survey) respondents indicated a 91% level of support for reinstating the railway station. This was reflected in the responses received to the interactive map with 62.5% of respondents supporting the opening of the railway station. When invited through the on-line survey and interactive map to comment the following broad themes emerged:

1. The station would be a great opportunity for residents to travel not only within Devon but the greater South West and beyond, without the need to use the car and the associated carbon emissions produced.

2. Improved rail connections apply to those visiting the town as much as those living in and around Cullompton; improving economic activity.

3. Improved rail connections allows a fast and efficient service for students who use the College and University campuses in Exeter, Taunton and beyond.

4. Ensure the service is affordable, convenient with adequate and affordable parking.

5. Improved pedestrian and cycle links, and town service bus are essential to its success.

6. Improve the existing station of Tiverton Parkway so monies can be better invested into social infrastructure such as doctor, dental and educational facilities.

7. People will not walk / cycle to the station. It will cause traffic chaos along Station Road and J28.

Whilst the concerns of respondents relating to investment into the existing (Tiverton Parkway) railway station are acknowledged, the masterplan confirms that a limited amount of car parking will be made available at the new proposed station and the establishment of an 'interchange hub' facilitating transfer between rail, bus, car, walk and cycle will be provided (Chapter 4.2). More specifically, the masterplan promotes pedestrian and cycle links along Station Road (Chapter 4.2), within the key opportunity sites and between the new rail station and CCA fields (Chapter 4.6). Overall, the response to the re-opening of the railway station indicates an over-whelming level of support. As such, the proposals outlined in Chapters 4.2 Routes and Movement and within key opportunity sites 1, 2, and 5 will be retained. Clearly, this project is progressing well with the station forecast to open by May 2025, but the further policy support provided by this masterplan to the station re-opening project will further support the Council and its partners in demonstrating is continued firm commitment to accelerating and delivering this strategically important project for Cullompton.

f) Enhancement of Fore Street.
The on-line survey wanted to understand respondents' views on the enhancement of the High Street.

Responses to the on-line survey, Q2(1), indicated a 95% level of support for the enhancement of the High Street with 85% of respondents seeking an improved pedestrian environment in the following order of importance:
1. Wider pavements;
2. Pedestrianisation;
3. No or less parking and a one-way system;
4. Time restricted deliveries, restricted access, improved public realm in the form of resurfacing, café seating or benches and 'greening of the high street in the form of trees and planting.

The interactive map also invited comments on the enhancement of Fore Street. 72% of those responding supported the enhancement of the high street with comments following a broad theme of:
- Climate change: installation of solar panels; planting / shading.
- Enhanced pedestrian environment: wider pavements; pedestrianisation or one-way system; restricted and enforced parking and deliveries, de-cluttering, shared surfacing (removal of high kerbs).

- Historic high street: shop front enhancement; surface materials to reflect historic setting whilst improving footfall, business activity and general safety.
- Social spaces: public art, seating, water features, planting, multiple pedestrian crossing places, a cleaner and greener (trees, planning, hanging baskets) high street with weekend road closures.

A number of respondents both through the on-line survey and interactive map, felt able to support the enhancement of Fore Street but only following the construction of the relief road &/or an additional motorway junction. Others were concerned that the loss of road space and/or widened pavements would limit access to or rely on the private ownership of land.

The level of support for the enhancement of Fore Street nonetheless remained high. As such, the proposals outlined in Chapters 4.2 Routes and Movement, including the pedestrian / cycle and vehicle network, 4.3 Public Realm and Open Space including improving the High Street / Courts and Lanes / Pocket Parks and 4.6 Fore Street will be retained.

g) Re-design of the Higher Bull Ring.
The on-line survey (Q2.6) asked if respondents would like the Higher Bullring as an enhanced community space. 86% expressed a level of support, whilst 8% disagreed and the remaining 6% had no opinion. Respondents expressed a preference towards its use in the following order of importance:
   - Improvements in and the frequency of markets.
   - Outdoor dining and seating
   - Events including music, performance and busking
   - No or less traffic and / or parking, planting, pop up kiosks, art installations and social spaces.

   More specific comments on the Higher Bullring related to:
   - The orientation of the sun and relocation of the vehicular route to the shaded side of the Bull Ring.
   - The importance and celebration of the historical importance of the Higher Bull Ring.
   - Redevelopment of the Harlequins site as a thoroughfare and community space.
   - A family friendly, cosmopolitan central space that encourages day and early evening use.

   The interactive map also invited comments on the enhancement of the Higher Bull Ring. 66% of those responding supported the enhancement of it commenting that it should act as a centre piece to draw people into the town centre. Others commented that it can only be sustainable once the relief road is constructed.

   Acknowledging the level of support, the proposals detailed in the masterplan at Chapters 4.2 Routes and Movement, 4.3 Public realm and open space, 4.5 Environment and Sustainability and 4.6 The Higher Bull Ring are retained.

h) Climate Change.
The means and ways for the town centre to support and respond to climate change is interwoven throughout the masterplan with opportunities for sustainable modes of transport, carbon neutral ways of construction and enhanced biodiversity, and a re-imagined town centre with enhanced uses, activities and public spaces considered in some detail. Chapter 4.6 of the masterplan introduces 8 sites that currently have varying levels of active use. Enhancement of them may bring a variety of benefits including benefits for the climate. The interactive map dealt specifically with these sites and received the following responses:

Alexandria Industrial Estate.
62.5% of respondents to the interactive map expressed support for the identification of Alexandria Industrial estate as a Regeneration and Enhancement Area; 37.5% disagreed. The masterplan outlines opportunities for it to create an enhanced arrival point into the town for the new rail station with enhanced pedestrian and cycle links possibly through the estate, enhanced River Culm frontage with regeneration of uses operating from the estate. Comments made specifically through the interactive map generally supported the proposal on the understanding that it does not result in the loss of existing businesses and is not financed by the public purse.

Railway Station.
As detailed above 91% of respondents (via the online survey) supported the opening of the railway station. With 62.5% of those commenting via the interactive map supporting re-opening.

Improvements to cycling between the new rail station and the town centre.
78% of respondents to the interactive map expressed support for improved cycle links to the new rail station with many seeing the benefits of it for short journeys. A hazardous cycle and pedestrian environment along near roads was expressed as the need to segregate cycles from pedestrians.

Tannery Site.
66% of respondents to the interactive map expressed support for the identification of the former Tannery site for redevelopment. A wide range of comments were received through the interactive map and made reference to opportunities for housing, employment and community functions including artisan teaching spaces and workshops, a site for a public park and /or swimming pool.

Fore Street enhancement.
72% of respondents to the interactive map expressed support for the enhancement of Fore Street. With further details provided at Paragraph 3.1(f) (above).

Leat Footbridge.
68% of respondents expressed support for the reinstatement of the former iron bridge over the leat through the interactive map. Comments specifically

received on the reinstatement of the former bridge are mixed; many concerned about its expense and the level of use it will receive whilst others saw benefits for enhanced connections between the CCA fields and town centre. Construction should not increase flood risk.

The Old Cinema site.
54% of respondents to the interactive map expressed support for the re-development and/or enhancement of the former cinema site. Comments received site saw value in its use as a multi functional events and activity space to enhance footfall and activity. Financial cost and viability were seen as a concern.

In summary, the key opportunity sites generally received a high level of support through the interactive map ranging from 78% to 54%. This too was reflected in the on-line survey (Appendix 1) with support ranging from 91% to 61%. Whilst the concerns of respondents are acknowledged, officers recommend the retention of the opportunity sites identified in Chapter 4.6 of the masterplan.

3.2 The 8 key findings (a-h detailed above) and the comments received on the 8 key opportunity sites are acknowledged. All will be retained within the Masterplan SPD. Changes proposed within the Masterplan SPD are detailed within Appendix 2 and offer text changes.

3.3 In support of the Draft Masterplan SPD (Appendix 3) is a Draft Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan will sit as an addendum to the Masterplan SPD and identifies the priority projects, as identified through the Masterplan SPD, that the Council is keen to see progressed. Under pinning the Delivery Plan is a set of cross-year targets outlining what could take place, when and how (Appendix 5).

4.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment / Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening

4.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) (Appendix 6) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) (Appendix 7) is required in accordance with regulations and Directives on any plan or programme prepared for town and country planning or land use purposes or which sets the framework for future development consent for certain projects. An HRA and SEA formed part of the Stage 2 public consultation material. No specific comments relating to them were received.

5.0 Planning Policy and Advisory Group (PPAG)

5.1 PPAG considered this report at the meeting on 17th January 2023. Members of PPAG had no specific comments to make. The Ward Member expressed support for the enlarged process of public consultation; including on-line interactive maps. PPAG supported the recommendations as set out in this report.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 A thorough analysis of the consultation responses has been undertaken and amendments accordingly proposed to the Draft Masterplan SPD as detailed in Appendix 2. The draft Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan once adopted will provide a comprehensive framework to guide development in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. Once adopted it will achieve full weight in decision making as a material planning consideration.

Contact for more information: Christie McCombe, Area Planning Officer
01884 234277
cmccombe@middevon.gov.uk

Background Papers: The Adopted Local Plan (2013-2033):
https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning-policy/adopted-local-plan-and-policies-maps/

Examination submission version Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan
https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/348271/cnp-final-submission-version-aug19.pdf

Public consultation material:
https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning-policy/masterplanning/public-consultation-cullompton-town-centre-masterplan-and-delivery-plan/

Cabinet 5 April 2018
Scrutiny 30 September 2019
Cabinet 16 January 2020
Cabinet 9th July 2020

Circulation of the Report: Members of Cabinet

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CULLOMPTON

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Appendix:
Public consultation report

August 2021

Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Public Consultation

88 survey responses

X events

X map comments

The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan, once adopted by the District Council, will form the basis for the regeneration of the town; enhancing the town's economic prospects and providing a clear strategy to ensure the town meets its full potential as an attractive and thriving town post COVID-19 and into the future. The Draft Masterplan has been prepared by consultants in the context of the major projects planned in and around Cullompton. These include:

- North West Cullompton Urban Extension;
- The new homes allocated to the east of the town;
- The proposed Culm Garden Village;
- The High Street Heritage Action Zone which will see investment into Cullompton's historic high street; and
- The potential reopening of Cullompton railway station.

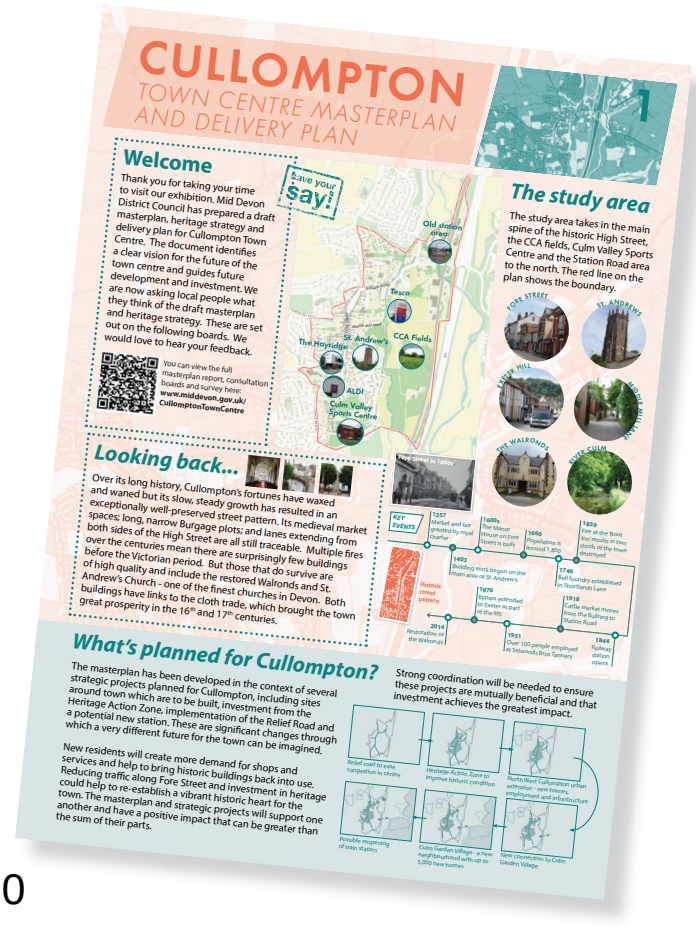
A public consultation was held between 28 June and 13 August 2021. During this period, people could view the document and consultation boards online and could submit comments or responses via:

- The online survey
- Directly on to the online interactive map
- Paper copies of a the survey at the Hayridge Centre from 28 June to 13 August 2021 during normal working hours.
- By posting a written response.

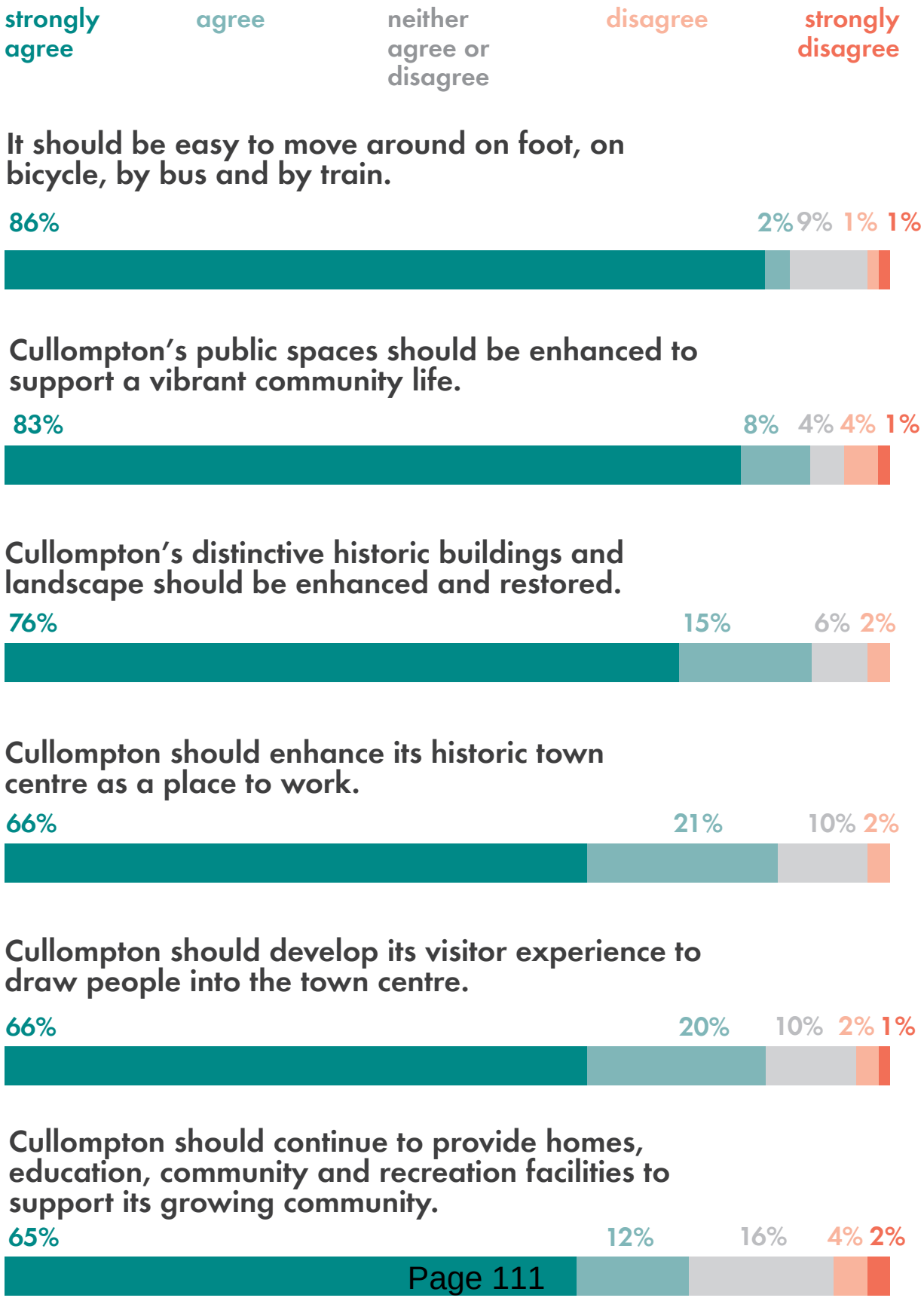
There were also drop in events at The Walronds, Tesco and the Hayridge Centre. This is the final stage of public consultation ahead of the District Council being able to formally adopt the masterplan.

An estimated X people were engaged in the public consultation. 88 responses were made to the survey online and in person; the feedback is reported in this document. In addition X comments were made via the interactive map.

This feedback is in addition to the first round of engagement which took place between February and April 2020, which included a workshop with 50 community members and local stakeholders, four town centre events, 55 survey responses and engagement with local school children. The comments raised at this first stage have been given full consideration by the District Council and incorporated into the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan.



Do you agree with the proposed vision for the town centre?



Is there anything missing from the vision?

- The reopening of the train station is really important for locals to get to Bristol, London and Exeter for work.
- Woodland accessible by foot from Cullompton
- Patience this plan should not be approved or incur additional cost until the impact of the relief road and train station if happening are quantifiable.
- Train station
- More easily accessible and reasonably priced parking.
- Stop building houses
- Need to stop building houses and wasting money on things like 19 high street, should stop employing people who don't do the work the the cemetery
- You can't exclude cars totally - maybe encourage more charging points? But don't pretend they don't exist.
- No more homes required, but amenities to support those we have with adequate off road parking
- Train station
- Cullompton should be GREEN in every sense
- Improper parking blights the town centre. Off road parking much be improved.
- Lack of clarity regarding traffic control measures
- Deaf friendly shops, services and community
- Street cafes
- Maybe some more parking
- Car parking is paramount and disabled spaces in the high street
- Supporting more shops and the market
- A more welcoming entry to the town and no right turn at the traffic lights onto Willand road
- Stop building on good agricultural land - we don't need thousands of new houses
- The infrastructure and roads are in dire need of attention.
- TRAIN STATION
- Schools should be thought about before building more houses
- Creation of high quality parks and open green spaces which rival the quality parks that exist in Tiverton.
- Promote local businesses and offer support
- The project should be collaborative with the people of the town involving them in the doing. by being activlty involved they gain skills, relationships, and feel ownership. This feels like a project being done to the town very laudable but not owned. see the blue house project http://www.jankattein.com/blue-house-yard-up-running/
- Strict rules for high street landlords to maintain their buildings.
- Get some double yellows on the outer bypass where needed and make the town one way, down through the town and back on the outer bypass and down Tiverton lane
- Parking space for the many town centre dwellings
- No cycle paths, many people would

commute to Exeter if there was a safe cycle path. Cullompton high street should be pedestrian friendly e.g

- Improve safety and celebrate multicultural population to make all inhabitants feel welcome and safe
- Electric charging points in the main car park
- Night times are badly managed. There are a number of drinking establishments that are not mindful of people living in the town centre. In a short period of living in the centre, we have had to call 999 due to fighting a number of times. The pubs are binge drinking establishments, not inviting public houses in a traditional and historical centre. The Manor Hotel is the root of the issue currently
- There could be more reference to how the Visions and Objectives inter-relate. For example historic and archaeological sites might be green space, or the green space might be the setting of a Listed Building. Key views can be obtained from St Andrew's Hill, which has the Scheduled Roman fort on top of it.
- The people in charge allow about 6 antisocial people to park as and when they like in the Main Fore Street all day on a Saturday as an example and block access to residents property in the conservation area. I won't matter what happens because these 6 people will just make pollution worse for all driving around them, trying to pass their vehicle on the pavement or smelling their rubbish / dog mess on the wrong days.
- The neglected town Leat needs improvement. Together with source weir, pathways and interconnecting ways.
- Don't forget car users - they won't go away! Public toilets - at several points in the town.
- More natural features tree shrub borders and flowering containers - public seats off the main street - more shade.

Do you support the Masterplan for the town centre?

strongly agree | agree | neither agree or disagree | disagree | strongly disagree

Do you agree that opportunities should be pursued to enhance the pedestrian experience along the high street?



Do you support enhanced cycle and pedestrian provision throughout the town?



Would you support improved cycle and pedestrian provision along the Station Road?



Do you support opportunities to improve the bus users experience in the town centre?



Do you agree a new rail station for the town centre would be beneficial?



Would you like to see the Higher Bullring as an enhanced community space?



strongly agree | agree | neither agree or disagree | disagree | strongly disagree

Would you like to see improved pedestrian and cycle links between the town centre and the CCA Fields?



Do you agree with the pocket parks identified?



Would you like to see a greater variety of uses in the town centre including leisure, food and drink, retail, residential and employment?



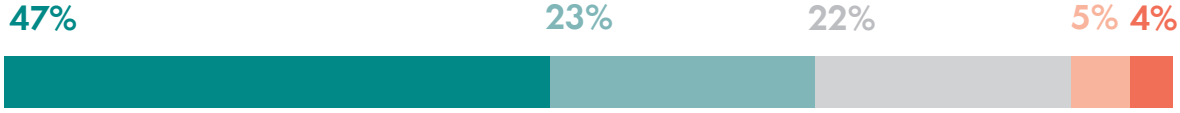
Do you agree that initiatives to encourage visitors into the town centre are desirable?



Would you like to see more flexible work space in the town centre where workers can access office space, equipment and training?



Would you like to have town centre WiFi provision that would promote local businesses and enhance the visitor experience?



Higher Bullring

strongly agree | agree | neither agree or disagree | disagree | strongly disagree

Would you like to see the Higher Bullring as an enhanced community space?



If so, how would you like to use the space?

The bubbles show the most frequent themes. The full record of responses is shown on the next page.

- 1 Markets (improved or more)
- 2 Outdoor dining/ seating
- 3 Events
- 3 Music/ perform/ busking
- 4 No or less traffic or parking
- 4 Pop ups
- 4 Trees and planting
- 4 Art installations
- 4 Social space

High Street

strongly agree | agree | neither agree or disagree | disagree | strongly disagree

Would you like to see any pedestrian environment improvements in the high street?



If so, what improvements would you like to see?

The bubbles show the most frequent themes. The full record of responses is shown on the next page.



Higher Bullring

How would you like to use the space?

- Farmer's Markets, events, dining/drinking space outdoors.
- Social space
- There needs to be more employment locally not community initiatives that require funding.
- Music, busking, stalls for sellers.
- Outdoor events in Summer e.g. food festivals. Pop up catering and outdoor eating spaces.
- How about you look after what is already there
- Continue to use as market/ pop up shop area
- Antiques Market
- town square, markets, socialising
- A much more diverse market promoting local produce, products, arts and crafts. Space for entertainment, outside seating area's.
- Events
- Permanent structures for market stall holders
- No traffic market stalls seats
- Outdoor cafe/bar/restaurant space
- Temporary sites for food vendors and seating
- less intimidating, using nature to soften the noise from traffic and people congregating to make it deaf friendly
- Outside eating area
- Local businesses and small businesses expanding their companies
- Markets, open restaurants space, shops and restaurants being able to use the pavements
- More benches for people to sit on and the bus stop moved.
- More market traders, music, outside seating for cafes, artists displaying their work, street theatre
- More market days , entertainment , eating areas
- Continue the farmers market
- More markets and provision to run car boot sales etc at weekends.
- It would be nice to have a Christmas Market leading up to Christmas
- Market enlargement, displays, social gatherings, performing arts, charity events
- Restaurants,cafes,bars,shops.
- Weekly market place expanded to see more local producers and trades.
- "Entertainment area, bands, singers, musicians, street players etc.
"
- Permanent market stalls that pop up shops can use too
- Shops, stalls, be proud of our town
- Providing more opportunities for those on the edge of society
- Sponsor music and entertainment

- This space was historically created as a market place and has retained all the hallmarks of that. the benefits of open space are that it can be used flexibly. serious consideration should be given to where the the open space is as it stands the opens space is where the morning sun is so markets in the morning are great however as the sun moves this becomes a dark and shadowed spot whilst the other side of the street gets better light and sun in the afternoon evening. Perhaps the relocation of the vehicle route to the east side of the bull ring should be a consideration
- Attractive seating area with parking spaces removed and open area created
- Less parking. More art and culture needed.
- More of a community space for experiences and festivals. Business to be able to expand into outdoor spaces
- Do not send bikes down Station road, use middle mill lane or higher mill lange and out through tesco carpark, keep biles and cars off the same bits of road, its not rocket science
- Market and festivals
- Larger market on high Street, get rid of the cars and it will be a nicer shopping experience.
- Weekly weekend markets, community events, art installations
- We are missing a greengrocers, a nice wine shop, a good coffee shop. We need somewhere that is family friendly and cosmopolitan. And stays open past lunch on Saturdays
- Higher Bullring is an important late historic feature in its own right, as well as containing various historic structures and buildings. This heritage should be presented and celebrated.
- Move the road closer to the East by using the parking spaces and have all the people area as one with out a road through the middle. Stop the same 6 antisocial people taking parking spaces on Festival days and put in a bicycle rack, (The Council have been “going”this for over a year. Prosecute the cyclists that cycle on the pavement and stop people parking on the Crossing, we all know they do and it is dangerous.
- More activity over a longer time space. I would like to see hustle and bustle all day every day, evenings too, for local people and visitors, including weekends.
- Trees /cafes / market
- Better market provision
- More outdoor cafes - better planting opportunities and enhanced market. Better signage.
- The site of the old Harlequins could be developed into a green thoroughfare with seating and gardens to provide a pleasant respite area for people to enjoy a lunch break, meeting place for friends etc. Soft play place for children under 13. Somewhere for teenagers.

Higher Street

What improvements would you like to see?

- Wider pavements, less traffic.
- Solar panels
- Deliveries should be time restricted to avoid rush hour
- No parking at all and loading/unloading times limited and strictly enforced. More diverse shopping.
- Wider pavements
- Reduce parking, widen pavements.
- How about pavements are not cluttered up
- Fencing barriers between road and pavement
- Double red lines and cameras to stop traffic parking in high street.
- wider pavements where possible, reduced traffic, a one-way system (already voted fr by Town Council), improved pavements for mobility scooters and push chairs
- “Shop fronts made more inviting, wider footpaths, better signage to areas of interest. Access only for delivery vehicles, residents vehicles or a one way system?“
- better pavements - cohesive, more in keeping with the historic nature of the town
- Reduce pavement obstructions including cars parked on pavements and at junctions.
- As per previous answer, improved road traffic management and control.
- Make it one way until bypass is built then pedestrianise and impose a weight limit up old Tiverton road Langlands and Swallow way
- There needs to be some safety measures outside mrs campbells house next to the Baptist church. There have been several near misses with cars rolling across the road into her wall. Needs some barriers to prevent injury to pedestrians
- Shaded seats
- Wider footpaths and minimal traffic
- Reduce to 1 way and widen pavements
- Make it pedestrian
- More trees
- Pedestrianise the high street
- No parking at all. Camera can be fitted to Fine people from parking.
- No parking on the high street at all from 8am until 9am and 5pm until 7pm also remove the traffic lights , there for saving our community field as it’s for the people of Cullompton
- Widen the pavement make it a one way system no deliveries at peak times.
- Wider pavements,also would be nice for the pavements to be tarmac, at the moment parts of the pavements are very slipper when it is wet,and also uneven in places.
- Removal of the high curb stones, wider pavements on one side, encouraging shape to paint their frontages
- No cars allowed
- Once relief road has been built, remove all vehicular access to the high street. Cafe’s with seating down the road, restaurants with seating on the street etc.

- “I would like to see the town centre pedestrianised with cafes offering outside seating.“
- The footpaths need widening up near Aldi into town. You can’t socially distance as only room for one person!
- Better pavements, maintained properly
- “Wider pavement
  Better quality pavement which is more aesthetically pleasing Regeneration of shop fronts “
- Wider pavements
- Weekend road closures. Shops with flowers outside and supporting businesses with free parking
- wider pavemtn /shared surface see italian hill towns and the relationship with people and traffic
- Wider pavements
- Reduce traffic - one way or pedestrianise
- less dog shit would be a start, all in all it is good, wide paths and multiple crossing points
- Cleaner buildings, no parking on high Street, get rid of all the cars.
- Make it one way or pedestrianise
- Wider footpaths, more greenery
- Enhancing pedestrian access will enhance understanding, appreciaition and hopefully conservation of the built historic environment.
- Pavements for pedestrian to cyclists or vehicle parking. No parking on the crossing, and please don’t tell me people shouldn’t because we know that just stop this dangerous parking before it kills someone.
- Relief Road needs urgent progress, then all these attributes could be pursued. One cannot be against any of them.
- Proper pedestrian crossings in Higher Bullring - Baptist Church / St Andrews area.
- Fountain, art, benches, cafe
- Make Fore Street delivery and access to lanes only. No through traffic except maybe buses.
- Wider, more even pavements. Easier road crossing.
- Preferably traffic free - limited hours for deliveries. More shade.
- More trees, more flower tubs

Sustainability

The masterplan introduces ways that the town can respond to climate change and move towards becoming a sustainable town including enhancing biodiversity, shifting towards sustainable means of transport (cycling, walking and public transport) and embracing carbon neutral ways of construction. Do you have any comments on the environment and sustainability strategy for Cullompton Town centre?

- All of the points mentioned in the plan are valuable, as long as they are implemented meaningfully and maintained. New developments should not be allowed to "tack on" or ignore their climate/environment responsibilities either. They must be closely monitored.
- Have free parking walking distance away from the high street so that the high street is not so busy
- If streets had dedicated safe bike lanes, I would be very likely to use a bike
- All public buildings to have solar or other environmental energy.
- All new development should go beyond legislation to include swift bricks or similar to encourage breeding birds. Green space development should incorporate insect-friendly planting and insect hotels - involve local school children and consult wildlife groups. Walking/cycling routes should allow for people with disabilities. Public transport should try to be integrated for convenience. Encourage car share schemes. Make Cullompton plastic free and encourage local businesses to use low carbon, fair trade and plastic free. Establish community groups and community champions. Community rubbish clear up groups.
- Look after what we have and stop wasting money
- Again, don't ignore cars. If you want to draw visitors most will come by car for sometime yet. There needs to be suitable parking and as I said before, possibly more charging points..
- All homes should have solar panels
- Realistically we will need personal transport in the form of cars for some time because we are living in a rural setting and public transport will never address all our needs. So we need to accommodate electric vehicles and have the infrastructure to support them, whilst also watching for what other options may appear e,g, hydrogen etc
- Anything to help
- Build a proper relief road east of the motorway instead of destroying the open space we have.
- Once again, road traffic management and control, pollution levels are very bad, pollution levels are very bad.
- We need to make use of nature based solutions to manage flooding
- There needs to be more parks, not just for children but garden style parks for adults where they can walk, relax and have quiet calm place to be themselves.
- Make it pedestrian
- Shop owners are not maintains their fronts and signs, these should be enforced as it makes the town look poor.
- Cycle routes that are safe, even for children so they can walk and cycle around the town and to school
- Yep, stop building house in Every nook and cranny in the town centre, all future homes should have solar panels,
- Less cars
- Stop the ridiculous levels of building and contain our community
- I think cycling through the town is so dangerous with all the traffic and hgv that go through, it would be nice to have a cycle

path,but the roads and pavements are not suitable.

- The secondary school students should be involved so that they have more pride on the town and stop dropping plastic and glass everywhere.
- Offer people loyalty cards in businesses to stop them going out of town
- Getting rid of the traffic and encouraging walking and cycling would be a good start
- Pedestrianise the high street for less pollution
- Reduce vehicles in the town centre. Encourage more public transport use and develop more extensive cycle routes
- lead by example, lets have all the council vans being electric, lets force all the buses to be electric, set an example for the town to follow. Set up a free or low cost school bus system for the town, get all the cars away from schools at the start and end of the school days
- No 19 higher bullring should be part of the project
- Pedestrianisation is the only way to do this.
- The station would be a great opportunity for residents to travel not only within Devon (Exeter, Torbay, Plymouth, Barnstaple and, shortly, Okehampton) but opens up the greater South West and beyond without using the car and the associated carbon emissions being produced (especially if the line is electrified). Obviously, these improvements will apply to those visiting the town. It also allows a fast and efficient service for students who use the College and University campuses in Exeter.
- Way to go. Add a cycle hire shop
- Fix the pollution and traffic issues first and foremost
- Proposals to enhance the natural environment need to be balanced with respect for the historic environment, including archaeology. Trees, water management features and other landscaping involving groundworks coupled damage sensitive Roman and medieval archaeological deposits.
- Too many people pretend they are not parked because they wait with the engine or or are rude when you ask them to turn off the engine. Night life s fine but take a way delivery drivers and customers cause a big problem on weekend evenings, no wheelchair access to nearby property because they are only”5” minutes. The problem is another 10 people selfishly think the same. Do tourists want to visit the Church with waste containers / dog mess drug butt ends on route, and loud music from cars pretending not to be parked?
- Careful thinking and consultation (careful, not slow) resulting in sustainability. More sustainable power sources on buildings etc.
- Approve of plans suggested

Heritage Strategy

The Heritage Strategy for Cullompton looks to use the historic character of Cullompton as a foundation to shape a distinctive identity for the town. Do you have any comments on the Heritage Strategy for Cullompton Town Centre?

- Cullompton has a history that lends itself well to arts and crafts. Look at establishing a craft centre - studios for local artists and a co-operative gallery. Get the schools engaged in paper/fabric based activities e.g. making banners. Consider making the railway station heritage in the long term (ie not using shipping containers! Birmingham's Moor Street is a good example).
- Like the crap heritage trail .
- Look up, we have wonderful buildings, many Grade II, hidden behind ugly shop fronts
- Can't come soon enough
- Pie in the sky. Great ideas but we will be starved of the necessary cash as usual.
- I live within the conservation area off of the town centre, I would like to hear more about enhancement around the area of Church Stree, Pye Corner, Gravel Walk and Queens Square.
- Heritage is the old tanning town not the commuter town it has become due to over development stop this now before itâ€™s too late
- Should be enhanced
- The nature of the town is one where the buildings built before planning are of more interest and and character than those built controlled by the planning process it is my belief that the heritage strategy should embrace the new especially in view of climate change impacts plus it adds a contemporary layer to the fabric making it more interesting rather than a poor pastiche
- Something needs to be done to tackle the issue of some business owners who refuse to improve the exterior of their properties. There is a lot of potential to enhance what is already there and now assistance to do so in the form of grants, so no excuse.
- Fully supported. And all PVC windows on the high street should be replaced with traditional versions.
- Pull all the old taty looking buildings down, cullompton has been a shit hole for the last 35 years, all the talk never changes anything
- Shouldn't just be shops on the main street
- It's exactly the right thing to do with seven Grade II* listed buildings in one small town - surely that is unheard of! But that comes with it a need to support owners of these properties with both knowledge and funding to keep these buildings in positive usage and condition
- The proposed treatment of the built historic environment and the historic town plan, particularly the burgage plots, is very positive and welcome. However, one of the town's most important archaeological sites, the Roman Fort on St Andrews Hill, does not get much of a mention. There is reference to looking at grants to get it off the at Risk Register, but a lot more could be done to raise awareness of this site and turn it into a real asset for the town. This would have synergies with a number of other themes and objectives, such as new green space, enhanced pedestrian access, key views and attracting visitors. More could also be made of the town's historic water features, its Leats and channels, mill ponds and water meadows. As interesting/ attractive features in their own right, but also linked to their biodiversity and potential to contribute to modern water management initiatives.

- Give the Town Council some teeth when they object to a development. We will have no meeting place bigger than 12 left soon when it is all flats, and wheelie bring and cars on the pavement.

- Always need more information available - enlarging the existing boards/QR links/ leaflets. Local blue plaque type scheme for both people and histories of specific buildings. Plaques to indicate which buildings are listed.

The Masterplan identifies eight key spatial opportunities for Cullompton.

Please select all that you support.

91% support

Reinstating the Railway Station.

83% support

Enhancing Fore Street with wider pavements, new surfacing and de-cluttering.

79% support

Improving cycling links between the proposed new rail station and the town centre.

76% support

Redesign the Bullring as a flexible and enhanced public space

70% support

Enhancing Alexandria Industrial Estate as an arrival point, complementing the Railway Station proposals.

67% support

Promoting the Old Cinema site to be brought back into use.

64% support

Reinstating the former ironbridge crossing over the Leat near St Andrews Church.

61% support

Reinstating the former ironbridge crossing over the Leat near St Andrews Church.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us in relation to the Town Centre Masterplan?

- The railway station is crucial to attract new locals, visitors and businesses alike
- The SDP focusses on encouraging travellers to break their journeys at the town and have an enhanced experience beyond what the service station can offer. However, could more be done to encourage people to break their journeys for 24 hours or more? There is nothing about improving the hospitality industry locally. Cullompton's location also lends itself to becoming a destination town for good restaurants/pubs and/or arts and crafts. Highlight that it can be a hub for exploring both the North and South coasts as well as Dartmoor and Exeter City. (Note: we are moving to Cullompton shortly.)
- Look after what we have and stop wasting money. Employ people that actually work and do their job instead of talking and going on a computer
- Don't group cyclists with pedestrians. I would support more pedestrian areas, but too many cyclists are disrespectful and spoil it for the majority. I am therefore forced to answer strongly disagree to many questions which include cycling provision, this skewing my answers.
- We need footfall in the town centre. Ultimately this means we need people living and working in and near to the town centre
- It needs to be more inclusive, that means finding ways to stop people congregating on pavements restricting disabled access and to reduce noise and make the entire community deaf friendly so it becomes less intimidating.
- Please do it
- More family friendly areas. Parks for all ages, not just the very little ones.
- Don't allow the tannery to be developed for housing
- Improve the footpath to Willand. The road is fast and vehicles often speed down the road. It is easily walkable and improving the footpath would be a great addition to Cullompton and Willand.
- I also back a swimming pool for Cullompton
- The HAZ grant scheme needs to be really pushed in order to convince business owners to individually make a difference to the attractiveness of the town as this will increase footfall and encourage more businesses to move to the town.
- "you do know that the old Cullompton station had 2 tunnels either side of the station road bridge, so that trains could use the sidings, these where blocked up and built over when the railway bridge was widened many years ago. To open the station back up will require replacing that bridge.

  Best thing for the town would be to buy the carpark at the site of the old court house and let the public use it without risk of jumped up fines, we all know the owner is forcing people to park else where by fining people for not parking straight or any other jumped up reason, so he can say no one uses it can I build house on it. You wait"
- Mural on last building of Fore St, overlooking the car park as a visual welcome to the town centre
- Can't make a silk purse out of a sows ear
- Pedestrians only in town
- Opposes the NW housing development that will lose valuable beautiful green spaces for current inhabitants

- The high street doesn't work at the moment. Inevitably cars, vans and lorries need to pull over on Fore St and it causes chaos. There's not enough parking to accommodate more visitors to the centre, not helped by The Hayridge Centre car park being run by a horrible private company. Not sure how widening Fore St will help with the traffic chaos. We live in the Merchant's House and have nowhere to park and it's really tricky.

- Just as mentioned above - more positive action for the Roman fort and more integration of the landscape, streetscape, natural, built and historic environment across the themes. Also the importance of Cullompton as an Anglo-Saxon church/town could be brought out.

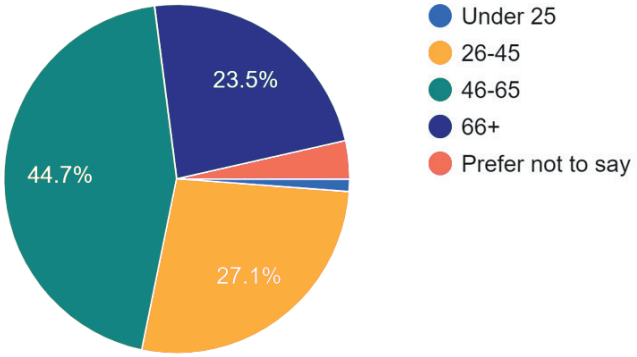
- Did any one ask the owner of the Cinema his plans? How will the bridge across the Leat help? you still have to get to middle mill lane to gain access to the church land. Any one ask them? Make the pavement wider? Is this just a sneaky hidden way to say make the road narrower and one way? The 6 anti social people with their unchallenged right to park need to be told NO NO NO and fined if they can't understand we are planning to spend Millions because of them. So why are we spending all this money and not finding the no parking (all day) solution?

- It's all taking far too long. Dynamism required.

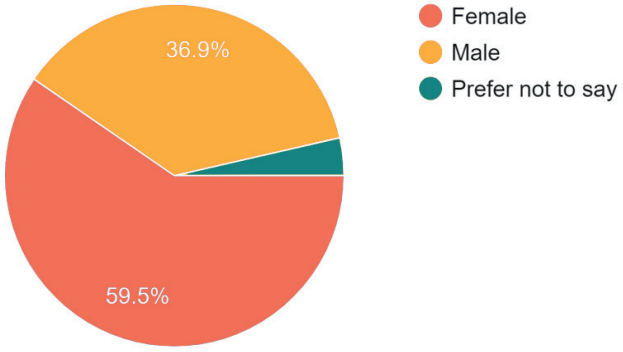
- If the town leat can't be reinstated (unlikely) make it clearer where it ran and why. Stop tarmacking pavements, do it properly with paving stones (no cobbles!). Railway station as proper transport hub/interchange. Move the service station down

Who took part?

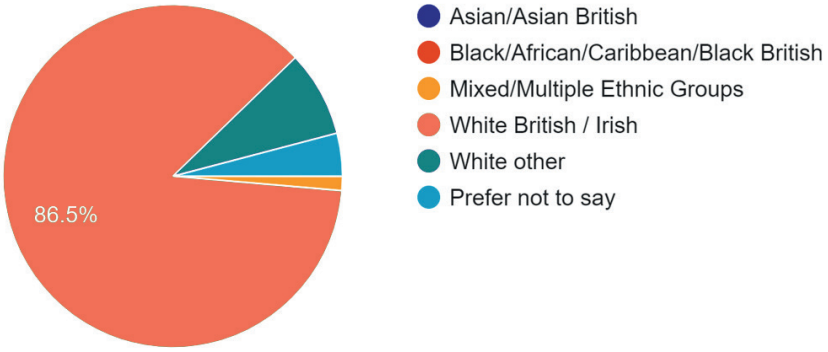
What is your age?



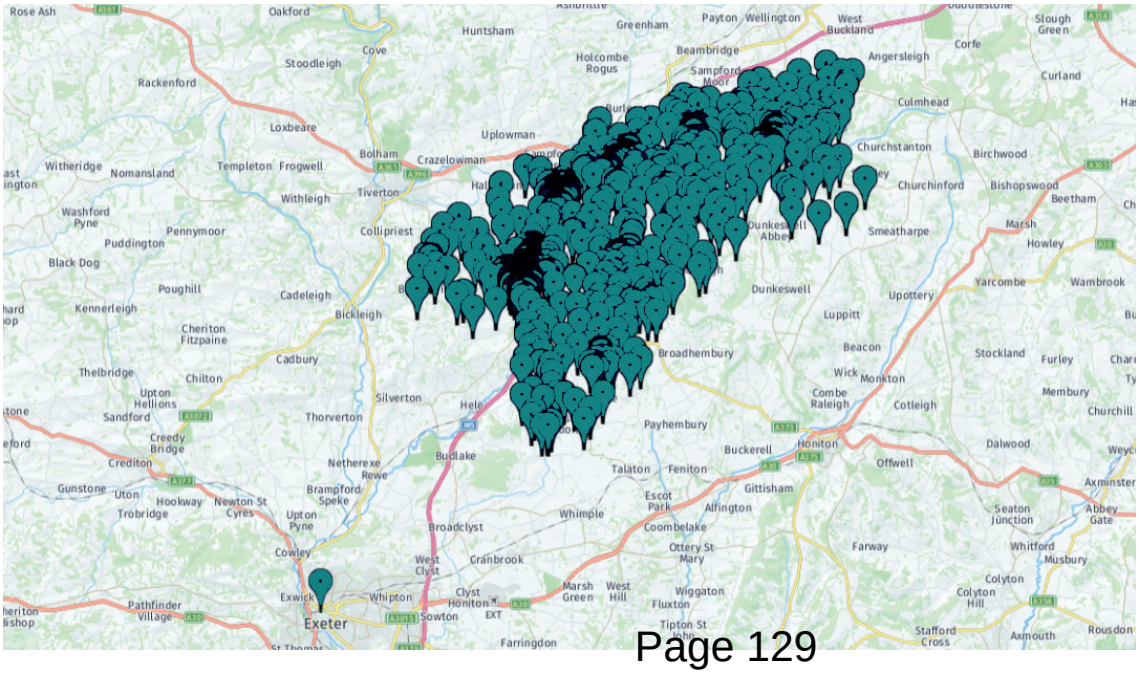
What is your gender?



What is your ethnicity?



What is your postcode?



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Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners accepts no responsibility for comments made by members of the community which have been reflected in this report.

Statutory & Other Consultee Comments

Appendix 2

Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan		
Consultee: Natural England	**Consultee Comment**	**Response**
Proposed pedestrian, cycle, leisure & recreational routes	Such routes provide an opportunity for multi-functional green spaces improve air quality, aid flood risk management and reduce noise pollution, as well as enhance biodiversity, ecological resilience and support more joined up habitat networks.	Noted
	We would welcome further detail to show the opportunities for nature and wildlife in the outline for the proposals; these routes may provide opportunities to form green corridors, enhancing local sites and improving connectivity, for instance.	Detail to be provided at planning application stage. Request for involvement noted.
	Include reference to Mid Devon's Green Infrastructure Plan.	Insert at end of para 4.2.21: and the Mid Devon Green Infrastructure Plan.
	Give further consideration to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites including links to habitats beyond the site.	The environmental value of sites proposed for development as key opportunity sites is included. However, their full potential including within the wider network of green links will be fully considered at planning application design stage
Biodiversity Net Gain	Where Masterplan proposals such as CCA Fields and The Bullring identify enhanced biodiversity through their delivery, we recommend reference to Biodiversity Metric. The tool Environmental Benefits from Nature has also been designed for use alongside the Biodiversity Metric.	Reference to biodiversity gain is reference throughout the masterplan document. The 'Biodiversity Matrix' and 'Environmental Benefits from Nature' will be fully applied at planning application stage. Specific mention is not required at this stage.
Landscape	The masterplan should recognise the impact that the 'key opportunities' may have on protected landscapes such as the Blackdown Hills AONB and East Devon AONB. Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs) and Natural Character Area (NCAs) profiles provide a context within which to assess development.	The 8 key opportunity sites are town centre focused and modest in scale. Their impact on protected landscapes such as the AONBs will be fully considered at design stage inc reference to LCAs & NCAs.

		Specific mention is made to the AONBs at paras 4.3.26 – 4.3.27.
Trees & Woodland	Any impact on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees should be considered in line with paragraph 175 of the NPPF	The impact of any proposals identified within the masterplan on ancient or veteran trees will be fully considered at design stage inc reference to Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory.
Community Engagement	We are pleased to see that local people have been given the opportunity to contribute to the masterplan from the outset	Noted
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening.	We agree with the conclusions set out in section 7.1 of the screening report that concludes that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan is not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and therefore advises that further Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required	Noted
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening.	We agree that strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) within the SEA Screening Opinion are unlikely to experience significant environmental effects from the proposed Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan	Noted
Consultee: Historic England	This is a very impressive report. It demonstrates an authoritative understanding of the town, its history and character and the issues which currently affect it, and sets out a comprehensive agenda for its future. We are particularly pleased to see such an extensive and well-informed section on the Heritage Strategy. This helps significantly in setting a spatially and thematically broad framework for the town which provides a useful context for the HSHAZ and other heritage related work which may complement and succeed it.	Noted.
	Liaison in the preparation of this report with the updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will ensure complementarity, and contribute to the creation of a holistic agenda for the heritage-led regeneration and sustainable management of the town.	Agreed
	Section 4.2.38 refers to a traffic analysis recently undertaken in association with roadworks in Fore St/High St. It would be useful to know these findings & what further assessment may be necessary to inform the public realm design work for the Bullring.	Available through Devon County Council and have been made available to the project team for the redesign of the Higher Bullring.

	Page 56 includes a section on Broadening Cullompton's Offer. This is a very short and simple section, and somewhat disappointing given the expansive and invigorating conversations regarding this to redefine and enhance the town's specific Unique Selling Point e.g capitalising on Devon tweed for promoting Cullompton's heritage and as an economic offer.	The masterplan seeks to set out physical parameters within which Cullompton's offer can be expanded. The offer e.g Devon tweed is dependent on market opportunities.
	We would encourage key messages highlighted within boxes or as bullet points to ensure that they have impact and are not lost in main bodies of text	Key messages are delivered by means of titles & sub headings, aims & objectives. A re-structured and formatted document is not consider necessary.
	We note in section 6.9.3 (p100) that a Delivery Action Plan will form an addendum to this masterplan. This would set out a time scale for interventions and delivery mechanisms. This is a very welcome and important part of the masterplan, especially if it can also identify priorities and delivery dependencies	Noted including need for time scales.
Consultee: NHS Primary care	The Cullompton masterplan includes proposals for a considerable number of new homes in the area. The increased population will require increased primary care capacity to provide medical services to these patients. NHS Devon CCG will engage with the Council via the Local Authority Engagement Team to negotiate S106 contributions towards the cost of increasing the required primary care infrastructure to meet the needs of the larger population.	Noted including invitation to negotiate at detailed planning application stage
Consultee: DCC (Historic) Environment group	Although the Roman Fort is outside the Town Centre Boundary it is briefly referred to in the Objectives of the Heritage Strategy (Section 5). We feel that there are significant opportunities to further integrate the fort for reason that it is a nationally important heritage asset, fundamental significance to the town's origins, is a dominant landscape feature and a significant open green space (albeit farmed). It has public rights of way running adjacent to it. It is also strategically located between the town centre and the new developments on the north and north-west of the town. This ties in with the Baseline Report (5.1 Emerging themes and objectives) where objectives for heritage/historic landscape - particularly (1) key views, green spaces, amenity roles, and (5) raising the profile of rural walks, support having more ambition for the future of the Roman fort. Include as a key opportunity site.	Whilst briefly referenced, the Roman Fort lies outside the boundary of the town centre masterplan. The Cullompton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan that is being updated alongside the adoption of this masterplan, gives the Roman Fort particular consideration.

	Para 4.3 (Public Realm and Open Space) could mention that the CCA Fields contain historic managed water meadows. These heritage assets could have a role in modern water management and biodiversity enhancement	Insert at para 4.3.2, second sentence: 'open fields, managed water meadows with an opportunity for biodiversity enhancement….'
	Paras 4.3.18-20: We welcome proposals to enhance the courts and lanes.	Noted.
	Paras 4.5.12-13: The management of floods and SUDS could reference Cullompton's long history of water management, including mill ponds, mill least, water meadows, urban water supply conduits. These could play a role in modern solutions.	Insert at the end of para 4.3.16: …'whilst acknowledging Cullompton's long history of water management in the form of town centre water channels, mill leats and ponds'.
	Para 4.6(3) There is some reference to heritage of the former Tannery Site but the focus is on the wildlife of the watercourse rather than it also being a significant heritage asset. This, and the importance of the Tanning industry to the town's development needs greater mention	Noted. The impact of development proposals upon the heritage of the tannery site and its relevance to the town's development will be fully considered at planning application design stage.
	Para 4.6.22 (Next Steps) should include a heritage impact and opportunity assessment, looking at the built heritage and below ground archaeological potential	The heritage impact including built heritage and below ground archaeological potential will be fully considered at planning application design stage.
	Chapter 5 (Heritage Strategy) does not mention the Roman fort in the introduction or on the Summary of Significance (though it is on the map, Fig.62). Despite being a nationally designated but at-Risk heritage asset, it is not referred to in 5.4 – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.	The Roman Fort lies outside the boundary of the town centre masterplan. The Cullompton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan that is being updated alongside the adoption of this masterplan, gives the Roman Fort full consideration.
	The fort is specifically referred to in the Heritage Strategy under Strategy for change, Aim 2 (Protect) with 5.8.11 containing the objective to remove the fort from Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. While we very much support this and the following Objective H, we feel that the key actions are limited in scope, relating principally to Historic England grant aid to the landowner. We feel that the Plan provides significant opportunities to link the objectives for the fort with	Reference included in the CAMP to the Roman origins of the town and how it has influenced the town historically. Additional reference to be included in the masterplan as follows: First sentence of para 5.8.4 to now read as follows:

	the wider aspirations for the town and could be much more ambitious. For example: A) Para 5.8 A Strategy for change, Aim 3 (Perceive), 5.8.4 – 5.8.5 do not mention the significance of the Roman origins of the town and the enduring influence of the fort and Roman road network. There is also, in consequence, a significant Roman archaeological resource in the town centre and on St Andrew's Hill. B) Para 5.8 A Strategy for change, Aim 3 (Promote), Objectives I to L do not mention the Roman fort. The Roman fort should be integrated into promotion of the town's heritage. Promotion and awareness raising will also be beneficial for the long-term protection (Aim 2) of the fort.	Cullompton's heritage has many layers, from the prehistoric settlement through to the Roman occupation in the Fort and associated civilian settlement. Objective I relates specifically to the historic buildings of Fore Street and the Bullring with Objective K making reference to Cullompton's distinct heritage including pop-up museum of archived materials. Specific reference to Cullompton's Roman past is not necessary at Objective I & K. However Objective J to be re worded as follows: increase awareness of heritage, including archaeology, in Cullompton's surrounding streets and spaces.
	Promotion and protection of the fort should be integrated with the Masterplan's Vision and Objectives, including: A) Historic Buildings and Landscapes (3) Protecting, enhancing, key views, green spaces – including seeking to provide more green space. B) Enticing Experience for Visitors (12) Raise profile and make use of attractions … and open spaces. (20) Link new development through a network of attractive spaces enabling connections to the town centre.	The updated CAMP provides additional protection to the setting of the Roman Fort to the east. However, the Point 1, bullet 3 of the Vision for the Masterplan Vision to read as follows: Protect, enhance and create key views to and from historic assets, green spaces and waterways……
	The fort is referred to as 'Roman fort and camp' in the document. It would be more accurately referred to as 'fort', 'forts' or 'fort and annexes'. There is no evidence for a 'camp' – which is a specific type of temporary Roman field defence.	Noted. All reference to be to the 'Roman Fort'.
	There are a number of comments relating to the Baseline Report.	The comments received to the baseline report whilst welcomed have not been set out in detail as it is not the intention of the Local Authority to update this document as part of this advanced stage of masterplanning.
Consultee: member of the public	As a new resident of Cullompton with a young family the exciting plans set out in the Masterplan was something that really attracted us	Noted.

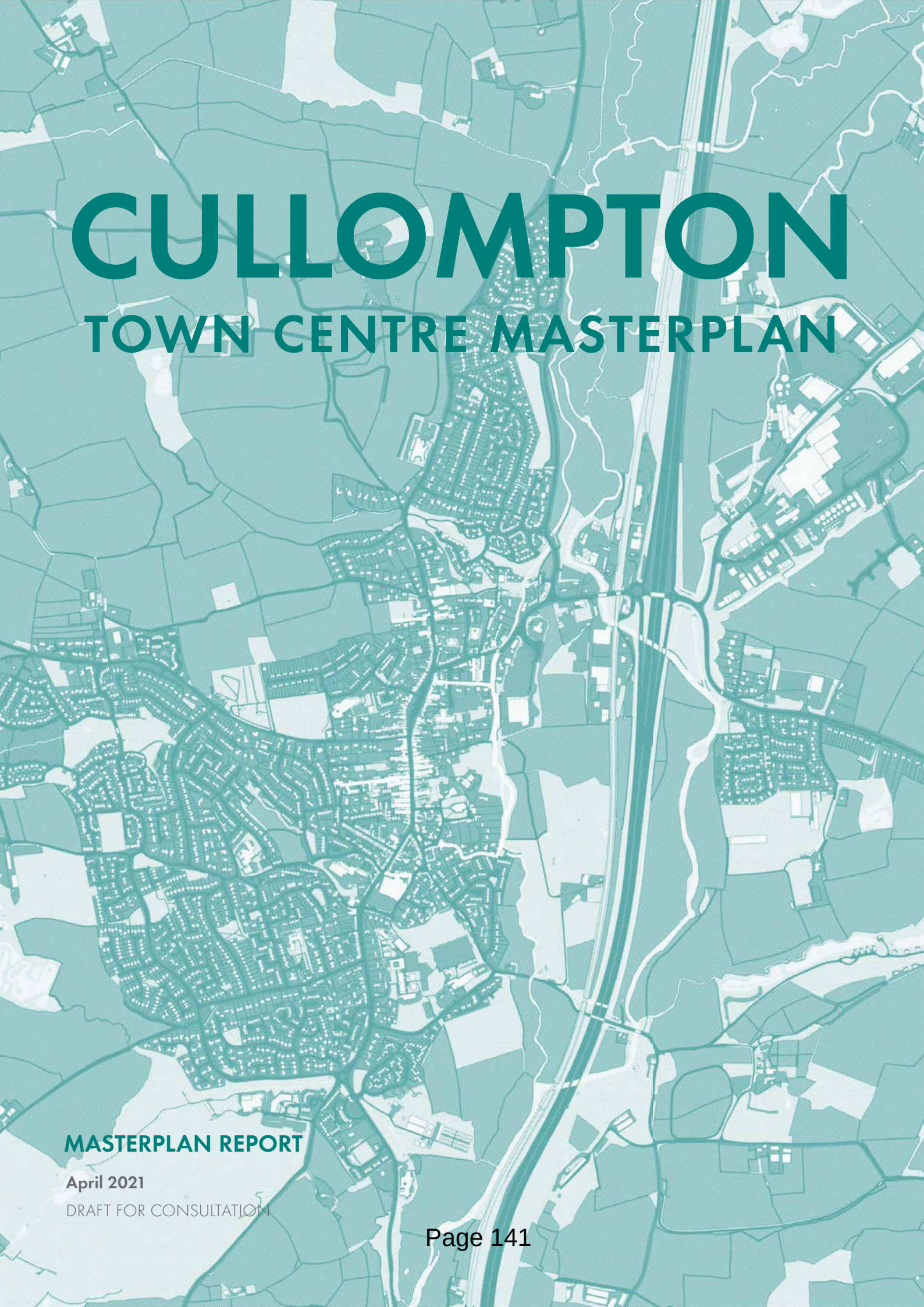
	to the town. We are particularly keen to see the relief road, the Culm Garden connection and train station to be built.	
Consultee: DCC Planning, Transportation & Environment.		
Local Transport Provision	Paragraph 4.2.8 refers to the Manual for Streets and states that a carriageway width of 5.5m would enable two Heavy Goods Vehicles to pass, with 6.0m for two-way bus movements. However, the Devon County Council Design Guide outlines that a carriageway of this nature needs to be 6.5m wide for two-way bus movements *with the possibility of additional widening on bends where required*." This approach should be reflected in the masterplan.	Amend para 4.2.8, fourth sentence to read as follows: 'The Devon County Council Design Guide indicates that a carriageway width of 6.5m would generally enable two Heavy Goods Vehicles to pass, with the possibility of additional widening on bends as required.'
	Paragraph 4.2.11 discusses the conversion of narrower lanes to formal shared surfaces. It should note that potential shared spaces would need to be in line with the new Department for Transport guidance on shared space.	Add to the end of para 4.2.11: ….including the Department of Transports guidance on shared space.
	Figure 15 should include the same caveat as that included for Figure 16, that being, "*Note: the points of access off the Cullompton Relief Road are not finalised and may change*".	Agreed. Insert Note next to the title of Figure 15*: the points of access off the Cullompton Relief Road are not finalised and may change.*
	Bullet point 32 on Page 31 should remove '*with improved cycle access to Exeter'* as this is not something which Devon County Council are looking to provide at present.	Agreed. Bullet point 32, page 31 to read as follows: 'Establish strategic cycle links between Cullompton and Willand.
	Figure 25 seems to suggest new bus stops along the Relief Road however the county council does not consider that buses will take this route as people want to access the Town Centre. We will not be providing bus laybys as part of the scheme and it will be difficult to add in later due to the impact on the floodplain. As such the bus stops indicated on the Relief Road should be removed.	Agreed. Delete 2x bus stop on Figure 25.
	Figure 29 shows public parking provision. This includes a car park off the football club car	Agreed. Amend accordingly.

	park; however, it should be noted that there is no agreement for the football car park to be used publicly. Instead the new and existing CCA car parks could be shown.	
	Devon County Council is supportive in principle for a new railway station to serve the town. Further work and discussion with the railway sector and other stakeholders is required to confirm how deliverable this aspiration is. Any new station would need to ensure appropriate access is achieved without generating additional traffic around J28 and also that it would not impact upon the functioning of the faster, long distance trains.	Noted. Working parties towards the delivery of the railway station, that include Devon County Council and other stakeholders, are established. Impact of the station on J28 and long distance train services noted.
Waste Planning	The waste planning authority have no strategic issues to offer.	Noted.
	The final sentence in paragraph 4.5.14 refers to "*storage for recycling and landfill waste*". It is recommended that '*landfill waste'* is replaced by '*residual waste'*.	Agreed. Replace final sentence of para 4.5.14 as follows: New development should include appropriate internal and external storage for residual waste'.
Flood Risk Management	The County Council welcomes the consideration of SuDs within the masterplan. There are a number of ways Mid Devon District Council may wish to add to this: A) SuDS could be constructed within pocket parks, such as swales and rain gardens. These features could manage surface water from surrounding impermeable areas. B) SuDS could be multifunctional. For example, green roofs could be constructed on top of bus shelters and cycle shelters. Kerbed rain gardens could be constructed as traffic calming measures or pedestrian crossings. C) Rainwater could be re-used, for example for use at public toilets or water planted areas. D) SuDS could be designed to replicate historical features or be representative of a local region or area. Rills could be constructed to represent the use of leats and water although these features may require space.	Noted. For consideration in the detailed design of pocket gardens and other development opportunities as planning permission requires.

Health & Wellbeing	It is necessary to ensure that the overall community is equally benefited and there is a strategic overview to ensure social and health disadvantages are mitigated and accounted in view of current and future local policies.	Noted. Health and wellbeing integrated as a 'golden thread' through the document with particular relevance to Vision point 5, bullet 23.
Economic development	There is a need for a strong phased approach to delivery of employment land focusing both on the spatial integrity of any enlarged settlement (i.e. making sure if no more were to be built afterwards, that what is built is in the right place). This phased approach should also focus most on sectors where current demand is, rather than be speculative – current demand is strongly skewed away from office and towards warehousing and some industrial.	Paras 4.4.23 – 4.4.29 are dedicated to employment opportunities within the town centre; with accessibility & the creation of a vibrant town centre in mind. Speculative warehousing and industrial opportunities are limited within the geographic area of the masterplan.
	Office and retail space to be focused towards the re-use of buildings within the town centre.	Noted. See paras 4.4.27.
	Developer contributions need to be realistically accounted for.	Noted.
Other	The fastest possible broadband connectivity at the time of development should go into all new buildings as a matter of course and policy.	Noted.
	The best and most sustainable energy saving and generation at the time of development should be applied to all new buildings as a matter of course and policy. This should be a prerequisite of Devon heading towards Net Zero.	Noted. Details to be addressed at detailed planning application stage.
	Sufficient Electric Vehicle charge points using the best and most up-to-date technology at the time of development should be installed.	Noted. Details to be addressed at detailed planning application stage.
Consultee: Highways England	Draft Masterplan 2021: Consideration given to connectivity to sustainable travel modes, amenities and facilities will be an important aspect in the likely success of modal shift and reducing the reliance on Junction 28 for localised trips across Cullompton.	Noted.
	Strategic Road Network Connections: In order to accommodate more than 500 dwellings at East Cullompton and development at the proposed Culm Garden Village, a strategic scale intervention will be required which may comprise a new Junction 28a as assumed in the transport evidence, or an alternative scheme as is yet to be identified through further assessment.	Noted.

	Masterplan considerations – Movement: The masterplan will need to ensure that the proposed development of Cullompton Town centre is supported by an adequate and sustainable transport network to ensure there is no adverse impact on the existing highway network, including M5 Junction 28. Data published by Government confirms that traffic levels on the strategic road network have now returned to pre-pandemic levels.	Noted. The masterplan gives particular consideration to modes of transport that do not rely on the private car. Recognition is also made to the capacity issues of J28.
	Town centre: Cullompton High Street forms part of an agreed strategic diversion route in the event of disruption on the M5 motorway. Highways England and Devon County Council will need to fully understand the transport implications of any measures proposed for Fore Street or use of the Relief Road to ensure an adequate diversion route is maintained to fulfil its strategic function.	Noted. Devon County Council are working party members to Cullompton's strategic projects including the relief Road, the Railway Station, enhancement of Fore Street and the Higher Bullring.
	Public transport: The masterplan should consider how public transport services can be improved, both through a potential increase in service provision and enhancements to infrastructure to encourage the use of sustainable modes. The principle of investing in the Railway Station is strongly supported by Highways England.	It is not within the remit of the Local Planning Authority to establish means to increase local public transport service. Enhancements are identified including the railway station proposal, enhanced pedestrian, cycle and bus stop provision.
	Commuting: The provision and delivery of the employment sites are key to ensuring that the need to commute to external destinations is minimised & to reduce the need for peak hour private car trips. Commercial development should also be well connected by sustainable travel connections from the outset. Masterplan Themes & Objectives: a) Reclaiming Cullompton's spaces to support a vibrant community life: Highways England supports the objective to alleviate traffic through Cullompton High Street. The transport implications of any changes to the local road network on the operation of Junction 28 will need to be fully understood, including how the proposals may impact on the role of the High Street as an agreed strategic diversion route for the M5 motorway. b) Easy to move around on foot, on bicycle, by bus and by train: Highways England welcomes the proposal to create a high-quality pedestrian and cycling link between the town centre and surround areas. Additional emphasis should be placed	Noted. Paras 4.4.23 – 4.4.29 are dedicated to employment opportunities within the town centre; with accessibility in mind. Noted.

	on the early re-opening of the Cullompton rail station to provide an alternative travel mode, and the masterplan should consider how the rail station could be best integrated into the town and what infrastructure is required to encourage its use.	Noted.



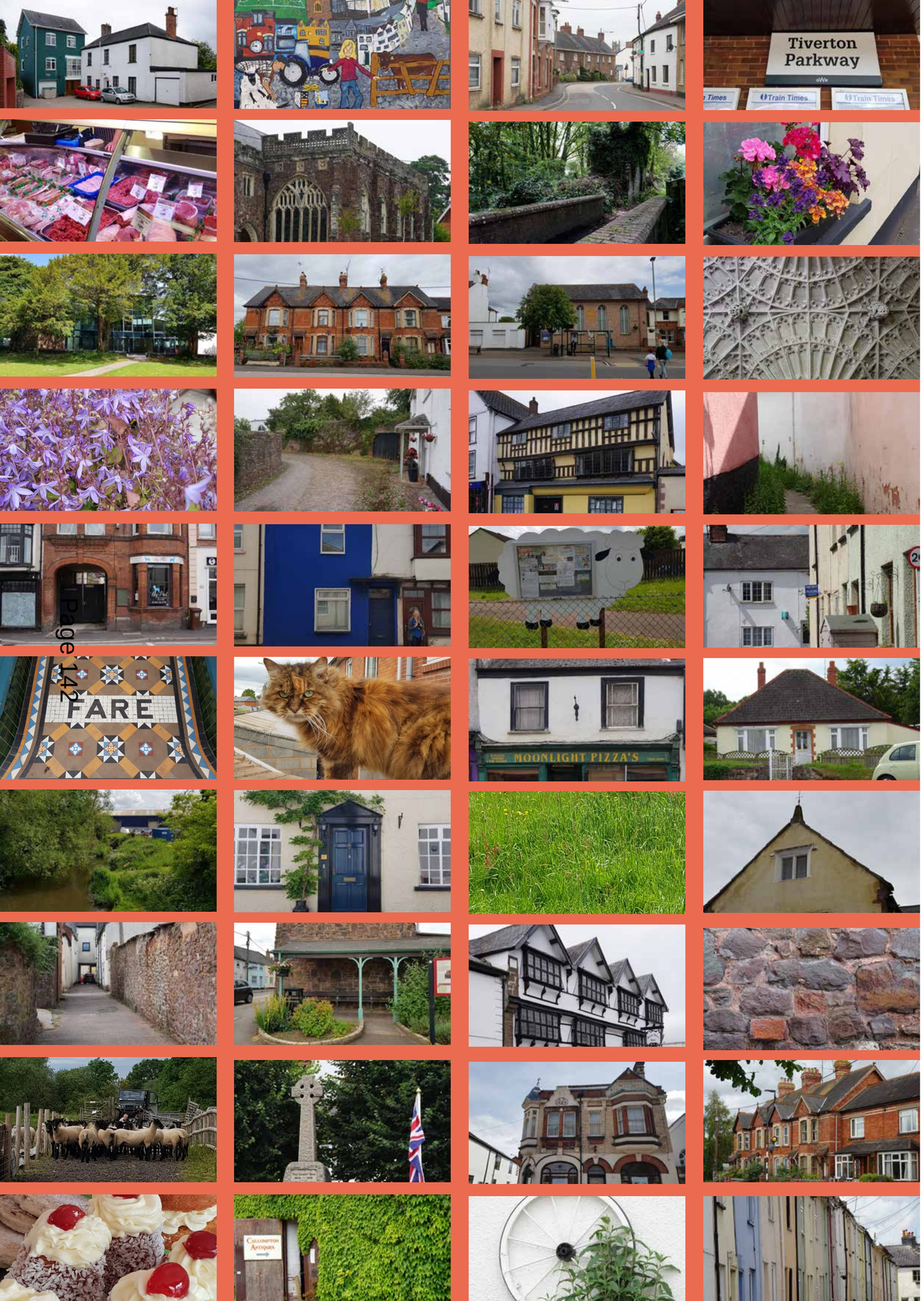
CULLOMPTON

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

MASTERPLAN REPORT

April 2021

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION



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1 Introduction

1.1 Role of the masterplan

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners was commissioned to prepare a masterplan and delivery strategy for Cullompton Town Centre on behalf of Mid-Devon District Council. The consultant team for the project includes transport and movement experts Hydrock and property and economic development specialists, Avison Young.

This report presents the vision and spatial masterplan for Cullompton town centre, including:

- **The policy and strategic context;**
- **Summary of analysis and community engagement undertaken for the project;**
- **A vision and thematic objectives for the town centre;**
- **A Masterplan setting out spatial and design priorities;**
- **A heritage strategy; and**
- **A phasing and delivery strategy.**

A detailed baseline study was prepared for the project and can be found here.









1.1.1 The Cullompton town centre masterplan identifies a clear vision for the town centre and sets out a spatial framework to guide future development and investment in Cullompton. The role of the masterplan is to provide realistic principles and overarching guidance that brings together the design and future delivery of development, public realm improvements and transport projects in Cullompton.

1.1.2 The masterplan has been developed in the context of a number of strategic projects planned in and around the town, set out in section 2.3. With these strategic projects on the horizon, a clear vision and spatial strategy is needed to help ensure that Cullompton town centre can realise its full potential as the commercial hub of an expanded town, making the most of its distinctive characteristics. The masterplan sets a framework for these strategic projects to support one another and to have a positive impact on the future of the town that can be greater than the sum of their parts. It also identifies further studies and steps that should follow the masterplan to help achieve this vision.

1.1.3 The masterplan will be adopted as a supplementary planning document and is part of the evidence to inform the Council's emerging Local Plan. It will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

1.2 Project process and engagement

Overview of project process

1.2.1 The project commenced in July 2019 and has consisted of two main phases of work:

- Stage 1: understanding the context and developing a vision; and
- Stage 2: producing a masterplan, heritage strategy and delivery guidance for the town centre.

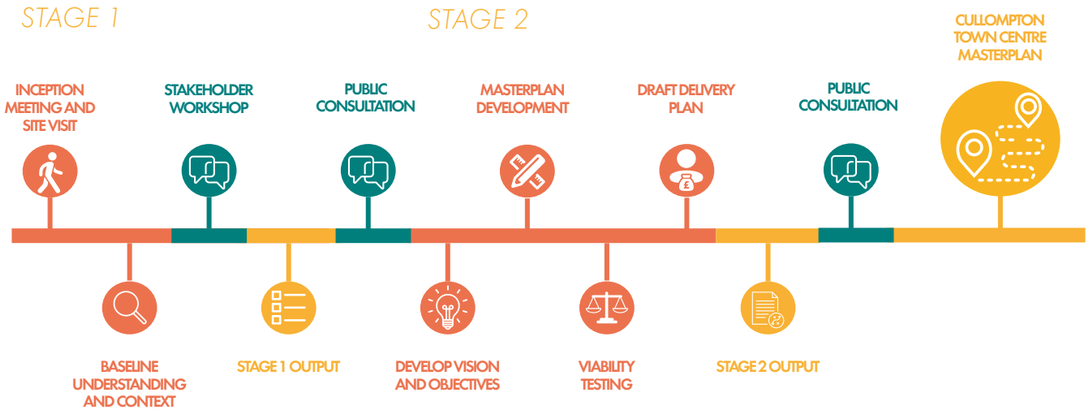
1.2.2 In Autumn 2019 the project team undertook research and analysis to develop a thorough understanding of Cullompton and its surrounding context. This included a policy review, an analysis of the socioeconomic make-up of the local population, a review of the property market, historic research and mapping of the town's urban design characteristics. A visioning workshop was held to ask key stakeholders about what works well and what could be improved in Cullompton. This all fed into an interim report which was completed in December 2019.

1.2.3 Through the baseline analysis, issues, opportunities and priorities emerged which evolved into a vision and thematic objectives for the town. These were consulted on during a six week consultation period in Spring 2020, and a refined vision and objectives were used to develop a strategic spatial plan and draft masterplan. This report presents the draft masterplan, as well as a heritage strategy and high-level advice for delivery and phasing.

Community engagement

1.2.4 The process has been deeply informed by community input, through:

- A Visioning workshop, September 2019
- End of stage 1 6-week public consultation, February 2020
- Draft masterplan 6-week public consultation, spring 2021



Visioning Workshop

1.2.5 To kick-off the process, a Visioning Workshop was held on Wednesday 4th September at the Hayridge Centre. Fifty people attended representing community groups, businesses and wider stakeholders, as well as councillors and officers. The event included a presentation setting out some initial thoughts about what makes Cullompton special, as well as an introduction to the baseline analysis undertaken so far. A workshop followed which comprised a roundtable discussion structured in two parts - the first part focused on issues and opportunities relating to buildings and character, Cullompton's identity, public spaces, town centre uses, and movement. Attendees were also asked to consider the opportunities associated with the planned investment in and around the town e.g. the relief road and potential reopening of the station. The second part explored the 'Big Ideas for Cully', which intended to raise the level of ambition for the town. The key messages are set out on this spread.

1.2.6 There is a lot that makes Cullompton special - from its historic courts and lanes to its markets and strong sense of community. There is a high level of ambition for positive change in the town centre, including the possibilities for enhancement associated with the relief road, the opportunity to improve public spaces, and the opportunity to strengthen the sense of arrival into Cullompton. There was recognition that some bits of the town are not functioning as well as they should be, for example the pedestrian experience, the historic fabric and the vacant shops. This feedback has helped to shape the emerging vision and objectives for the masterplan.



Figure 1 **Photos of the stakeholder workshop**



1 Cullompton is a "gem of a historic town"
- views and greenery
- courts and lanes
- archaeology
- sense of community
- markets
- 15th C church
- richness of architectural styles and periods

2 Several sites were identified for reuse or redevelopment
- old cinema
- Methodist church
- sorting office
- Harlequin Valet
- Old Tannery
- former British Legion



3 Church buildings are an asset and could be more welcoming



4 Bullring is the natural core and a key public space
- more social spaces
- more greening
- successful events



5 The pedestrian experience could be improved
- narrow, uneven pavements
- unsafe routes
- unclear routes that don't properly link up





6 Get the most out of courts and lanes
- creating activity along lanes
- arts and crafts, cafes and independents

7 Rubbish is a problem
- often blocks the lanes
- regular pick-ups neccessary



8 Improve the arrival experience into Cullompton
- a new gateway for the town
- improve signage

9 Rethink deliveries and servicing
- delivery hub
- scheduled times for delivery
- encourage people into the town centre
- lorries an issue on High Street



10 Improve the High Street for pedestrians
- more parking spaces
- less traffic, less street clutter
- wider pavements
- more space for festivals / events





11 Attracting people beyond just the services
- independent businesses will attract people
- parking strategy
- what is Cullompton's offer?



12 Enabling sustainable transport options
- support for new rail station
- better cycle links to Exeter city centre and Tiverton Parkway
- more bus routes to industrial areas, residential areas and Exeter city centre

13 Lack of higher education in Cullompton
- we need more options or better access to nearby options

14 We need to spruce up the CCA fields
- a great asset but currently has a low profile
- the relief road an opportunity to improve CCA fields







15 Support for affordable homes and a mix of employment spaces
- improve connections



Figure 2 **A leaflet advertising the stage 1 engagement**

4
town centre events

40+
survey responses

15
written responses made

35
school children engagement at 2 local primary schools

Figure 3 **A summary of the stage 1 engagement**

End of stage one, 6-week public consultation

1.2.7 A public consultation was held between 25 February and 15 April 2020 to test the baseline analysis findings and the emerging vision and objectives for the masterplan.

1.2.8 The consultation was communicated through the council's website, social media, the council's email list for those interested in planning in Cullompton and was featured in Devon Live. The consultation materials were displayed online and in town:

- Wednesday 4 March, 10am-2pm, Cullompton Town Hall
- Friday 13 March, 2.30-6pm, Tesco entrance, Station Road
- Saturday 14 March, 9.30am-12.30pm, Farmers Market
- Monday 16 March, 4-7pm, The Hayridge Centre

1.2.9 People were able to give their feelback through completing a questionaire (either online or written at the events) or providing a written response (via email or post).



Figure 4 **Photos of engagement with school children**

If you were in charge of Cullompton's future, what one thing would you change?
42 people responded to this question.



Figure 6 **An infographic, summarising the feedback to the question: If you were in charge of Cullompton's future, what one thing would you change?**

1.2.10 In addition, this phase of consultation sought to engage young people in their town,through two workshops with local schools:

- Tuesday 19th November 2019, St. Andrew's Primary School, 5-11yrs, 10 children
- Wednesday 20th November 2019, Willowbank Primary School, 10-11yrs, 25 children

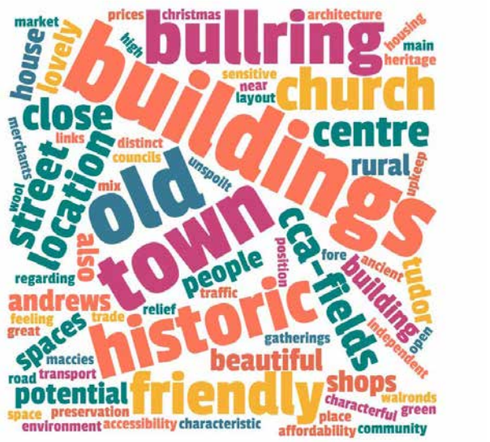
1.2.11 Throughout all of the engagement activities, demographics were monitored to check that all parts of the community were involved. The response was representative of the community in Cullompton in terms of gender, ethnicity and location with a decent spread of addresses across the town. In terms of age, there was a higher response rate from over 65s than the town's population, however engagement with schools helped to bring in the views of young people.

1.2.12 The feedback from this stage of consultation is summarised on the following pages and helped to inform the masterplan priorities and proposals.

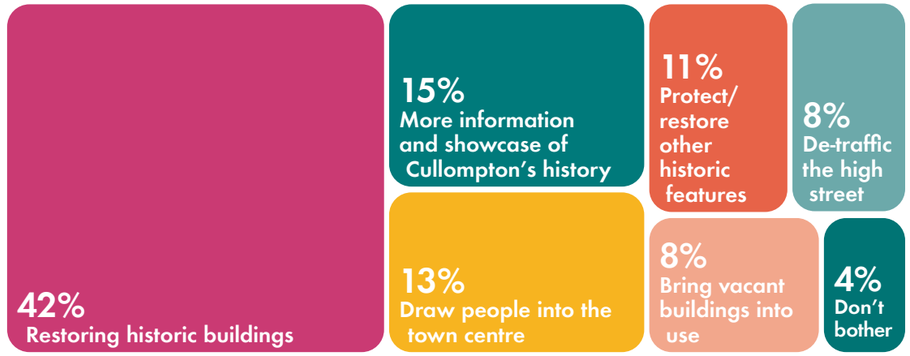


Figure 5 **Worksheets from the engagement with school children**

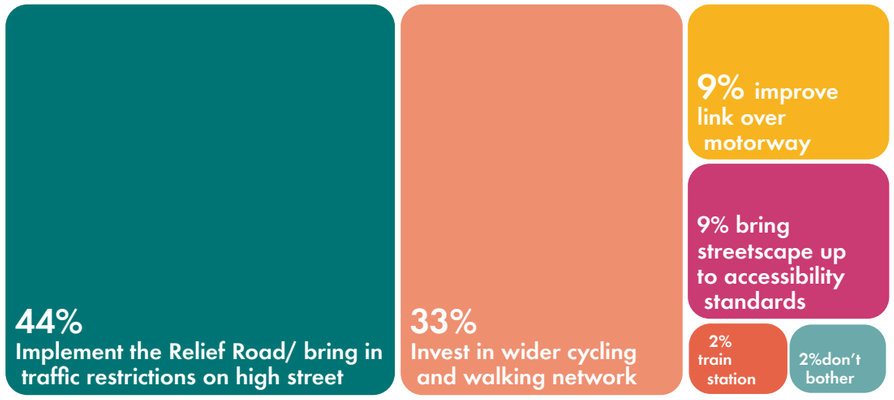
What do you think is Cullompton's best characteristic?
40 people responded to this question.



What are your priorities for making the most of Cullompton's heritage?
40 people responded to this question.



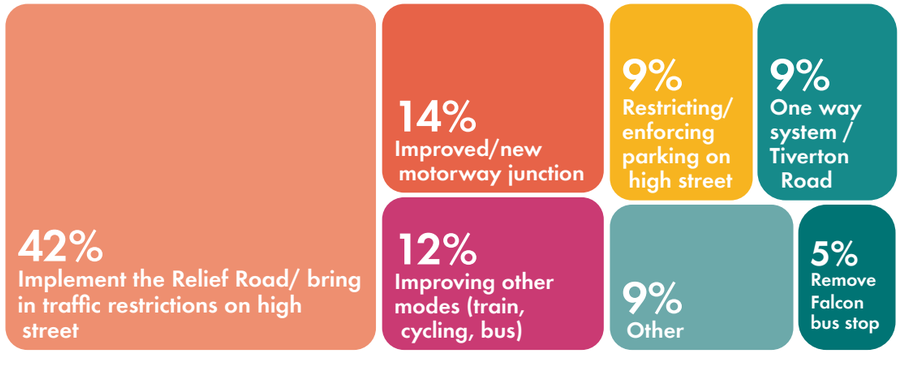
What are your priorities for improving pedestrian and cycle movement in and around Cullompton?
36 people responded to this question.



What are your priorities for improving public and open spaces?
39 people responded to this question.



What are your priorities for improving vehicular movement in and around Cullompton?
34 people responded to this question.



How can we support the town centre's role as a focus for homes, shops, work and community life?
39 people responded to this question.

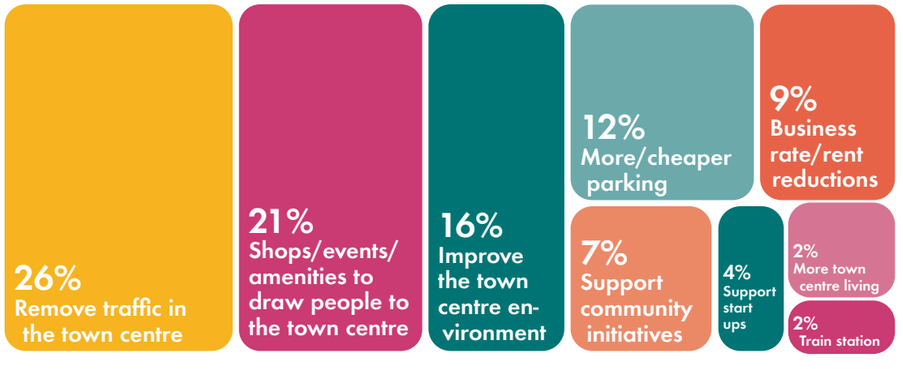
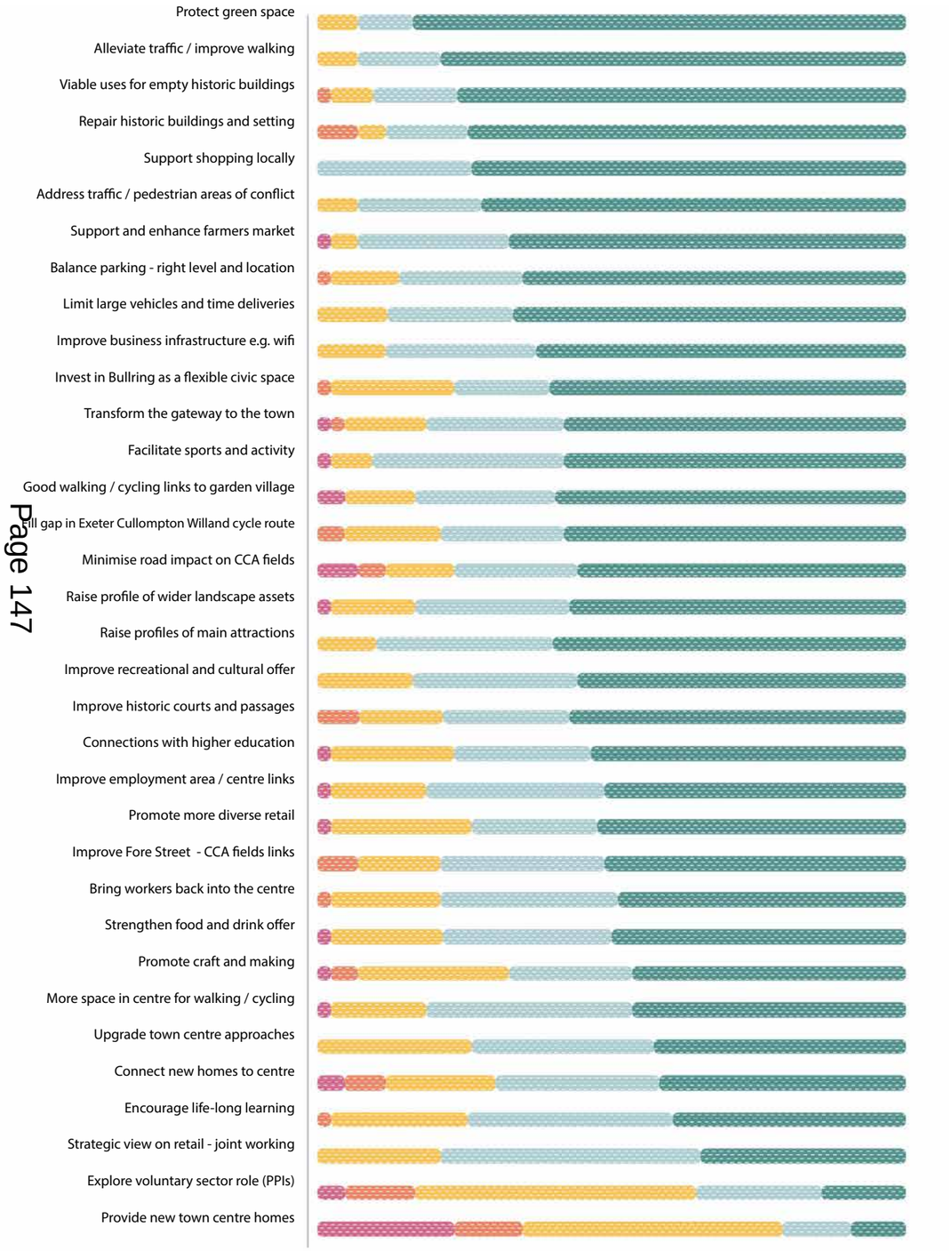
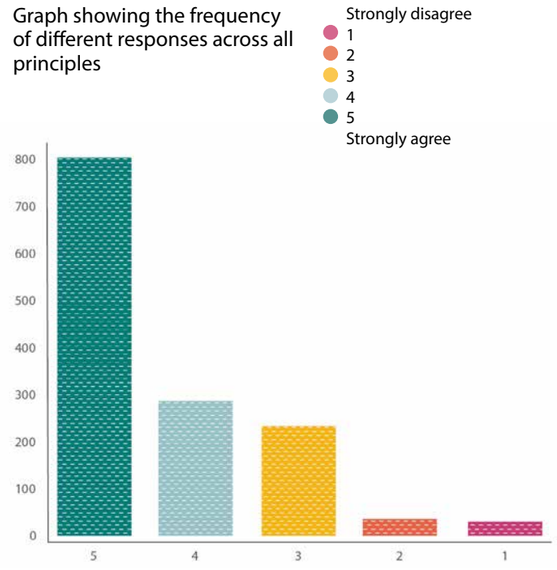


Figure 7 **Infographics, summarising the feedback from the Stage 2 online and written survey.**

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following principles?



Graph showing the frequency of different responses across all principles



Five principles with the highest % of people who strongly agree



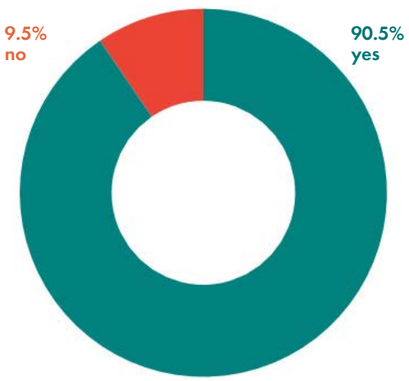
Three principles with the highest % of people who strongly disagree and disagree combined



In answering the following questions please assume that the proposed Relief Road will have been completed and be open for use:

Do you think restricting traffic in High Street is a good idea?

42 people responded to this questions.



If yes, what do you think should be done?

38 people responded to this questions.

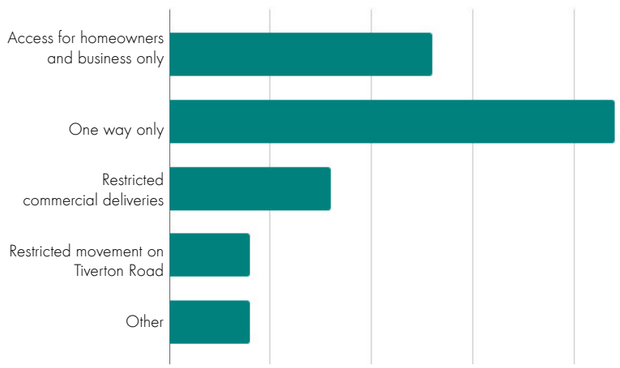


Figure 8 **Infographics, summarising the feedback from the Stage 2 online and written survey.**

2 Context

2.1 Planning context

Local Plan Review (2013-2033)

2.1.1 The Local Plan Review, adopted 29 July 2020, will guide sustainable development in Mid Devon District over a 20 year period. The Review sets out a vision for the District that promotes community well-being, supports sustainable economic success, conserves and enhances the area and respects environmental limits.

2.1.2 The Local Plan Review reinforces Cullompton's role as a strategic location for growth, considering its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity. The review allocates further land for development. Development will be targeted to: provide sustainable urban extensions; provide enhancements to the town centre through additional investment; develop any remaining underused brownfield sites; and protect and enhance the key environmental assets including heritage, biodiversity and air quality.

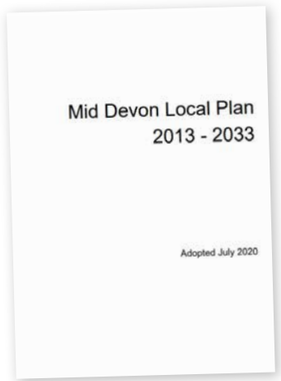


Figure 9 **Adopted Local Plan**

Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan submission

2.1.3 The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan is the community's vision and priorities for how they would like to see the Cullompton area develop and change in the coming years. At the time of writing this report, Mid Devon District Council has determined that the Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan, as modified to incorporate the independent examiner's recommendations, should proceed to a Referendum during 2021. Although, it is not yet adopted as part of the development plan for the area, it now carries significant weight. It sets out a number of planning policies which seek to:

- Ensure all new developments contribute to the overall sustainability of Cullompton as a town and a community
- Improve mobility, accessibility and reduce the overall use and impact of the motor vehicle
- Provide new dwellings to meet a wide range of needs and demands
- Respect and appreciate the countryside
- Protect and enhance the historic built environment whilst broadening the appeal of the town and its cultural activity
- Make Cullompton more business friendly

"Cullompton is a market town with a distinct character and identity rooted in a rich history that will be conserved as the town grows into the future as a vibrant centre for its residents and the surrounding rural area."

Extract from the vision statement for Cullompton as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan

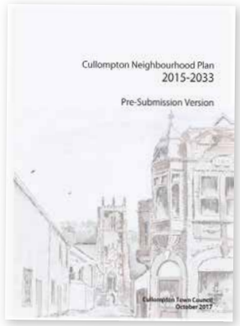


Figure 10 **Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan**

- Provide first class local community facilities and develop community-based services that meet the growing demands of the community

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

2.1.4 The Appraisal describes what makes the area special in terms of architecture, history, character, landscape, open spaces and trees, appearance and building material and ornamentation. The 2009 Appraisal has recently been updated and is well advanced with an expectation that it will be finalised in 2021. The management plan identifies three key issues for the conservation area: through traffic which detracts from the environment of the town centre; erosion of historic character and appearance throughout the conservation area; and decreasing vitality and viability of the town centre. The Plan sets out opportunities and principles to address these issues to enhance the conservation area.

Mid-Devon Climate Emergency Declaration

2.1.5 In recognition of the impact of climate change Mid Devon District Council joined other Devon wide local authorities in May 2019 to form the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group. Further to this, Mid Devon District Council has set the ambitious target of being carbon neutral by 2030, against the Devon-wide and nation-wide target of 2050. The interim Devon Carbon Plan is now out to public consultation and the Mid Devon District Council Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan has been adopted.













Figure 11 **Photos of Cullompton**



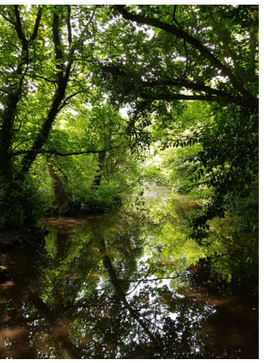











Figure 12 **Photos of Cullompton**

National Design Guidance (2019)

2.1.6 In October 2019 the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government published a new National Design Guide, along with an update to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in relation to 'good design'. The new Design Guide provides some explanation to the definition of 'good design' for use by Local Planning Authorities. The document sets out characteristics of a well-defined place under ten themes: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

2.1.7 In terms of Cullompton's future, given the two significant planned developments (Culm Garden Village and the North West Urban Extension) as well as any future development, the National Design Guidance will serve as a policy tool as authority planning officers prepare local planning policy and guidance and assess the quality of planning applications.

2.1.8 This National Design Guidance can be supplemented with design guidance on a local level. Mid Devon District Council accordingly adopted the Mid Devon Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document during October 2020.



Figure 13 **National Design Guide**

Change in planning use classes (2020)

2.1.9 The Government on 21st July 2020 published The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, which came into force on 1st September 2020. The main change is the introduction of Use Class E, subsuming A1, A2, A3, B1, D1, D2 (retail, office and non-residential institutions and assembly and leisure uses), into one single class E. This means that a change of a building's use between the following use classes will no longer require planning permission: retail, professional services, food & drink, business (office, research and development and light industrial process), Non-residential institutions (medical or health services, crèches, day nurseries and centres), and assembly and leisure (indoor sport, recreation or fitness, gyms).

2.1.10 The changes are still relatively new and there is limited data on their impact, however it is anticipated that the extension of permitted development rights will have an impact in town centres and high streets.

2.1.11 There is also two further new classes:

- F.1 for non-residential institutions (education, art gallery, museum, public library, public exhibition hall, places of worship, law courts)
- F.2 for shops no larger that 280sqm (selling mostly essential goods and at least 1km from another similar shop); community hall, outdoor sport/ recreation area, indoor or outdoor swimming pool, skating rink.

2.1.12 The premises within these planning use classes would therefore need planning permission for a change of use, securing their place in the town.

Planning White Paper (2020)

2.1.13 In August 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government published the The Planning for the Future paper for consultation. The objective of the paper is to streamline and modernise the planning process, 'cutting red tape not standards' and ensuring more land is available for development where it is needed.

2.1.14 Among other proposals, the paper puts forward a system where local authorities would zone all land in their areas for "growth", "renewal" or "protection". Areas zoned for growth would accommodate "substantial development" and would benefit from outline permission (but developers would still need to secure reserved matters permission in accordance with a locally drawn up design codes). Areas zoned for renewal would be seen as suitable for some development.

2.1.15 There is an emphasis on building environmentally friendly, sustainable homes, taking a digital-first approach to modernising the planning process, reviving town and city centres and improving the system of developer contributions towards infrastructure.

2.1.16 The consultation is now closed and there remains uncertainty over if and when measures will be introduced.

2.2 Strategic context: Responding to Covid-19

2.2.1 Covid-19 has added a further layer of challenge and complexity to the planning and designing of town centres across the UK. The country's town centres were already on a trajectory of significant structural change prior to the pandemic. Many of these shifts have been accelerated by the pandemic, whilst others have been diverted to a different course. High Streets may look very different in the future - but it is not yet fully clear how these changes will manifest themselves.

2.2.2 Economies, places and mindsets will change but other essential traits will endure. For example, humans are social animals and will continue to come together. We are also incredibly adaptable. However, Central Government has underlined that any adaptation must align with climate objectives, identifying post pandemic responses as a once in a generation opportunity to shift living patterns and habits to help reduce our carbon emissions.

Placemaking implications

2.2.3 A number of trends and opportunities have been identified since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020. These each have implications for the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan and the future operation of the town centre.

Working patterns

2.2.4 Work patterns have been transformed and will not bounce back even with the roll out of a vaccine. Companies and workers have discovered that many types of work can be done remotely and there has been a corresponding shift to home and hub working.

- Many people will work from home in future and the design of homes should reflect this. Perhaps with a move away from open plan living, to flexible interiors that can support two separate home workers without disruption and with the retention of living space that can be separate from work space. Access to outside space for all residents and superfast and reliable broadband will also be key.
- Now people can work from anywhere, there may well be greater demand for flexible workhubs, either in co-working spaces or at local cafes and pubs for people to escape the home for work without having to commute. These could be flexible spaces, with separate or spacious, open desk space, superfast broadband, bike access and coffee provision. The Nook provides a great model for Cullompton.
- For Cullompton, this freedom of working locations is a real opportunity to attract new residents who no longer feel they must live in town or city centres in order to be close to workplaces.

A community focus

2.2.5 Lockdowns during 2020 helped to foster neighbourliness and community networks and resulted in the emergence and growth of circular and exchange economies across the country, which can be harnessed for the good of Cullompton and other small towns

- Local grocery and independent shops have been newly appreciated and seen an increase in custom, reversing a historic trend away from these shops towards supermarkets. Given that much of Cullompton town centre's catchment is within a 10 minute cycle, this is a real opportunity for a stronger town centre role.
- There has been an increase in home grown foods and allotment use and a new appreciation for the resilience or buffer this provides in food supply as well and the physical and mental well-being benefits.
- Local community groups have been more active than ever, with many making good use of technology such as through Whats App groups or Next Door websites. Cullompton's well-established community networks are well placed or benefit from this trend.
- There has been a more general growth in the appreciation of care work, socially constructive and front line jobs and community roles. Many of these important jobs are found in and around Cullompton.

Open spaces

2.2.6 Open space became a far greater priority for those in lockdown and during various transition phases in 2020. There are a number of key facets to this which are important for the masterplan.

- Green open spaces provide access to nature, the opportunity for exercise and a relatively safe setting for small social gatherings. In Cullompton, this translates as a crucial role for the CCA fields and the water meadows and fields which surround the town centre
- Streets and public spaces are critical for impromptu and informal catch-ups when people bump into friends and neighbours when out and about. For these to work effectively, pavements must be wide enough for people to pause and benches be provided. This has clear implications for Fore Street and the Bull Ring.
- Outdoor spaces connected to cafes and restaurants and to cultural venues help these businesses to survive during times of social distancing and support residents in living sociable but safe lives.
- Initiatives in Paris and elsewhere to create the '15 minute city' based on walking and cycling - this is also relevant to smaller centres

The life of the town centre

2.2.7 Shops, food and drink businesses and cultural and leisure venues have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and need as much support as possible from town strategies and masterplans.

- Many local theatres need a new (or interim) model that can enable them to stage performances in a socially distanced manner. Good alternative outdoor performance spaces are key, as are good alternative interim uses for interior spaces so these can still have some use and bring an income
- There are many creative responses by food and beverage venues from the simple take over of street space in Paris and London for tables and chairs, to the establishment of greenhouse eating pods where space allows. The removal of some traffic from Fore Street will help Cullompton embrace this approach.
- Shops are the heart of a town centre and provide more than a utilitarian service. Many provide identity and a sense of belonging for local residents. Independent shops, which are more nimble than large retailers, can help revive town centres and Cullompton is very well placed for this.
- Creative use of vacant units in town centres is critical and can help to both address blight on the high street and provide valuable community uses and pop-up shops for residents.
- 2020 has taught us that new buildings in town centres should be adaptable and loose fit design so that these can respond to future economic and cultural shifts without having to be demolished and replaced.
- Town centre coordination between businesses, management of key issues and curation of the town centre is more important than ever. Bringing Cullompton's businesses together, such as through the existing group Culm Valley in Business, the town council or an independent group would aid this. The town's active community groups can also be involved in taking forward masterplan ideas.
- Changes to business rates have been discussed in recent years to address the discrepancy between online and bricks and mortar retailers that penalises businesses with physical stores. The 2020 Grimsey Review made a strong case for these changes and it is currently under consideration by Central Government.

Addressing economic insecurity

2.2.8 2020 saw a sharp recession and a significant rise in unemployment, with some sectors such as the aviation industry, retail and the leisure industry being

disproportionately affected. This will result in economic insecurity for some residents and masterplans can play a key role in supporting low cost living for residents in the future. Key opportunities include:

- Keeping household bills down by ensuring low operational carbon requirements for new homes, through insulation, ventilation and renewable energy sources
- Encouraging walking and cycling as a form of transport that is free at the point of use

Supporting centres of exchange such as tool libraries and maker spaces, perhaps making use of vacant units on the high street or Fore Street.

Movement implications

2.2.9 There are a number of movement trends and opportunities which have arisen as a result of the pandemic and its associated lockdowns during 2020. These can be summarised as:

- A lower level of commuting and therefore lower levels of private cars on the road for long trips as a result of the greater emphasis on working from home
- An associated uptake in walking and cycling during lockdown – lots of people have been on a bike for the first time in a while, and technology (e.g. e-bikes and scooters) means that micro-mobility should be key to access strategies going forward. It is important to capitalise on and embed this trend in local Cullompton movement patterns.
- User confidence in public transport has plummeted due to safety concerns and it will be a challenge to restore former use levels in the coming few years. It will be critical to support local public transport by making it accessible, reliable and attractive. Short-medium term, we can directly influence the quality and setting of public transport stops.
- There may be an uptake of private car commuting in the short-medium term which would be difficult to accommodate in the medium-long term. It is important that this trend is not allowed to continue. Increased working from home, cycling and walking can hopefully have a mitigating effect on this. There will, however, be potential impacts on town centre parking of course.
- Funding available during 2020 for temporary improvements to increase space for social distancing while walking and cycling provides a good starting point for assessing these schemes and establishing the more successful elements on a permanent basis.

Property implications

Office space (B1)

2.2.10 In the short term, offices will have to accommodate fewer people, i.e. lower density occupation, which may hit achievable rents. Looking forward, this may increase the amount of floor space required by tenants for 'safe' occupation but conversely, the lockdown has forced flexible working practices on many businesses which we expect to become more acceptable going forward, reducing required floor space. How this manifests itself in the market and if it has a lasting effect is too early to tell.

- Tenants may seek increased rent free periods, shorter leases and more frequent breaks to allow for the need to vacate in the future should economic weakness persist which will hit investment values, and investors may apply higher investment yields to office investments to allow for risk, which will also negatively impact investment values.

High street retail, banks/building societies, estate agencies, restaurants and cafes, pubs/bars and takeaways (A1 – A5)

2.2.11 Retail units will have to accommodate social distancing requirements thus raising cost and reducing efficiency, and may suffer from falling revenue as high street retailers and service providers that can move from physical to online do so.

2.2.12 There is an emerging trend of retailers seeking turnover rents (i.e. rent linked to achieved turnover rather than a fixed rent with periodic increases); while popular with tenants as a slower month/ quarter means they will pay less rent, the uncertainty is an issue for investors who will place a higher yield on the investment, therefore reducing property investment value. Despite this, a pragmatic view of turnover rents suggests that they may contribute to a more sustainable business and stable occupation, and in turn this stability could translate into stronger trading and therefore higher rent in better times. We anticipate that most landlords will be reluctant to switch to turnover rents in the short term and will resist surrendering existing leases to re-sign on a turnover basis.

Residential (C3)

2.2.13 It's not yet clear what impact Covid-19 will have on residential sales values as the market is only just beginning to emerge from the lockdown and demand is strong, as many transactions that were pending at the time the lockdown started are being pushed through at previously agreed prices. Initial feedback from estate agents suggests that now viewings are available, there is a pent-up demand formed of those whose search was put on hold during lockdown and those who want/need to move in the interim weeks, compounded by the low level of stock in the market. In many areas we anticipate a short spike in values back to or in excess of pre-Covid values, however this will soon fall back once this backlog is cleared – although the extent to this fall is unknown.

2.2.14 What we do not yet know is what impact a sustained and serious economic slowdown/recession will do to employment and earnings. A significant downturn will have an impact on what buyers are able to pay, and what mortgage lenders are prepared to lend, both of which may have an impact on the sale prices for homes, and the rate (i.e. the speed) of sale achievable by housebuilders – and hence land values.

Grimsey Review 2020 and High Street Task Force

2.2.15 In June 2020 an updated Grimsey Review was released, largely in response to the impact of Covid-19 on Britains town centres. The report sets out three headline priorities of:

- A shift to Localism, with local people encouraged to redesign their own high streets and have a say on the businesses, services and amenities there
- Fewer cars, more green space, with centres that are designed for people rather than the car
- Local leadership by people with a broad range of skills which is valued and recognised

2.2.16 A number of recommendations are then made to help achieve these three overarching goals which cover:

- Establishing participatory planning with high street Citizen's Assemblies, Community Value Charters and community right to buy and the establishment of community trusts through the National Lottery Community Fund.
- Amending business rates, replacing the current system with a 2% sales tax that will level the playing field between online and offline retailers
- Re-skilling for new employment sectors for those predominantly young and female workers likely to lose retail and leisure jobs in the future
- Encouraging people to give up cars, introduce a pedestrianisation task force and pilot mobility hubs for sustainable transport modes

2.2.17 In addition to the updated Grimsey Review, The High Street Task Force recently developed a framework for place regeneration in response to Covid-19 impacts, focused on repositioning, reinventing, rebranding and restructuring UK High Streets.

Cullompton's context

Cullompton is located 12 miles north of Exeter in the heart of Mid Devon, situated adjacent to the M5 which is the main transport corridor through Devon. Cullompton is the second largest town in the district with a population of over 8,800. The town is close to rail services from nearby Tiverton Parkway and is set within a stunning valley landscape, with views towards the Blackdown Hills and East Devon AONBs.

Figure 14 **Strategic context diagram**

2.3 Related projects

2.3.1 A number of significant changes are proposed for Cullompton through which a very different future can be imagined. Sites in the town, identified in the Adopted Local Plan (2013-2033) which are due to be built include:

- North West Cullompton
- East Cullompton (Culm Garden Village)
- Ware Park and Footlands, and
- Land at Colebrook. C

Together, they could more than double the town's population, which would create more demand for shops and services, bringing historic buildings back into use. This coupled with investment from the Heritage Action Zone funding and reduced traffic on the High Street (as a result of the Relief Road implementation), could result in a renewal of the centre, re-establishing a vibrant historic heart for the town. Movement patterns would change; there is a risk that new development would result in more traffic for the town. A new station would help bring people out of their cars for trips to Exeter, Bristol and Taunton, while strong cycling and walking routes (in particular over the M5/river/rail) will be needed to support active travel for trips within the town. Strong coordination will be needed to ensure these projects are mutually beneficial and that investment achieves the greatest impact. The following pages highlight the critical interdependencies and considerations as these initiatives move forward.

Relief Road

2.3.2 Traffic in the town centre is having an adverse effect on air quality, living conditions, the heritage assets and their setting, and the attractiveness overall. A key objective of the Local Plan has been to implement a relief road which diverts traffic away from the town centre and improves capacity. Following an option analysis and consultation, a preferred route option was approved by Devon County Council in March 2019. The route runs through the CCA fields alongside the rail line, joining Duke Street to the south and Station Road to the north. A planning application was submitted to the Council in June 2020. Planning permission has now been given for the construction of the Relief Road with a planned completion date of 2023 / 2024.

Improvements to M5 Junction 28

2.3.3 Devon County Council is pursuing funding for works intended to address capacity, environmental and safety concerns, whilst also providing a substantial improvement for pedestrian and cycle movements across the motorway.

Cullompton Rail Station

2.3.4 The Adopted Local Plan (2013-2033) identifies and allocates a site for the reopening of the railway station, on the Bristol to Exeter line. The Station would benefit the town by providing a sustainable transport option and decreasing travel times to Exeter (the main destination for commuters from Cullompton), as well as Taunton and Bristol. In May 2020, Mid-Devon secured funding to develop a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC).

Heritage Action Zone

2.3.5 Following a successful bid, Cullompton has been selected for the High Streets Heritage Action Zones scheme and will now work with Historic England to develop plans to revive the high street over a four-year programme. The fund will deliver physical improvements and cultural activities to regenerate the high street and restore local historic character. Through the programme, councils, businesses and community groups will be able to access expert advice and investment to bring historic buildings back to life.

Culm Garden Village

2.3.6 In January 2017, the Government identified an area to the east of Cullompton on the other side of the M5 as a 'Garden Village', with the potential to deliver up to 5,000 new homes alongside jobs, schools and community facilities. The Garden Village includes an area which is allocated for mixed use development in the Local Plan. A masterplan is being developed for the Garden Village which considers the strategic location of homes, neighbourhood centres, employment areas, community facilities, green infrastructure and connections. The stage 1 draft of the masterplan was consulted on in January/ February 2019.

North-West Urban Extension

2.3.7 The Local Plan allocates this site and a masterplan for the area was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in 2016. Since then planning applications for the first phase are in the process of being approved, including 600 homes, a link road which serves the development from off Willand Road, a primary school, green infrastructure, sports pitches, allotments and a community orchard. Phase 2 / 3 will include 750 homes, a local centre, community building, more green infrastructure, a MUGA, employment land and Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

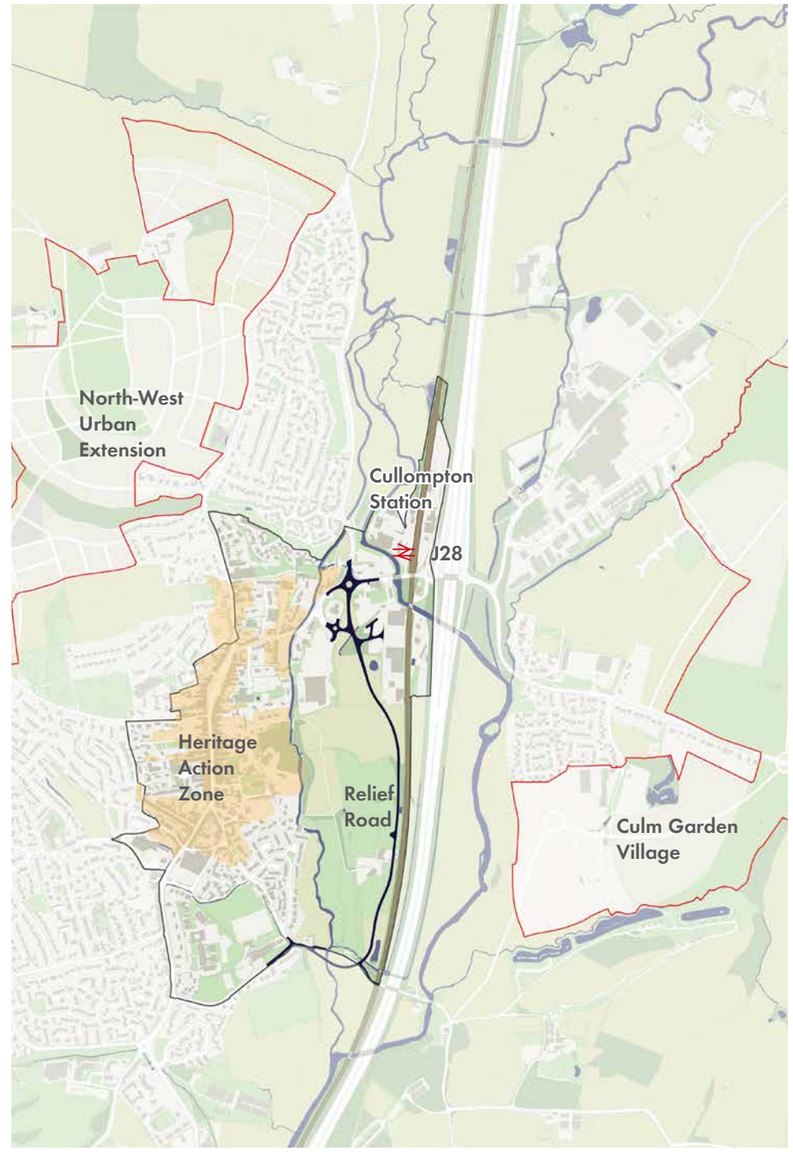


Figure 15 **A plan of proposed projects** masterplan study area

Interdependencies and key considerations

	RELIEF ROAD	CULM GARDEN VILLAGE	NEW RAIL STATION	HERITAGE ACTION ZONE	CCA FIELDS	NORTH-WEST URBAN EXTENSION
CULM GARDEN VILLAGE	• CGV initial stages are scheduled to come forward following the completion of the Relief Road.					
NEW RAIL STATION	• Opportunities to integrate public transport, access, parking and pedestrian / cycle connections • Opportunity to improve the sense of arrival.	• The railway station will make a positive contribution to the emerging movement strategy for the CGV with benefits for the wider town. • Good pedestrian / cycle connections are needed.				
HERITAGE ACTION ZONE	• The Relief Road takes cars off the High Street, reducing levels of pollution in the historic core of the town. • The new streetscape of the high street should provide a sensitive context for historic assets.	• The growth in population will benefit economic activity and private investment into the historic town centre.	• The station could help to limit car use locally, reducing levels of pollution and related impact on the town centre and its heritage. • Good signage and wayfinding and an improved arrival experience are needed between station and historic core of the town.			
CCA FIELDS	• Enhancement of the resulting re-configured green space for resident and visitor enjoyment. • Enhancement through existing and new tree planting and management. • Opportunities to improve pedestrian / cycle connections.	• Good pedestrian and cycle links between the town centre and the CGV through the CCA fields will provide an attractive alternative to the use of the motor vehicle. This will need to include a link over the M5 / river / rail.	• Good cycle lanes and safe walking links through the CCA fields could support active travel to and from the train station if well designed. Cycle measures would need to consider integrating with other routes in the town and ensure safe crossing of Station Road.	• Enhancement of the laneways between Fore Street and CCA field will help to raise the profile and accessibility of the open space		
NORTH-WEST URBAN EXTENSION	• The north west urban extension will contribute to traffic volumes in the town.	• Together, they will result in a large population increase for the town. The growing population has the potential to support shops and services in the town centre helping to bring historic buildings back into use. Strong connections via sustainable transport modes to the town centre are important.	• There is an opportunity to enhance the walking / cycling route from the new development to the station, along the footpath between Willand Road and Millennium Way. Millennium Way currently has no footpath. If Alexandria Industrial Estate were to be developed, a continuation of this route could be considered.	• The growing population has the potential to support shops and services helping to bring historic buildings back into use.	• The increased population will generate a greater use of the CCA fields and sports facilities. • Pedestrian / cycle routes should be enhanced.	
J28	• Provision of a relief Road will be the first stage of highway improvements in the area with Stage 2 including measures to address capacity constraints at J28. • Opportunities to enhance connectivity for non-motorised modes of transport.	• Highway measures to address the capacity constraints are required at J28 to facilitate the development of the garden village. • Any highway improvement works will need to ensure the safe movement of pedestrian and cyclists across the motorway.	• In the long term, a new rail station should help to shift modes, decreasing traffic and alleviating pressure on J28. • Highway measures to address capacity issues will need to consider how they would relate to each other.	• Traffic management measures in the town centre would need to keep apace with wider strategic highway interventions in the area. • Good signage / wayfinding and an improved arrival experience are needed between Station Road and the historic centre.	• Opportunity to enhance pedestrian / cycle signage and wayfinding	• Significant developments will add to traffic volumes increasing the need for strategic highway improvements in the area.

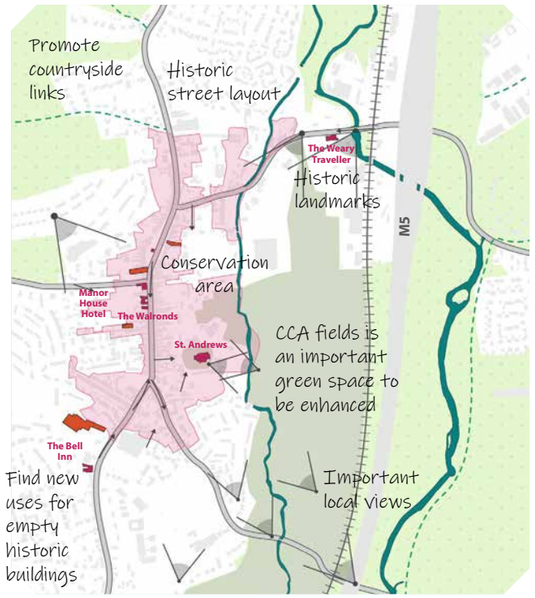
Key messages

- ***Cullompton's population is planned to grow significantly. This creates an opportunity to bring historic buildings back into use and to revitalise the town centre. Planning and investment should aim for new residents use the high street for their shops and services, travelling there on foot or by bicycle.***
- ***Many of the planned projects (the Relief Road, new station, Culm Garden Village and J28 improvements) would place new demands on Station Road which is currently heavily trafficked. Station Road will need to be carefully designed to provide the required capacity, while also improving the arrival experience and making space for pedestrians and cyclists.***
- ***There are a number of barriers between the proposed Culm Garden Village and the town centre: the M5, the River Culm, the CCA fields and the rail line. A number of the proposed projects have the potential to contribute further to this separation (the Relief Road and J28 improvements). A pedestrian and cycle crossing over these barriers is critical to the success of Culm Garden Village. A crossing should be prioritised and designed in now.***

3 Vision and objectives

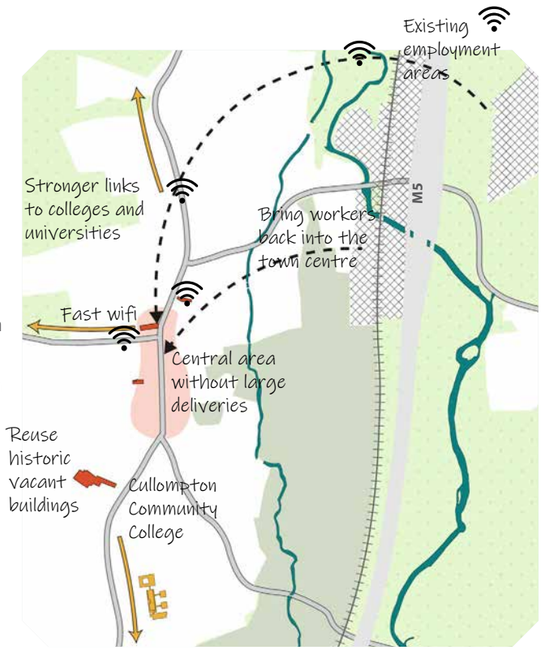
1 CULLOMPTON'S DISTINCTIVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE SHOULD BE ENHANCED AND RESTORED.

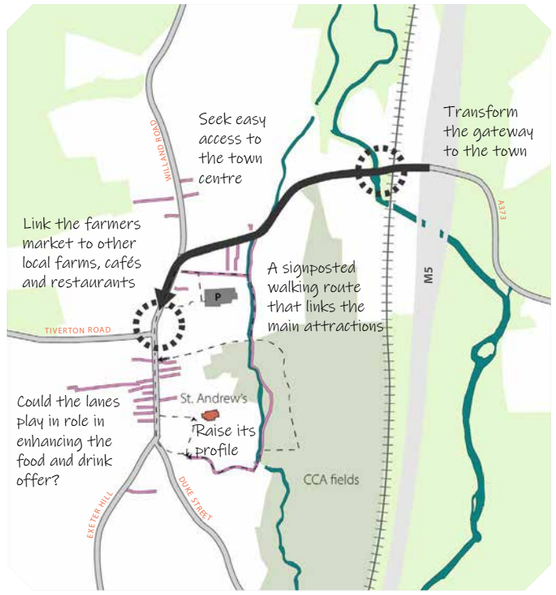
1. Find viable uses for empty historic buildings, including more and improved residential accommodation in the town centre.
2. Seek to improve the appearance and setting of the historic buildings through the planning process and through on-going repair and maintenance by private individuals.
3. Protect, enhance and create key views, green spaces and waterways, with consideration of their biodiversity and amenity roles. Seek to provide more green spaces.
4. Enhance the attractiveness, use and public enjoyment of the CCA fields following the delivery of the relief road.
5. Increasing Cullompton's attractiveness as a place to work, visit and enjoy.



2 CULLOMPTON'S CENTRE SHOULD REDISCOVER ITS HISTORIC ROLE AS A PLACE OF WORK.

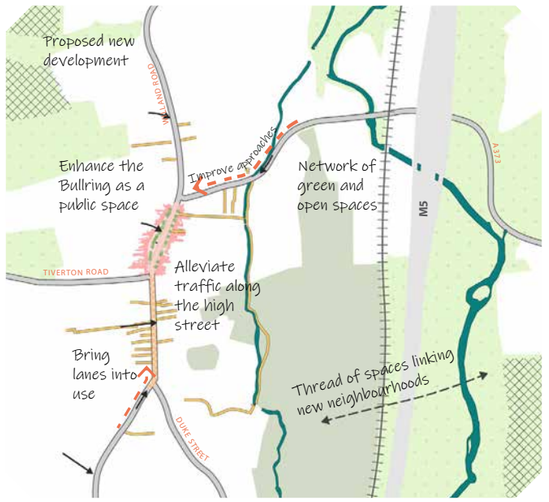
6. Seek out the potential of vacant and under used sites and buildings in the town centre to complement the existing employment offer and enhance town centre vitality. This could provide different types of work space that meet today's needs.
7. Celebrate the town's history and how it can contribute to Cullompton's identity and future offer. Potential opportunities exist to create a unique offer.
8. a) Enhance infrastructure to meet the needs of business including WiFi connectivity and speed with consideration of deliveries and servicing.
   b) Secure the productive use of historic buildings through occupation that meets modern day requirements
9. Improve the town centre's attractiveness and offer to those working in Cullompton's peripheral employment areas including its accessibility via improvements to physical links.
10. Forge connections between businesses and nearby higher educational institutions.





3 AN ENTICING EXPERIENCE FOR VISITORS WILL AIM TO DRAW PEOPLE INTO CULLOMPTON'S TOWN CENTRE.

11. a) Transform the 'gateway' into the town to create a positive first impression.
    b) Encourage holiday-makers en-route to the south west to venture beyond the M5 service station.
12. Raise the profile and make use of Cullompton's main attractions, historic buildings, courts, lanes and open spaces.
13. Strengthen Cullompton as a food and drink destination promoting its cafe's, restaurants and Farmer's Market and forging links with producers in the local area.
14. Enhance the retail, leisure, food and drink offer within an improved historic environment to encourage visits and dwell time.
15. A holistic view of the town centres' parking provision and on-going requirements.



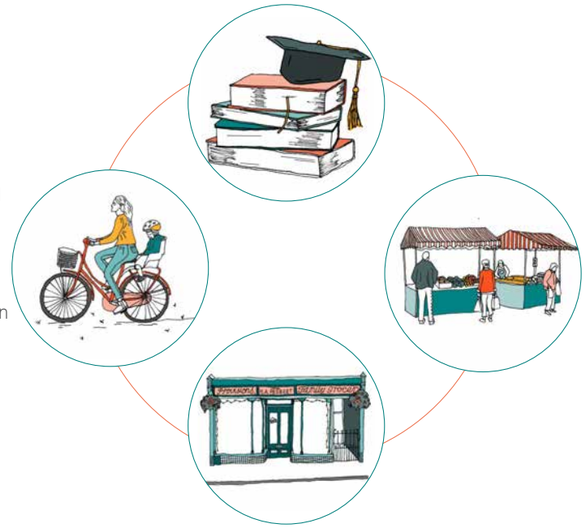


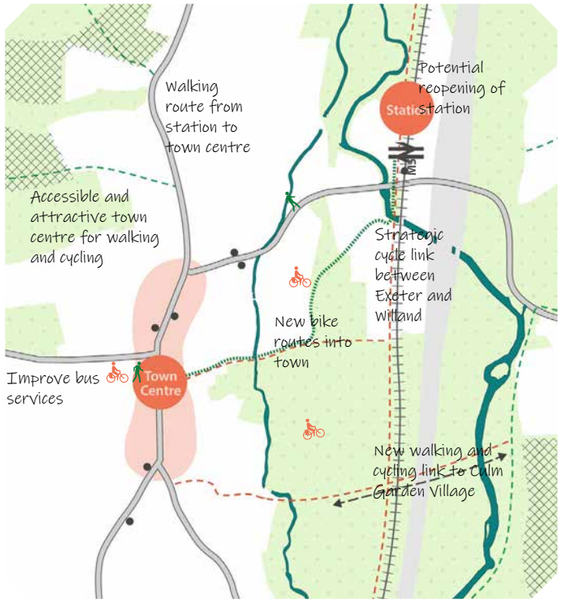
4 CULLOMPTON'S SPACES SHOULD BE RECLAIMED AND REDESIGNED TO SUPPORT A VIBRANT COMMUNITY LIFE.

16. Alleviate traffic along the high street and redesign the space creating a better pedestrian and cycle environment.
17. Establish the Bull Ring as the town's primary outdoor civic space framed by historic buildings enabling flexible use by the community.
18. Upgrade the approaches to the town centre including the leat path on Station Road and on Exeter Road in the area of the Hayridge.
19. Assess opportunities to bring the historic courts and passageways off Fore Street into use with signage, surfacing and lighting improvements.
20. Link new developments through a network of attractive spaces enhancing connectivity to the town centre and reinforcing its purpose.

5 CULLOMPTON SHOULD BE A SUSTAINABLE TOWN FOR ITS GROWING COMMUNITY: WITH HOMES, EDUCATION, COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

21. Make it easy for all new residents to shop locally and identify with Cullompton as their home town.
22. Support Cullompton's schools outside the planning system to encourage opportunities for life-long learning.
23. Ensure recreational outdoor space and leisure facilities support healthy living and social interaction for all.
24. Support and expand Cullompton's popular street markets to cater for a growing community.
25. Provide new homes in the town centre to increase vitality, footfall and spend.
26. Explore the potential for the community and voluntary sector to forge partnerships to support community services.





6 IT WILL BE EASY TO MOVE AROUND ON FOOT, ON BICYCLE, BY BUS AND BY TRAIN.

27. Create high quality pedestrian and cycle links to the proposed train station, Culm Garden Village and other planned development.
28. Give more space and priority to people getting around on foot, on bicycle and by bus in Cullompton, including between the town centre and the proposed train station.
29. Encourage uses which are reliant on large delivery vehicles to relocate from the historic core where possible. Consider how servicing and delivery needs can be accommodated within an enhanced town centre pedestrian environment.
30. Improve links between Fore Street and the CCA fields.
31. Address points of conflict between road traffic, cyclists and pedestrians where possible.
32. Establish strategic cycle links between Cullompton and Willand with improved cycle access to Exeter.
33. Improve signage to encourage exploration around the town by foot and cycle.

4 Masterplan

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 This chapter sets out the spatial strategies that underpin the vision for Cullompton and provides planning and design guidance to achieve this vision.

A diagram showing the main areas of activity are set out to the left showing the key relationships and areas of focus within the town centre and its immediate environs.

Further detail on each of the spatial strategies is provided on the following pages. This covers:

- transport and movement
- open space public realm;
- activity and land use;
- and environment and sustainability.

4.1.2 A closer look is then taken into key sites, including:

- The Station/Gateway area
- The Tannery site

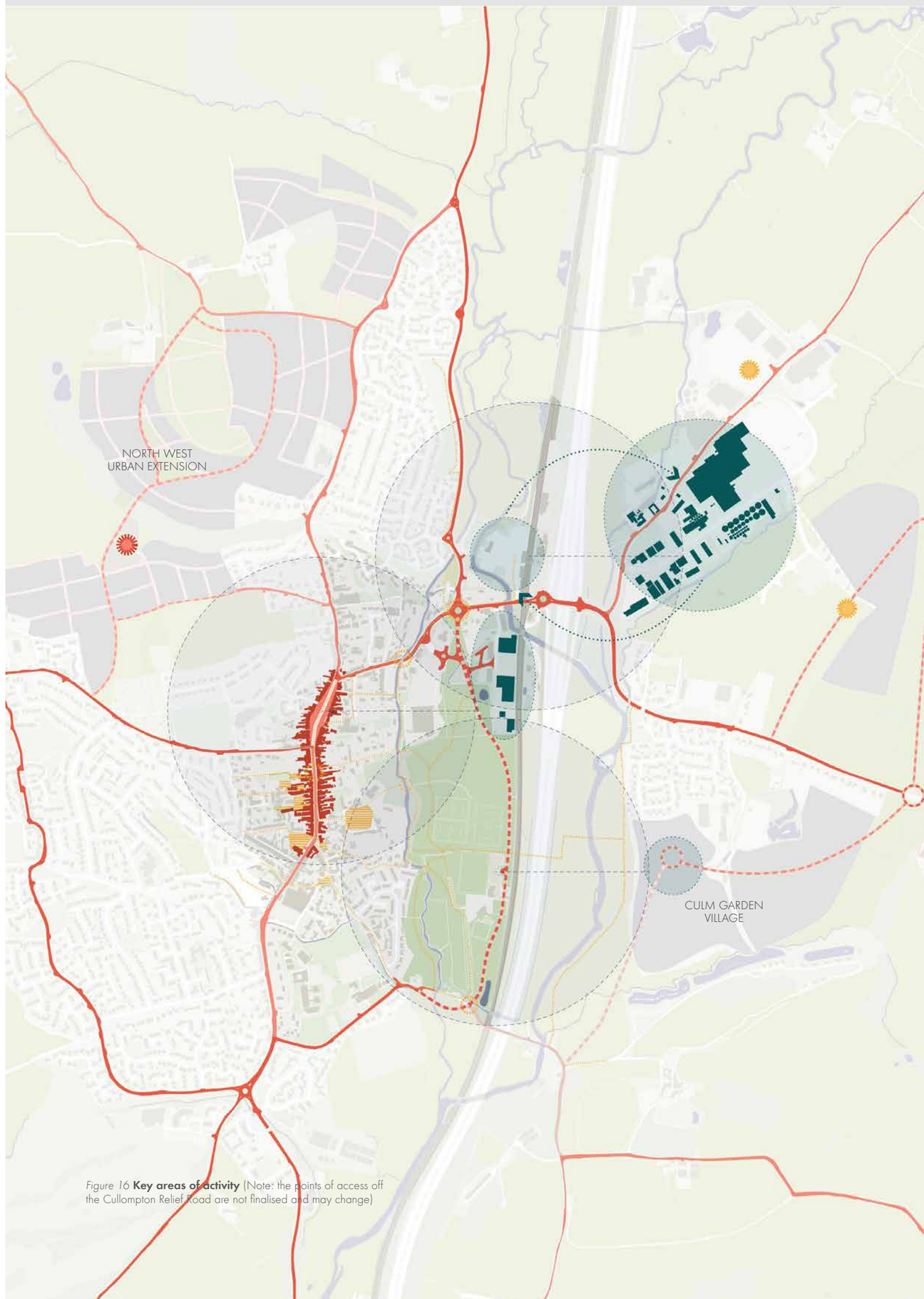


Figure 16 **Key areas of activity** (Note: the points of access off the Cullompton Relief Road are not finalised and may change)

4.2 Routes and movement

4.2.1 In line with national and local guidance, the masterplan looks to support a shift in travel modes, decreasing use of private vehicles and increasing walking, cycling and public transport. This shift would benefit Cullompton residents through decreasing town centre traffic, improving air quality, making travel more affordable, helping respond to the climate emergency as well as boosting the health and wellbeing of residents.

4.2.2 The masterplan's approach to movement is also shaped by a number of proposed projects: the Relief Road, the new station and J28 improvements.

4.2.3 This chapter sets out the routes and movement strategy in terms of:

- Pedestrian network
- Cycling network
- Public transport
- Vehicular network
- Parking strategy

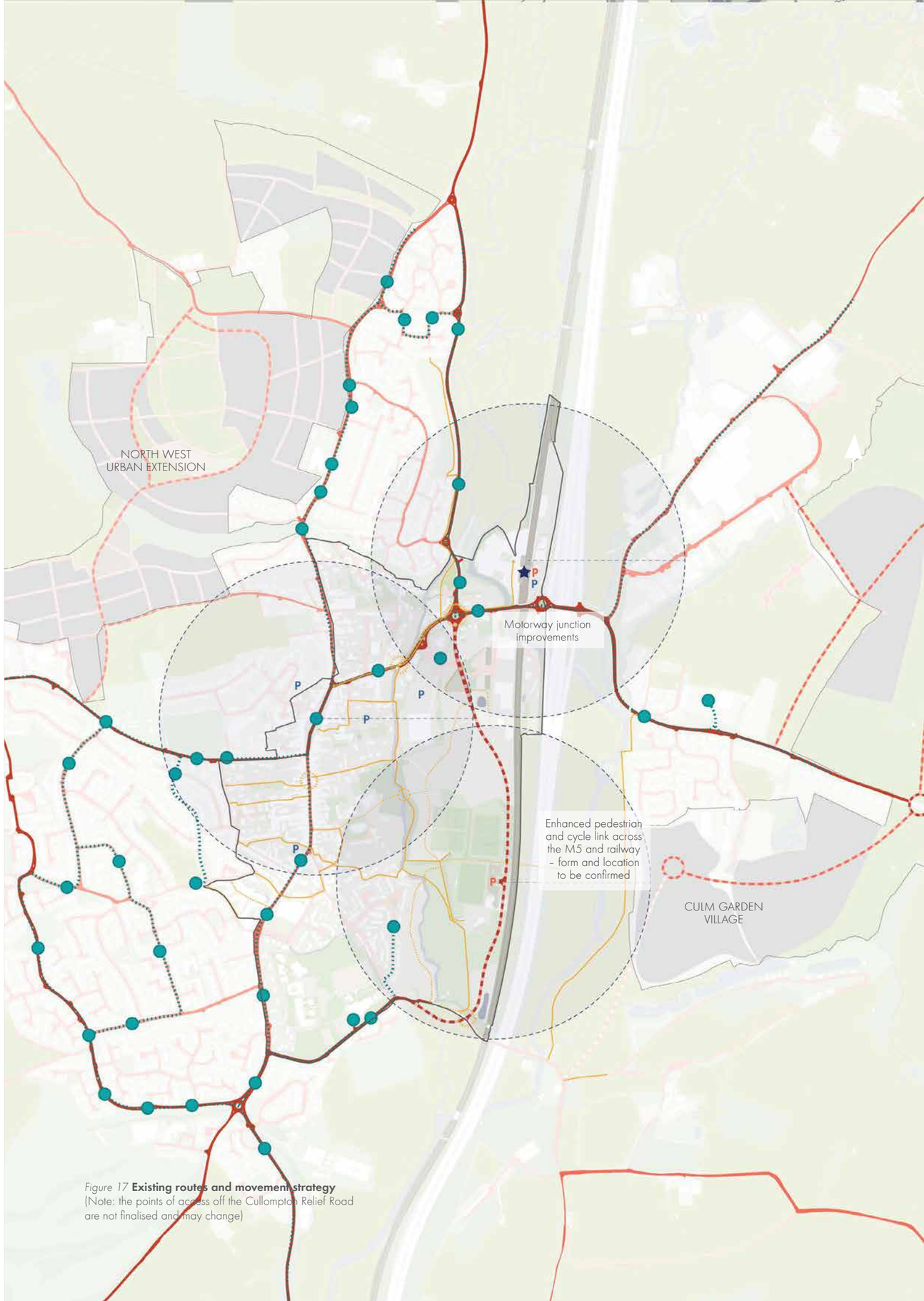


Figure 17 **Existing routes and movement strategy**
(Note: the points of access off the Cullompton Relief Road are not finalised and may change)



Figure 18 **Proposed pedestrian network**
Includes existing routes and proposed routes (subject to landowner agreement) and reinstatement of former leat crossing)



Figure 19 **Pedestrian priority at side roads**

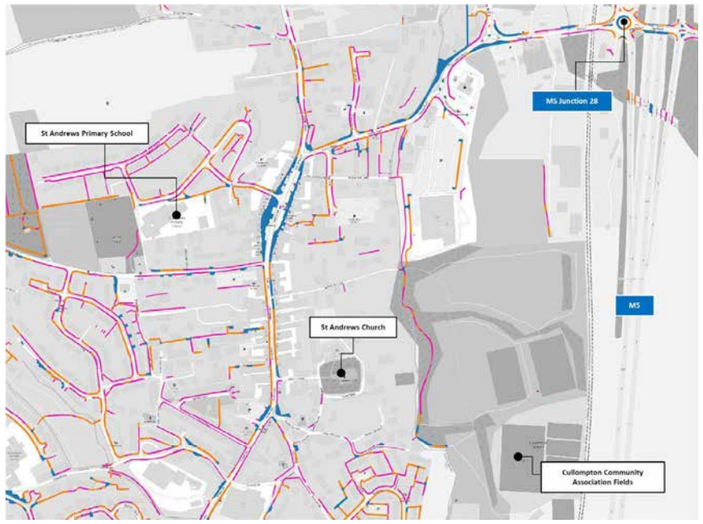


Figure 20 **Footway widths in the town centre (pink under 2m / amber 2-3m / blue over 3m)**

Pedestrian Network

4.2.4 The town centre provides an existing network of footways, lanes, shared and off-carriageway routes for pedestrians. However, the historic nature of much of the network and the domination of roads and parking spaces means that the network is compromised and incomplete. The town centre predates the motor car with use by horse and cart and pedestrians. The arrival of the motor car has resulted in competition for space, reduced air quality and amenity. Whilst some historic routes are commonly lightly trafficked and may operate as informal shared spaces, there are opportunities to improve pedestrian provision in the town centre for all users.

4.2.5 A significant proportion of footways around the town are <2m wide and our calculations show that, between Station Road and Cockpit Hill, 55% of the area of the main street is given-over to roads and parking spaces - a balance which needs to be tipped in favour of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport uses of town centre shops and facilities. The Covid - 19 crisis has prompted a re-focus on the quality of pedestrian space and connectivity.

The Bullring, High Street and Fore Street

4.2.6 The relief road proposals and associated reduction in traffic through the Bullring and Fore Street present a particular opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment. There is an opportunity to narrow the carriageway and widen footways for the length of the high street. Opportunities should be investigated to rationalise parking to increase pedestrian areas whilst still supporting business footfall and allowing deliveries to take place in defined lay-bys. Space could also be used flexibly for different purposes at different times. The Bullring and Fore Street should be designed comprehensively to better control parking, enhance pedestrian areas and provide a more consistent use of surface materials. It also presents an opportunity to declutter the space from the proliferation of bollards, signage, lighting, seating, planters.

4.2.7 There is an opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment at side roads, prioritising pedestrians over turning traffic. There is also potential to narrow and tighten the junction of Bullring / St Andrews Road which is presently 19m wide as it meets the main road - this would reduce the speed of approaching vehicles, particularly from the High Street. The Fore Street / Cockpit Hill junction could be similarly amended, providing additional footway whilst enabling all vehicle turning movements at an appropriate speed. Side road should prioritise pedestrian movements across junctions.

4.2.8 There is the potential within the town centre to address the domination by motor vehicles. This could include providing opportunities to reclaim space for public use such as at the Bullring. The Bullring has carriageway widths of almost 11m in places, with significant parts of the area given over to perpendicular and echelon parking which generates reversing vehicle movements. Manual for Streets indicates that a carriageway width of 5.5m would generally enable two Heavy Goods Vehicles to pass, with 6.0m being suitable for two-way bus movements. This means a significant amount of space in the Bullring could be given over to pedestrians and cyclists, while maintaining two-way vehicular access. As part of any works, attention should be given to the consistency of materials and street furniture; the location of parking / delivery spaces; and the management of signage and other potential 'clutter'.

4.2.9 There are four principal crossing points on Fore Street, High Street and the Bullring - two zebra crossings, a central pedestrian island and a signalised crossing at the Station Road junction. The four existing formal crossing points serve a section of road 420m in length, with an average distance between crossings of 105m. If the high street were to be improved there is an opportunity to integrate crossings at desire lines, for example between Middle Mill Lane and the lane which connects to the Methodist Church. Narrowing the carriageway would also help to improve the ability for people to cross the road. Careful use of materials and traffic calming measures should be used to reduce vehicle speeds and prioritise pedestrians.

Pedestrian network

4.2.10 The town centre is relatively well connected on a north-south axis and there are many smaller roads and lanes providing for east-west movements. However, these east-west movements through the town centre are more fragmented, often using narrower footways, lanes with variable surfacing, and requiring people to cross main roads.

4.2.11 The masterplan recognises the need to improve existing east-west movements through better way-finding, improved surfacing and footpath widening where possible. The conversion of narrower lanes to formal shared surfaces could also be considered i.e Ways Lane, Crow Green, New Street, Cockpit Hill and Queen Square. Enhancement works will need to meet latest Government guidance.

4.2.12 Pedestrian connectivity is also critical on key routes into the town centre including along Tiverton Road and on Station Road. On Tiverton Road, DCC is implementing schemes to provide 'missing links' between footways. At Station Road the new relief road roundabout is to include pedestrian crossing facilities to complement the existing Zebra crossing and provide connections to the potential new rail station to the north, reconnecting the town with the national rail network and enabling sustainable long distance trips from within and around Cullompton.

4.2.13 Away from the road network, the CCA fields accommodate public footpath links and provide a pleasant and convenient route along the eastern side of the town. Consideration to be given to upgrading current footpaths to accommodate those with mobility issues. This potentially could include greater use of stone or hoggin surfacing on less heavily used paths, whilst the flood impact of non-permeable materials such as tarmac or other hard wearing-course will need to be considered on other paths.

4.2.14 There is also an opportunity to reinstate the former ironbridge crossing over the leat close to St Andrew's Church. Subject to landowner agreement it could provide new and improved connections to the town centre.

4.2.15 Proposals for the Culm Garden Village will need east west pedestrian and cycle links across the M5 motorway to the town centre. These routes should be of a high standard of construction enabling their use throughout the year.

4.2.16 Footway improvements to the Culm Garden Village will include Meadow Lane and linkages at Duke Street / Old Hill.

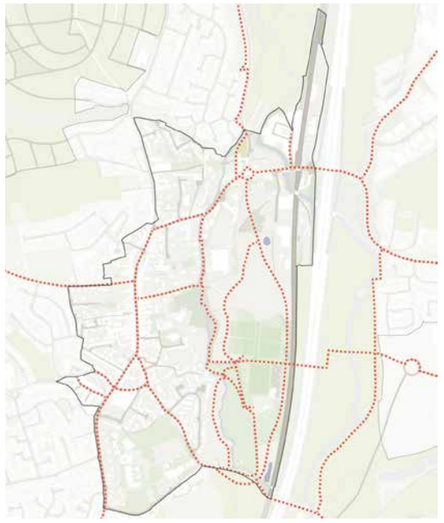


Figure 21 **Proposed cycle network** (includes existing and proposed routes)



Figure 23 **Mini Holland scheme in Waltham Forest showing cycle lanes and zebra crossings**



Figure 22 **The CCA Fields could be brought up to standard for cycling and Cullompton could help close the gap becoming part of the National cycling Network.**

Cycle Network and Cycle Parking

4.2.17 Given the size of the town, cycling should be an alternative to cars for short journeys. However, the current volume of motorised traffic in the town centre is a deterrent to many would-be cyclists.

4.2.18 There is no dedicated cycle provision in the town centre and this should be addressed in the design of the Bullring and Fore Street as part of future plans for the high street once the Relief Road is constructed. Given the width of the high street cycle lanes could be considered.

4.2.19 Cycle measures should also be implemented on Station Road, Willand Road and Tiverton Road where space permits. Cycle provision in the town centre will be viewed comprehensively within an enhanced pedestrian environment whilst ensuring vehicular traffic is adequately provided for. This will allow a connected in-town network which can then link to outlying villages.

4.2.20 Likewise, comprehensive cycle parking should be provided in convenient and safe locations around the town centre. The level of provision should take account of the growing population and emerging evidence of likely behavioural change during and post-Covid, including increased levels of cycling as a means of socially-distanced travel. Cycle parking should be located alongside existing public transport bus stops and travel nodes.

4.2.21 The relief road proposes a 2m footway along the western side. Pedestrians and cyclists will be encouraged to use the CCA fields. It is recommended that existing and new paths through the CCA fields are upgraded / provided in accordance with recommendations of Local Transport Note 1/20 regarding cycle infrastructure design (Department for Transport, July 2020).

4.2.22 STRAVA data shows the wide network of direct routes (e.g B3181) and parallel country lanes, enable the 14 mile trip to Exeter to be undertaken by the more experienced cyclist. However, improvements to the National Cycle Network between Exeter and Cullompton could attract other less confident cyclists to cycle to Exeter.

Covid-19 recovery focus









Figure 24 **Examples of cycle and footbridges. Clockwise from top left: Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Hassett Park Gollings, Luchtsingel Rotterdam and a green bridge at Mile End**

Pedestrian/cycle crossing over the motorway

4.2.23 Culm Garden Village proposes up to 5,000 new homes on the opposite side of the M5 from Cullompton's town centre. While there will be small local centres and convenience shops, the aspiration is that these new residents and workers will also visit the historic town centre for services and shops. The two existing crossings are J28/Station Road, which currently has a very poor environment for pedestrians and cyclists, and Duke Street.

4.2.24 There are a number of barriers (existing and proposed) between the town centre and the proposed Culm Garden Village. From west to east there is: the proposed Relief Road, the railway line, the M5 and the River Culm. Work is required to understand what type of pedestrian and cycle-bridge would be feasible and if the bridge should span all of these barriers. For example, the bridge could land before or after the Relief Road to the west and the River Culm to the east where smaller crossings could be integrated.

4.2.25 Key considerations for the design of the crossing include:

- The bridge should connect directly with pedestrian / cycle routes in the town.
- The bridge and approaches should be wheelchair accessible and should allow cyclists to traverse without dismounting.
- The design of the bridge should result in a safe and comfortable environment, considering ascent/descent, noise, lighting and wind.
- The crossing should be in place at the earliest opportunity to embed sustainable habits for use of the town centre.
- If viability allows, the potential of creating a green bridge and/or wildlife crossing could be explored. This would mean integrating planting and green infrastructure and would provide an expansion for the CCA Fields, integrating them into the wider countryside. A green bridge has the potential to improve the character of the space, enhance the green network and to support the movement of wildlife.

4.2.26 A feasibility and design process should be undertaken as a next step.

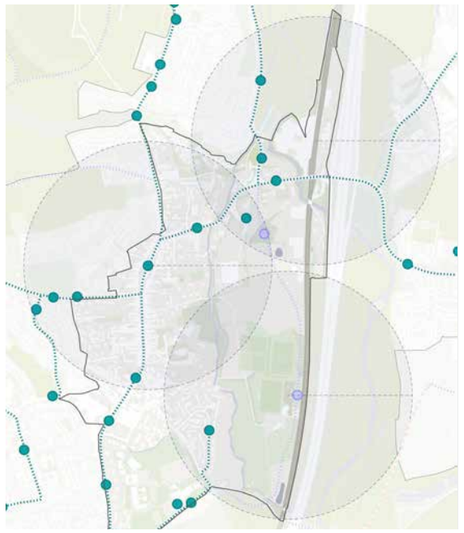


Figure 25 **Proposed bus network**



Figure 26 **Photo of railway line from Tiverton Parkway**

Public Transport - Bus

4.2.27 The town is served by buses including local and strategic services, focussed on well-used stops on the High Street. Cullompton is also served by the Plymouth - Bristol Airport Falcon coach service which travels along the M5 and can presently be accessed on Station Road opposite to the Weary Traveller Pub.

4.2.28 It is critical to the wellbeing of the town centre that buses are retained within the High Street. Any future traffic management will need to ensure that the provision of bus journeys are accommodated.

4.2.29 Bus provision should be extended to provide services to areas of new development including the North West Urban Extension and Culm Garden Village.

4.2.30 As regards to the Falcon, drop off / pick up moved to the northern side of Station Road early in 2020. Devon County Council are reviewing opportunities to provide a layby on the northern side of Station Road alongside relief Road works. This would integrate well with the proposed rail station and travel node.

Public Transport - Train

4.2.31 Both Cullompton and Wellington stations were closed in 1964 with the loss of a stopping train service; however both towns have grown in population since then and are the largest settlements between Exeter and Taunton. The Devon and Somerset Metro Partnership has been working towards the reinstatement of these stations. This partnership includes local authorities, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, the two local Members of Parliament and representatives from the rail industry. In 2019, Mid Devon District Council and Somerset West and Taunton Council became the Project Sponsors.

4.2.32 The rail mainline through Cullompton would provide onward travel to local stations such as Wellington, and also to the wider regional / national rail network serving Taunton, Exeter, Bristol and beyond. This would be a very positive advancement for the town, in particular in creating sustainable travel option for commuters, most of which travel to/from Exeter. The station area provides great opportunities to provide an interchange hub; facilitating rail, bus, car, walk and cycle mode transfer and co-location of cycle and vehicular parking. The proposals to re-open Cullompton Train Station is part of a wider project to improve rail services along the Bristol – Exeter corridor. Enhancement of rail services, including the reopening of new stations, is an important part of the multimodal approach to meeting the travel needs of the region.

4.2.33 Re-instating the train station aims to provide sustainable transport options for residents and visitors to Cullompton and contribute towards reducing carbon emissions, congestion and air quality in the town as well as cutting residents commuting times. Importantly in addition to improving rail accessibility to the key centres of Exeter and Taunton it will also open up economic opportunities for Cullompton and act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration of the town.

4.2.34 In February 2021 the Devon and Somerset Metro Board submitted its Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to the Department for Transport to reopen



Figure 27 **Proposed vehicular network**

stations at Cullompton and Wellington. This work was funded through the Government's 'Restoring Your Railways Fund'. There is a great deal of support for the proposal and initial feedback from the Department for Transport is encouraging. Should the next stages of the scheme's development prove successful construction could take place in 2024, subject to funding.

Motor Vehicle Network

The Bullring, High Street and Fore Street

4.2.35 The Relief Road is proposed to be built by 2023 / 2024 to reduce traffic on the high street. Once in place, there is an opportunity to redesign the high street. Through the consultation process, residents were asked for their views. 90.5% of respondents thought that once the Relief Road is in place that restricting traffic is a good idea. When asked what they thought should be done, the most popular response was 'One-way working' followed by 'Access for homeowners/businesses only'.

4.2.36 Given this feedback, detailed assessments will be undertaken once the Relief Road has been constructed, to understand options available within the constraints, for example of space and existing rights of access.

4.2.37 Drivers should be encouraged to take the Relief Road instead of the High Street whenever possible. A gateway feature at the junction of Exeter Road / Meadow Way might encourage this. Drivers should also be motivated to drive slowly along the High Street. The carriage way could be narrowed in places to provide a more conducive pedestrian environment. Other traffic measures could include a lower speed limit, a weight limit or the use of shared surfacing (to latest Department for Transport guidance).

4.2.38 During the preparation of the Masterplan roadworks were undertaken in Cullompton which closed the Fore Street / High Street route between Cockpit Hill and Tiverton Road. Traffic data shows that there was an overall reduction in vehicle trips through the town centre as a result, despite vehicles transferring onto alternative routes. During this time traffic analysis took place.

J28

4.2.39 Devon County Council is working with Highways England to identify longer term transport solutions to address capacity issues at J28, unlock housing growth and ensure smooth flow of traffic on and off the M5. This work is currently at strategic outline business case stage where a number of potential options are being investigated. As part of the scheme improved pedestrian / cycle movements will be developed.

4.2.40 In either case, it is understood that pedestrian and cycle facilities would be provided as part of the scheme, and there is an ongoing commitment to the early provision of a dedicated pedestrian / cycle bridge separate from the motorway junction. These sustainable transport facilities are needed in order to establish appropriate patterns of travel from the outset of occupation of the Garden Village.

4.2.41 Junction improvements will alleviate current delays to traffic in peak periods. Traffic in the town centre would be significantly improved with the construction of the Cullompton Relief Road

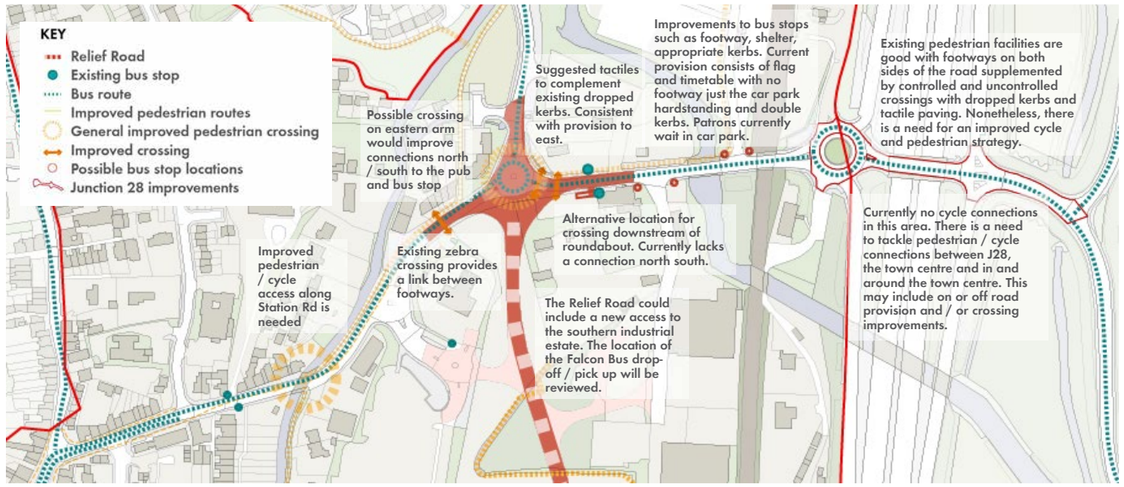


Figure 28 **Potential pedestrian and cycle improvements at Station Road and M5 J28 (current layout)**

and junction improvement works; reducing the environmental impact of queued and slow-moving vehicles.

4.2.42 Traffic accessing the town from the motorway should pass through distinct 'gateways' which demonstrate a change in character from a strategic highway route into a town centre area where pedestrian / cyclists have greater emphasis. These gateways will need to make it clear where drivers have entered a low speed area where priority is shared between users.

4.2.43 Existing pedestrian and cycle provision across town including along Station Road can be difficult; particularly where it is not continuous and where it is shared with vehicles. Further detailed analysis of cycle and pedestrian provision will be required. Of particular importance is the need to improve pedestrian / cycle access to and from the town, the new Railway Station and Culm Garden Village. This could include improved provision along Station Road, along with an investigation of alternative and complimentary east / west routings. Measures to be investigated could include a range of improvements including dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes, signing and installation of tactile paving where this is missing at access junctions.

COVID-19 and traffic patterns in Cullompton

4.2.44 Emerging evidence suggests that COVID-19 is likely to result in significant shifts in commuting by those that are able to work from home (a stated preference to work at home 40% of the week seems commonplace). This leads to key considerations including:

- The need for flexible work / meeting / collaboration / IT spaces in the town centre, in lieu of longer-distance commuting.
- Embedding the increase in walking and cycling, and embracing inclusive travel technologies that may include e-bikes and e-scooters in urban design.
- Supporting and maintaining local public transport through the Covid crisis and into a post-Covid future.
- A 'decide and provide' / 'vision and validate' approach to the assessment of travel demand, as opposed to outmoded 'predict and provide' techniques which serve largely to create the same sorts of transport environments and issues which have happened in the past.

Covid-19 recovery focus

Parking Strategy

4.2.45 The town's car parking provision is well used and for the most part well placed to intercept vehicles at arrival points in the town.

4.2.46 The masterplan recommends retaining sufficient delivery and disabled parking spaces in convenient locations within the town centre, whilst enhancing access to well-located carparks around the edge of the centre and increasing the level of use of 'interceptor' carparks at the northern and southern ends of the town centre.

4.2.47 This strategy enables the transformation of the Bull ring / Fore Street corridor into a more pedestrian focused space, whilst providing and improving access for people that need to use cars to access the town given its rural hinterland.

4.2.48 It is not proposed through this masterplan that additional parking is provided. Over provision of car parking undermines the strategy for sustainable transport movements and would be an inefficient use of land.

4.2.49 In general, car parking should prioritise disabled car parking spaces and electric car parking charging points.

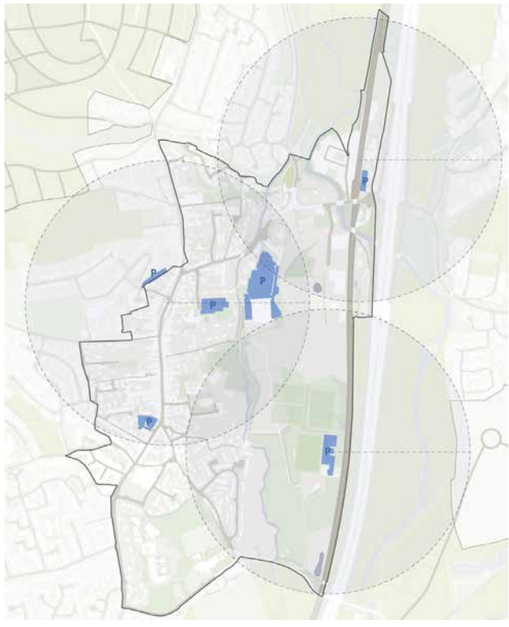


Figure 29 **Plan showing public parking provision including provision as part of the relief road proposals. The circles show primary travel nodes.**

4.3 Public realm and open space

4.3.1 Cullompton has a number of public and green spaces. However, the connections between them currently lack cohesion. The CCA fields are currently the town's primary green space. There is an opportunity for the lanes to provide strong and characterful pedestrian connections to the high street and beyond. Following the implementation of the Relief Road, the Bullring will be transformed into a public space that has the flexibility to hold markets and community events. Alongside wider improvements to make the high street more pedestrian friendly, a number of smaller spaces could be re-imagined as places to rest and play, whilst integrating nature.

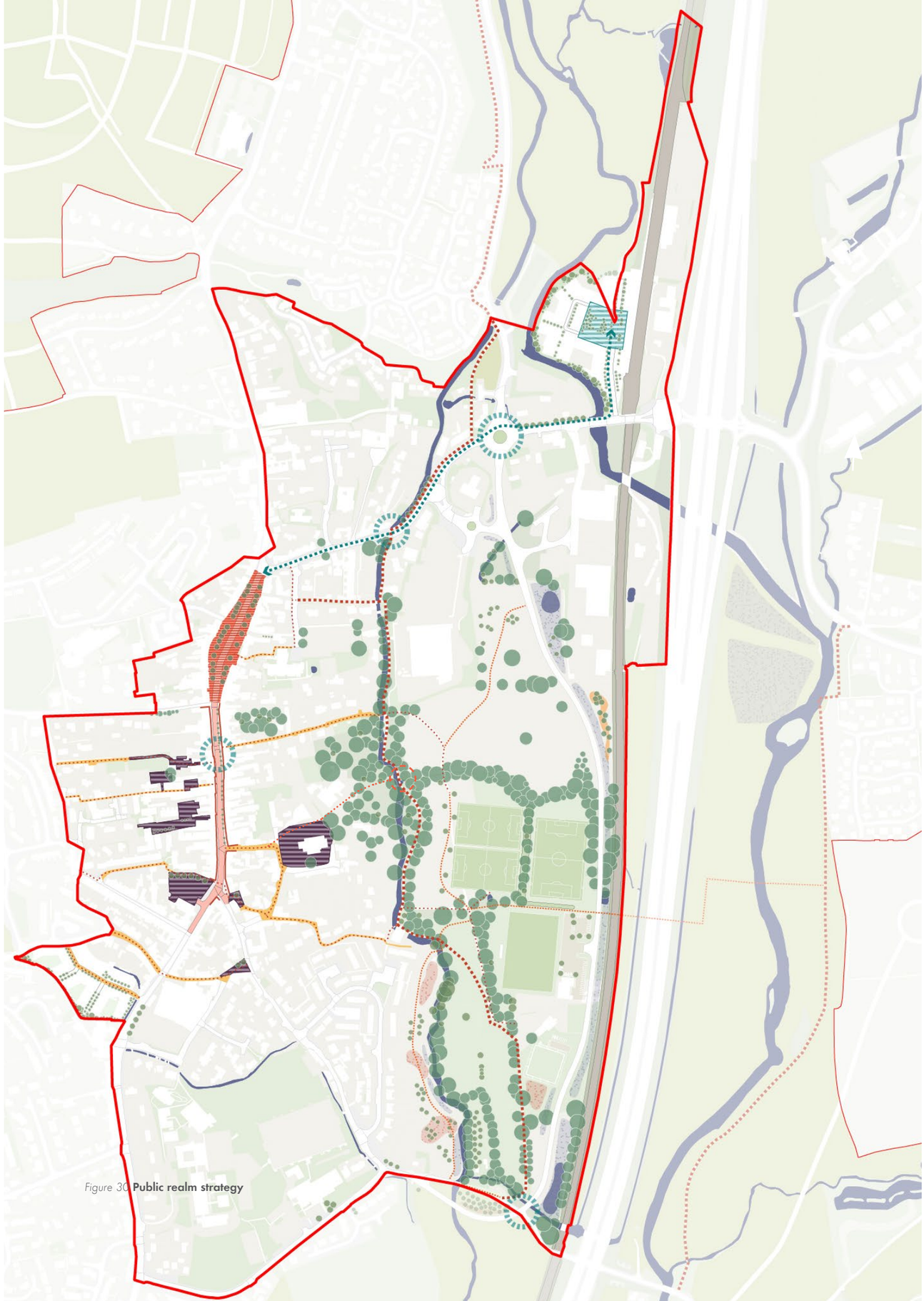


Figure 30 **Public realm strategy**





Figure 31 **Stockbridge Water Meadows, an example of a green space investments and water course improvements.**

CCA Fields

4.3.2 Cullompton's principal green space is the Cullompton Community Association (CCA) Fields. The community owned CCA Fields provide a children's playground, a footpath along the leat, open fields/ meadows and a home to the Rangers' Football Club and Cullompton Bowling Club. Being in an area of high flood risk, they also serve as the town's floodplains.

4.3.3 The CCA Fields are well integrated with the town, with access from Duke Street in the south, Lower Mill Lane, Middle Mill Lane and Higher Mill Lane from west, as well as from Station Road and Tesco in the north. While accessibility is good, the prominence of this green space could be better communicated to visitors through wayfinding and signage. There is also an opportunity to increase the number of connections between the CCA fields and the town centre through the reinstatement of the former leat crossing, close to St Andrew's Church. This is set out more fully in Chapter 4.6.

4.3.4 The town lacks connections to the east, with the railway line and motorway creating a barrier for both people and wildlife. There are opportunities to improve pedestrian / cycle connectivity to the proposed CGV to the east. The current Duke Street bridge could also potentially assist in improving pedestrian / cycle connectivity as well as providing a wildlife east / west corridor.

4.3.5 The Relief Road proposals reconfigure the sports facilities, including provision of new car parking and adjustments to the CCA boundaries to reflect compensatory land utilised as a result of the relief road scheme. The sports facilities will be well integrated within the CCA fields and as such will benefit from the existing network of paths. Measures are proposed to create biodiversity gain and mitigate the road's impacts on the green space.

4.3.6 The Culm Garden Village proposals will deliver a new neighbourhood on the opposite side of the motorway. There will be a need for better connections between the new development and the town centre. The solution could be the construction of a bridge. However, more detailed analysis is required to understand the most appropriate solution; whether it be a new bridge, enhancement of existing whilst considering the most appropriate location for the improved connections.

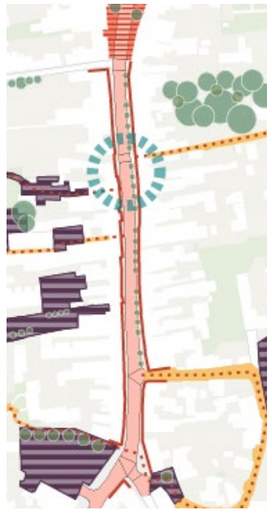




Figure 32 **The High Street in Lewes is one way with traffic calming measures. As a result the space is better for pedestrians and shops** ©Google



Otley Street, Skipton provides a one way through route while giving wide pavements and a characterful environment ©Google

Improving the High Street

4.3.7 Cullompton's high street (Bullring and Fore Street) is heavily trafficked with narrow pavements, making it unappealing to spend time there and limiting the commercial potential of the shops. A key step in reviving the town centre is a shift from being 'a place to go through', to 'a place to go to'. The implementation of the Relief Road will relieve the High Street of traffic. This change creates the opportunity to transform the character and function of the High Street.

4.3.8 A key ambition for the transformation of the high street is to rebalance the street space given to pedestrians and cyclists. The relief road proposals and associated reduction in traffic through the high street present a particular opportunity to review the pedestrian environment. Opportunities should be investigated to reclaim space for pedestrians / cyclists whilst still supporting business footfall and deliveries but ensuring traffic is adequately provided for. There is potential to transfer informal off-street carriageway parking to footway. Better and more consistent use of materials could control footway parking by design, whilst providing an opportunity to declutter the space from the proliferation of bollards, signage, lighting, seating, planters. Side roads would need to adopt a standard DCC treatment which could prioritise pedestrian movements across junctions. Where possible junction radii should be reduced to make it easier to cross, for example at the St Andrew's Hill junction.

4.3.9 Given the size of the town, cycling offers a promising alternative to cars for short journeys. Integrating segregated cycling lanes along the length of the high street should be explored to improve comfort-levels for non-seasoned cyclists. The high street cycle provision should be designed to enhance connections to the future Station, to Tiverton Road and to the Community College. The route could also provide connection onto the town's lanes and courts which are already largely car-free routes. Cycle parking should be provided in locations which provide easy access to shops without cluttering pedestrian routes, such as the Bullring and the Hayridge Centre.

4.3.10 Bus stops are very well used on the high street. Public transport should be retained and given pride of place in the town centre once the relief road is in place. Space around bus stops could be enhanced for comfortable waiting.

4.3.11 Drivers should be encouraged to take the Relief Road instead of the high street whenever possible, as well as to drive slowly along the high street. At the design stage of the enhancement of Fore Street, a review of access (one way, business and resident access only) could be considered. Traffic calming measures such as timed delivery restrictions, lower speed and weight limits, narrowing of the carriageway and different surfacing are all elements that could be considered. A design process with modelling and consultation will be needed to determine the future layout of the high street.

4.3.12 Cullompton's high street contains buildings of historic merit and architectural quality, however many of these are in a state of disrepair and they often suffer from a poor streetscape setting. The HAZ project will provide a programme of works to improve the heritage of the town. This wider project will include shop front improvements and public realm works to help unify the character of the High Street and restore original architectural features and shop fronts (see section 5).





Figure 33
Reigate High Street still has traffic through it but wider pavements near the market building ©Google



Figure 34
Lewes High Street has a wider section which can close to traffic to support the town's markets and events. Image copyright: Editor5807, CC BY 3.0

The Bullring

4.3.13 As its name suggests, the Bullring has long been the location of the town's market. However its current use as the principle north-south route has meant the space feels more like a road than a market square. Alongside the changes to the wider high street, with implementation of the Relief Road the Bullring has the potential to be reimagined as a flexible public space which supports markets and events.

4.3.14 At the design stage for the enhancement of the Bullring as a flexible public space, consideration could be given to the area as a shared surface or level area that brings together the whole of the Bullring – pavements, parking, carriageway – as one larger space. This space could adapt flexibly to accommodate events of different scales. For example, for smaller events car parking could be suspended with vehicular access remaining, while the street could be closed off to traffic entirely for larger events. Electricity and water access should be integrated to better support the market and events. A cohesive approach to surfacing and materials would enable the space to support a variety of functions, while being read as one.

4.3.15 Consideration should be given to how the space could be used at different times. There is potential for the space to be brought to life by local businesses, including outdoor seating for restaurants, pubs and cafes, as well as displays by local shops. Pop-ups and kiosks could also be used to generate more activity with additional festivals and events.

4.3.16 Opportunities will be explored to provide sustainable drainage to reduce the risk of surface water flooding, to provide treatment of the runoff and to increase biodiversity.

4.3.17 There are currently 36 car parking spaces in the Bullring. They are arranged perpendicular or echelon to the carriageway for one hour maximum use. Subject to capacity, the nearby car parks at St Andrews and Forge Way could facilitate additional parking, such that the Bullring could be redesigned to reduce the number of spaces provided, giving over more space to more active town centre uses such as the market, pop up uses, café seating and cycle parking. Remaining car parking spaces could be provided as parallel or diagonal bays and should prioritise disabled people.



Figure 35
Ashwin Street, Dalston, an example of activation of the space through SUDS planting and spill out of local businesses.



Improving the Courts and Lanes

4.3.18 The Courts and Lanes off the High Street provide permeable, less trafficked routes. However, they are poorly signed and have inconsistent, low grade surfacing.

4.3.19 A wayfinding and signage strategy should be implemented for the Lanes, raising the prominence of through routes and directing people towards landmarks or public space. This wayfinding could communicate a visitor's loop - along the Leat, Lower Mill Lane, High Street, Higher Mill Lane taking in St Andrew's Church. There is also an opportunity for historic interpretation signage, helping to tell Cullompton's story.

4.3.20 Lanes could also be improved by upgrading the surfacing to a common palette of materials. Subtle cues in the surfacing could help with legibility of these routes from the high street. Rain gardens which allow for sustainable urban drainage could be integrated where space allows. Resident and servicing access should be maintained.





Figure 36
Top left: Oswestry, an examples of a lane improved through lighting
Left: Kendal, an example of distinctive surfacing at entry points
Above: Holt, an example of a planted lane.

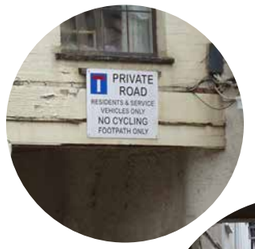




Figure 37
Above: signage currently discourages use of the lanes
Below: the lanes have potential to become characterful routes and spaces.

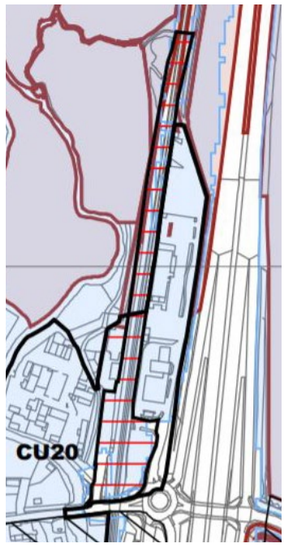




Figure 38
Barneveld Noord Station in the Netherlands uses shipping containers to make a very light touch and cost effective facility. Image Copyright: Spoorjan, CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

Figure 39 **Adopted policies map (July 2020) showing safeguarded area for railway station (red hatching)**

The Future Railway Station

4.3.21 An important part of the station project will be ensuring an attractive sense of arrival with pleasant outdoor spaces. The detailed design of the station would also need to provide for adequate pedestrian and cycle movements, parking and other public transport provision.









Figure 40
Top left: Holt, a bench and some planting create a quiet space to rest in the town. Left: Hackney Downs Studios, terraced steps built into an awkward corner give people a place to catch the evening sun. Above: Walthamstown street corner planted informally.

Developing a network of 'pocket parks'

4.3.22 Public spaces can play a multitude of roles for local people, they can provide places to sit and rest; places to experience nature; places for children to play; places to experience art or culture; or places to socialise. Cullompton lacks connections between its areas of public open space.

4.3.23 There are a number of small scale spaces in the town which have the potential to be enhanced as active public spaces, including;

- Pound Square and the area in front of the Hayridge Centre Car Park
- The space in front of the Methodist Church
- Part of the Community Centre Car Park

4.3.24 The masterplan proposes these are transformed into 'pocket parks', providing doorstep play (a play space within sight of home, where children can play within view of known adults), public seating, pop up activities, tree planting and/or rain gardens.

4.3.25 There are examples in the town of where this has already been done successfully, including the gardens of the Walronds and the corner of Cockpit Hill and the high street.





Figure 41
Above: the Walronds garden
Right: the Corner of Cockpit Lane



Figure 42 **Plan showing access from Cullompton to the countryside and nearby cultual and historic landmarks. There are also a range of smaller privately owned facilities including, for example, farmshops and country pubs, glamping and wineries.**

Covid-19 recovery focus

Strengthening access to the countryside

4.3.26 Cullompton residents also benefit from its rural setting with access to the countryside. There are a number of popular routes from the town for walking, cycling and running along country roads and public rights of way. In addition to these, there are popular destinations within short reach of the town including Blackdown Hills AONB, East Devon AONB, Killerton, Knightshayes Court, Ashclyst Forest, Grand Western Canal Country Park and Broadhembury Hill Fort.

4.3.27 This access to the countryside provides high quality walking/cycling routes, as well as the many positive benefits of contact with nature. There are a number of opportunities to improve and enhance access to the countryside for Cullompton residents, including:

- The M5 represents a significant barrier to the east of the town. Old Hill Road, including the bridge over the M5 will be required to carry vehicular traffic. However, opportunities should be embraced for Duke Street and Old Hill to help improve accessibility as a high quality route for people on foot and cycle as a means to provide a high quality crossing over the M5 which links the town and CCA fields to the Culm Garden Village and beyond.

- New developments should respect existing rights of way and integrate and enhance connections to the countryside. Routes for walking and cycling should be prioritised over vehicular routes. They should link housing to schools, shops, employment areas, recreational/sports facilities and rights of way/ countryside to encourage healthier lifestyles and minimise car use.

- There is an opportunity to develop cycling routes which join with the National Cycling Network. There is a strategic gap between route 3 (Tiverton, Halberton, Willand) and route 34 (Exeter, Topsham) which Cullompton could play a role in connecting. This would both provide residents access to safe, enjoyable cycling routes as well as draw visitors into the town for a stop on their journey.

- Key exit/entry points from the town could be upgraded to better serve pedestrians and cyclists, with wider pavements, higher priority at junctions and improved signage. This includes Tiverton Road, Five Bridges and Station Road/Millenium Way.

4.4 Activity and land use











Figure 43
Examples of vacant and historic shop fronts being brought back into use for temporary/pop up uses. Left, Glasgow City Council's transformation of Saltmarket and right, Meanwhile Space and Harrow Council's transformation of a key shopfront in Harrow.

Homes

4.4.1 A significant number of new homes is planned for Cullompton, including on two large strategic sites. The NW Cullompton Urban Extension proposes 600 homes in the first phase and 750 in the second. The East Cullompton Local Plan allocation proposes 2,600 homes and is intended to form the first phase of Culm Garden Village, which could see the delivery of up to 5,000 new homes.

4.4.2 New developments should integrate with existing rights of way and enhance connections to the town centre and the countryside, as well as providing attractive walking and cycling routes to schools, shops, employment areas, recreational and sports facilities to encourage healthier lifestyles and minimise car use.

4.4.3 Cullompton's town centre should remain the retail and civic centre for the growing population. Retail facilities in new developments should complement rather than compete with the town centre.

4.4.4 Given the high rate of town centre vacancy, there is also an opportunity for upper storeys of buildings to be converted into high quality homes. Additional town centre living both increases the footfall on the high street and adds to the diversity of types of homes on the market.

Shops and services

4.4.5 Cullompton is the shopping and civic centre supporting residents of the town and the surrounding villages and countryside. The high street includes a high proportion of shops, cafes and restaurants (65% of occupiers are A1-5), with a small proportion of offices (6% B1) and leisure (7% D1). In recent years, there has been a surge in cafes, dog grooming salons, charity shops and health related uses (chiropractors, dentists, etc).

4.4.6 Many towns in the UK have been subject in recent years to a homogenization of both the types of shops and the general uses in town centres. Cullompton, in contrast, has remained highly independent in its offer. Just 10% of current occupiers are classed as 'national', 6% are 'regional', while the remaining 84% are 'local; independents or smaller chains. These local businesses are an asset to the town, being more agile than larger chains to respond to the changing market and contributing to the town's unique appeal.

4.4.7 Across the UK, High Street retail has suffered in recent years, largely due to the rise in internet shopping. The decline in High Street shopping has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Cullompton, there are a number of notable vacancies, though comparatively the vacancy rate is not overly high (7% compared to the pre pandemic national average of 10.3%). This may be an example of Cullompton's ability to adapt flexibly, with 10% of retail units with frontage onto the high street area having been converted to residential use.









Covid-19 recovery focus

4.4.8 While the vacancy rate is not overly high, there has been a decline in the quality and variety of businesses along the high street. It may be that landlords have taken the first tenant possible in order to start the rental flow quickly. Longer term over a wider area, this becomes a self-perpetuating trend, where the lower-quality tenants tend to put off stronger tenants, leading to lower demand for property, lower rents and little reinvestment. Opportunities could be explored to break this cycle so Cullompton can more readily diversify its offer.

4.4.9 In terms of national retailers, Tesco, Aldi and Home Bargains are located on the edges of the town centre. On one hand, these larger supermarkets generally attract visitors from other locations in mid Devon, but they also compete with the high street businesses. Changes to the high street should focus on creating linked trips and increasing dwell time, to benefit more from the presence of these larger chains.

4.4.10 Cullompton is serviced by a local post office branch at the Pillar Box. In recent years, the town has experienced the loss of a number of the high street banks. Banks have more recently been required to have a more centralised provision with a reduction in their high street portfolio. Given this, it is unlikely that banks will look to locate back into the high street.

4.4.11 The Masterplan aims to increase the vibrancy of shops and services. This can be facilitated through the following:

- encouraging greater footfall on the high street
- broadening Cullompton's offer
- enhancing the visitor economy
- A Business Improvement District (BID). Other towns have benefitted from the creation of a BID. This might be something that the town wants to consider.

Encouraging more footfall on the high street

4.4.12 The commercial potential of shops is closely related to the number of people visiting the high street. The proposals to improve the physical environment will be critical to draw people to the town centre. The future designs for this space should prioritise creating a comfortable and enjoyable environment for people on foot, to make shopping in Cullompton an obvious choice. This includes: widening pavements, tackling car domination and associated air pollution, tree planting and shopfront improvements. In addition to the public realm improvements, there are a number of other ways that more people can be attracted to the high street:

- The masterplan proposes connections to and from the Alexandria Business Park. Connections to Kingsmill Industrial Estate will need to form part of a wider review of measures to address issues at Junction 28.
- The town is forecast to grow in population over the coming years which it is hoped will give a boost to the high street area and the viability of retailers. It will be important that a strong relationship is established between the town centre and Culm Garden Village so that new residents use Cullompton as their town centre for shops and services. To these ends, strong cycling and walking routes (in particular over the M5/river/rail) will be needed to support active travel for trips. It will also be important that Culm Garden Village does not provide any significant retail as to not draw people away from the town centre.
- One further way that footfall can be enhanced is to prioritise workspace and/or homes in the development of any town centre developments or conversions. More people working and living within the town centre means more customers for whom high street shops, restaurants, pubs and cafes are an obvious choice. See Page 58 for more on employment provision.



Figure 44
The Low Line, London. An example of a wayfindings strategy and visitors loop.



Figure 45
An example of an outdoor coffee cart improving provision for visitors.



Figure 46
Church of St Mary the Great, Cambridge © Mat Fascione. An active church which is also a tourist attraction, allowing visitors to climb the bell tower.



Figure 47
An example of how motorway signage can help attract visitors into the town. Photo copyright David Smith.



Figure 48
Gloucestershire farm shop motorway services. An example of how local produce and a niche offer can attract visitors. Photo copyright Anthony O'Neil.

Broadening Cullompton's offer

4.4.13 While there are a number of unique and thriving local businesses, there has been a downward trend in the variety and the quality of shops in the town centre. Across the country, demand for retail property is down, with the focus shifting to "experience" retail, where customer service, activities or food and beverage become significant drivers of a shopping trip. In order to compete with surrounding centres and to attract more people into the town centre, Cullompton would benefit from a diversity of traders on the high street. There are a number of sectors that would benefit its appeal.

4.4.14 Cullompton has a good food or drink offer and growing 'cafe culture'. While the town is currently well provided for, as the population of Cullompton grows it is anticipated that cafés, restaurants and bars will become a more viable proposition, which would also benefit from proposed public realm improvements. These businesses would be complemented by other evening based activities starting up in the town, such as a cultural venue (ie. live music venue, small cinema or gallery space).

4.4.15 Looking at the town's demographics, there is a growing eastern European population in Cullompton with the potential to support Cullompton's wider multi-cultural appeal.

4.4.16 Cullompton would benefit from developing its own readily identifiable niche. This would attract interest, draw footfall, helping Cullompton to remain viable.

4.4.17 The vacant premises in the town centre present an opportunity for Cullompton to host pop-ups and temporary shops. Affordability of the premises will play a key role in the success of a pop-up shop scheme.

Enhancing the visitor economy

4.4.18 Cullompton is conveniently located just off of the M5, a key route for tourists heading to south Devon and Cornwall's holiday destinations. This location presents a strong opportunity for Cullompton to establish itself as a stopping point on route, drawing people beyond the motorway services and into the town centre. Cullompton already has a number of key components: car parking which is easily accessed from the motorway; en route petrol stations; the CCA Fields where people can walk their dog; and a characterful High Street with shops, cafes and restaurants. Some ways Cullompton could attract more visitors in town include:

- A visitor's 'loop' could be promoted to visitors through signage and marketing, along the Leat, Lower Mill Lane, High Street, Higher Mill Lane taking in St Andrew's Church. There is also an opportunity for historic interpretation signage, helping to tell Cullompton's story, for example the town's milling history. Public realm improvements could help make this route feel cohesive and welcoming.

- Celebrating the town's heritage could be used to attract visitors into the town. Appropriate signposting from the motorway and information about the town's history and architecture are simple measures to increase visitor numbers. Town centre destinations include the Grade 1* listed St Andrew's Church, a key landmark building and rated among the top 1000 churches in Britain, the Grade II* listed Manor House Hotel and the Grade 1 listed Walronds.

Exploring the potential of creating a Business Improvement District (BID)

4.4.19 Cullompton has a large number of traders which are operating very effectively but potentially in isolation from one another. An assessment of freehold ownership of the high street area shows that just 17 of the 98 properties fronting high street are owned by companies instead of individuals. Where the ownership is by individuals, there is often less of an ability for a cohesive management plan across an area. It could be beneficial for all businesses in the town centre for a Business Improvement District (BID) to be created in the centre. This would enable a number of common priorities to be identified by the businesses in the town centre, such as public realm improvements, shop front improvements, curation of Cullompton's offer and marketing and promotional activities.

4.4.20 A BID scheme is designed to be operated by the local businesses, requiring initial support and occasional input thereafter from the local authority. Its function is to develop projects and services that will benefit the trading environment within the boundary of a clearly defined commercial area. A vote on whether or not to establish a BID is open to tenants and if a majority, both by number and by rateable value, approve the proposal, all ratepayers will contribute through a small levy (identified by local businesses i.e. 0.5%, 1%, 2% etc) on their business rates.

4.4.21 Once voted for, the levy becomes mandatory on all defined ratepayers. The BID has a lifespan of five years and any further proposals will have to be reaffirmed through a subsequent vote. The District Council and Town Council can help traders should they wish to pursue a BID.

4.4.22 BID gives local businesses the power to effect changes that will benefit them in their local community. Improvements may include cleaning and environmental measures, improved promotion of the area, improved events, and greater advocacy on key issues, but the legislation does not put a limit on what products or services are provided.





Figure 49
Signature Brewery, an example of an industrial use taking on a customer-facing activities by opening a taproom at weekends.

Employment

Industry and making

4.4.23 Historically, Cullompton has been a place of making; its economy was founded on weavers who used the river's power and water to produce cloth. The masterplan seeks to reinforce this strand of Cullompton's identity and to strengthen the town as a place for industry and making. Industrial and warehousing property is in good demand, evidenced by the lack of availability and number of developers looking to deliver more space in the area. Alexandria Business Park, Longbridge Meadow and the Kingsmill Industrial Estate are thriving and there is potential to intensify these areas to provide additional floorspace. All three of these estates are well positioned off of the motorway and there is also an opportunity to create better provision for people to walk, cycle and take public transport, enabling local people to commute to work and workers to use the town centre's shops and services without driving.

4.4.24 The proposed future Station location is adjacent to the Alexandria Business Park. If funding is secured and the new station goes ahead, it will change the context significantly. In terms of industrial and business space, it is anticipated that existing businesses which can sit comfortably alongside other uses (lighter industry, fewer vehicular movements, little noise/smell) could be rehoused on the same site. This would be part of a redevelopment to create a positive station arrival experience and intensify the use of the land given the changing market context that the station brings.

Office and co-working space

4.4.25 The supply of office space is limited in the town. The Nook, a local success story, draws occupiers from across Devon. The Nook offers flexible workspace for those predominantly working from home including entrepreneurs, freelancers and business owners. Situated in a converted factory in Kingsmill Estate, the characterful setting and proximity to the motorway are ingredients for its success; to the extent that demand exceeds the amount of office space available.

4.4.26 The COVID-19 pandemic has led to changing working patterns which is likely to create new demand for small and flexible workspace. Many companies are exploring 'hub and spoke' office models, rather than having their staff commute into large centres. For many, working from home has become a new reality; as the Covid-19 pandemic subsides, people will reconsider their working patterns finding a balance between commuting and working from home.Hiring a desk-space locally, on a flexible basis, can provide a delineation between work and home which can be advantageous. Similarly, it can reduce commuting times helping work life balance.

the nook
WHERE CHANGE COMES TO WORK

"The Nook has become an iconic and beloved place to work in the South West, not only because of the unique, quirky office spaces born from its creators' vision, but due to the community of 'nooksters' who work within the walls of the building.

James and Vicki were presented with the opportunity to take on their Father's truck factory in Cullompton in 2016. They saw huge potential to develop the large space into something really special."

Extract from the Nook's website





Figure 50
Qworky in Skipton is an example of a high street building conversion into co-working, creating 12 desks for hire. This helps to bring vacant buildings back into use and contributes to footfall on the high street.

4.4.27 There could be an opportunity for Cullompton to benefit from changing working habits and to build on the success of the Nook, by creating a small, flexible workspace in the town centre, run either by the Nook or a competitor. The presence of office space near the high street area could also act as a catalyst for related economies, with cafes, pubs and restaurants all benefiting from having a new workforce centrally.

Securing high-speed broadband connectivity for Cullompton

4.4.28 High-speed broadband signal is an increasingly important factor in the decision of where people want to live and work. This trend has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, during which lockdown made us more dependent than ever on our internet signal for all parts of our lives from working to learning to socialising. Faster internet connectivity helps to promote business development (e.g access to on-line learning programmes) and would attract inward investment to Cullompton. It would also equip education, social and community groups with access to technology that will enable them to expand their programme and improve their effectiveness.

4.4.29 In recognition of the poor broadband connectivity across the sub-region, local authorities have developed the Connecting Devon and Somerset Initiative. The project is working to deliver next generation broadband infrastructure to areas where the market has failed to invest.

Covid-19 recovery focus

Closing the skill gap

4.4.30 There remain pockets of acute deprivation in Cullompton and the population has lower than average skills, qualifications and income. Utilising key players that make up a strong community infrastructure network, there is an opportunity to create structured links between local businesses, high learning organisations and members of the local community not in employment, education or training. Mid-Devon District Council, Cullompton Community College and Cullompton Community Centre could work together to help address this gap.

4.4.31 Cullompton Community College educates approximately 750 students aged 11-16, a key age group for forging aspirations for the future. Exposure to people in high skilled jobs can help to give students inspiration and open up options for their future. This could include involvement with programmes like STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths), through which STEM ambassadors volunteer their time and visit schools, helping to bring STEM subjects to life and demonstrate the value of them in life and careers. There is also an opportunity for students to be involved in some of the upcoming developments in the town, for example working with engineers, developers, architects and planners on the design and delivery of the rail project and/or Culm Garden Village. Additionally, with Exeter University only a half an hour drive away, it would be fruitful for the Community College to forge a strong relationship with this reputable higher learning organisation. For example, there could be an annual trip for students to visit the University Campus and to be exposed to university life and the breadth of subjects they could go on to study.

4.4.32 Mid-Devon District Council is part of the Government's apprenticeship scheme, subsidising and matching businesses to those looking for skilled work with on the job training and development. The

National Apprenticeship Service has reported that nearly every employer that takes on an apprentice (96%) reports benefits to their business, with 72% of businesses reporting improved productivity. With a flourishing business community around the Kingsmill Industrial Estate, the Alexandria Business Park and at Longbridge Meadow, there is potential for more local businesses to be recruited to the scheme, in turn offering apprenticeships to local people who are out of work. This would be a benefit to local businesses, while also helping to improve the skills and employability of local people.

Community and civic uses

4.4.33 Community, culture and civic uses play an important role in attracting people into the town centre; supporting a vibrant and fulfilling town life. Having them centrally located supports footfall, other commercial uses and activities. There are a number of facilities in the town centre including Cullompton Community Centre, Culm Valley Sports Centre, the sports clubs at the CCA Fields and the Hayridge Centre. The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of town centre-based arts, cultural and leisure activities and its role in promoting a visitor and evening economy. The creation and enhancement of outdoor performance space including for example at the Bull Ring and the construction of a swimming pool within the north west urban extension will bring significant gains.



Figure 51
Saffron Screen cinema in Saffron Walden doubles as an auditorium for the secondary school in the weekday.



Figure 52
The Depot, Lewes is a former brewery and vacant historic building which was converted into a community cinema.

4.5 Environment and sustainability

Biodiversity and green space investment

4.5.1 The regeneration of Cullompton should seek to maximise opportunities to tackle climate change at a local level. This fits well with the District Council's Climate Emergency declaration aims and the government's aspiration to build back better in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

4.5.2 Culm Garden Village will be planned and delivered to ensure it is sustainable and positively contributes to combating challenges associated with climate change. A sustainability strategy will set out how the garden village will deliver a low carbon, environmentally sensitive development. The sustainability strategy will also encourage healthy lifestyles and a shift to active (pedestrian / cycle) travel modes.

4.5.3 In terms of the new developments (Culm Garden Village and the North West Urban Extension) design will be landscape-led retaining and enhancing existing green infrastructure wherever possible. They will create places that contribute to net biodiversity gain.

4.5.4 The Relief Road proposal includes measures to prevent biodiversity loss and mitigates the impact of the road on the CCA fields including:

- Pre-development surveys including ecological assessments;
- Maintaining green infrastructure wherever possible,
- Measures to address and prevent water pollution;
- Additional and planting to create a number of different habitats including shrubs, trees, hedges, grassland / wildflower and wetland,
- Maximising the biodiversity potential of the two proposed highway drainage ponds;
- Installing bat and bird boxes; and
- Wildlife passages for bats, birds and otters.

4.5.5 There is an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and mitigate against climate change within the town centre. This may include:

- Installing bat and bird boxes perhaps with an emphasis on a particular species e.g. swifts,
- Pocket parks with an emphasis on foraging bird or insect species,
- Retention and enhancement of green infrastructure links to support ecological connectivity across and around the town for species that would benefit from wildlife commuting zones such as amphibians, bats and hedgehogs;
- Environmental improvements that benefit people and nature - such as energy saving measures to lessen climate impact and reduce light pollution;
- Infrastructure to support electric vehicle charging;
- Improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity including installation of cycle lanes, bike stands and seating;
- Retrofit projects to support the town centre's greener future e.g. energy efficiency measures; and
- Encourage the use of sustainable construction designs, methods and materials that complement and highlight the town's heritage.

Sustainable transport

4.5.6 The masterplan encourages a modal shift away from private motor vehicles, towards sustainable transport modes. This highway approach is consistent with national policy and the stance taken by Highways England.

4.5.7 To these ends, a key ambition for the transformation of the high street following the construction of the Relief Road is:

- to rebalance the street space given to pedestrians and cyclists whilst still supporting business footfall, deliveries and ensuring traffic is adequately provided for. This is anticipated to result in reduced air pollution.














- The improved pedestrian and cycle environment making these modes the obvious choice for short journeys.

- The retention of buses in the High Street with any future traffic management needing to ensure that the provision of bus journeys are accommodated.

4.5.8 Section 4.2 sets out guidance for the improvement of walking and cycling provision.

4.5.9 The re-opening of Cullompton rail station would also help to increase the uptake of sustainable travel to and from the town. The majority of Cullompton residents currently commute out of the town by car, and the rail station has the greatest potential to reduce the level of vehicular outbound commuting.

4.5.10 Publically accessible electric vehicle charging points could be established in the town centre car parks.

4.5.11 New developments should be well connected to sustainable travel routes to allow sustainable travel patterns. In the case of the Culm Garden Village, critical to this is a crossing over the M5 and railway line. New developments could look to explore how proposed driveways and / or street parking can be adapted to open / green space, should demand for them fall over time.Flood risk management

4.5.12 There is a long history of flooding in Cullompton from the River Culm, its tributaries and from surface water flooding. Any redesign of the high street should seek out opportunities to provide sustainable drainage techniques to reduce the risk of surface water flooding, to provide treatment of the runoff and to provide habitat for biodiversity as well as amenity space for residents and visitors.

4.5.13 Opportunities to enhance the watercourses in the area should be sought. Any new housing developments, any new town centre parking areas or pedestrian cycle links should use sustainable drainage techniques as per the SuDS for Devon Guidance (2017). Historic courts and passageways off Fore Street could consider permeable surfaces where appropriate to mitigate the speed of water run off and water quality. Similarly, measures could also include features such a rain gardens.

Guidance for new buildings

4.5.14 For new homes and commercial buildings, designs should explore and provide opportunities for best practice in Net Zero design, manufacture, construction and performance. New developments will be expected to demonstrate how household efficiency and waste management will create demonstrably lower domestic energy use, reduced utility bills and increased rates of recycling. New development should include appropriate internal and external storage for recycling and landfill waste.








4.6 Key opportunities

4.6.1 Cullompton is a compact market town with a sensitive historic environment that is one of its greatest assets. This presents both an opportunity and a constraint. The town is located alongside the River Culm and its associated leats. These waterways provide an attractive natural environment in close proximity to the town centre yet also present a flood risk for existing and new homes, work spaces or community venues in close proximity.

4.6.2 New development within the town will need to give consideration to the constraints imposed by the historic environment and flood risk. Any new development must enhance the character and function of the town centre whilst making a positive contribution towards climate change.

4.6.3 In order to enhance the role of the town centre, a number of transformational opportunity sites have been identified. This document outlines the potential for each site but these would be subject to further discussion with landowners and partners.

4.6.4 The opportunity sites should be read in the context of broader proposals for the area. To the north of the town, strategic proposals for new homes, jobs and community space are proposed. Such proposals will result in a population increase of approximately 18,000 people within Cullompton. These strategic developments increase the footfall for the town centre and will help enhance the town's vitality and viability.

4.6.5 These strategic developments including the CGV and infrastructure projects such as Relief Road, the railway and J28 improvements present an opportunity to improve connections across town, the public realm, as well as the economic and social life of the town centre and Cullompton's valuable heritage.

1 **Alexandria Industrial Estate**

2 **Railway Station**

3 **Tannery Site**

4 **Higher Bullring**

5 **Improvements to cycling between proposed new rail station and the town centre**

6 **Fore Street enhancement**

7 **Leat footbridge**

8 **The Old Cinema site**

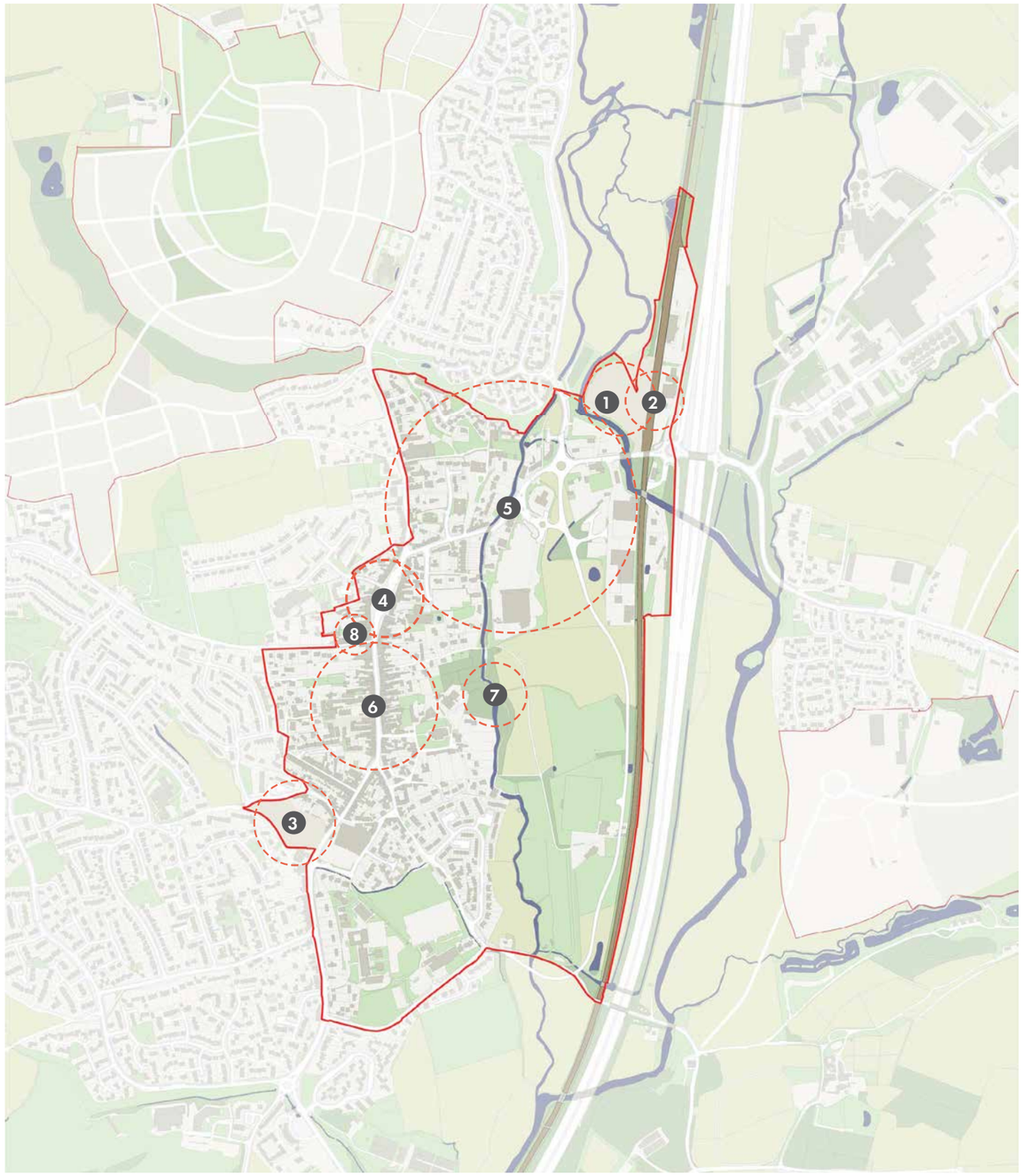


Figure 53 **Plan showing approximate locations of key opportunity sites**

1 Alexandria Industrial Estate

Context

4.6.6 There is a recognition that the approach to Cullompton from Station Road has scope for enhancement. The Alexandria Industrial Estate has potential for enhancement particularly given its close proximity to the proposed new railway station.

4.6.7 Should the railway station get government funding it is likely that would be for basic railway infrastructure including ticket machine, shelters and benches with a pedestrian / cycle and wheelchair accessible overbridge.

4.6.8 There is therefore an opportunity to supplement this provision in the immediate vicinity. This could include footway / cycleway improvements, electric bike and car hire, improvements to the public realm and other complimentary uses.

4.6.9 The River Culm flows to the west of Alexandria Industrial Estate and presents an opportunity for an enhanced environment. Notwithstanding this, parts of the Industrial Estate lie within flood Zone 3 which limits the scope of land uses that can be provided including residential.

Objectives

4.6.10 Alexandria Industrial Estate is identified as a Regeneration and Enhancement Area. Key objectives for any future approach will consider the following:

- Provide a positive arrival point for Cullompton and walking and cycling access to a new rail station
- Enhance pedestrian and cycle links through the estate between the new railway station and town centre including investigation of the potential for a new cycle / pedestrian route via Millennium Way
- Establish a more positive relationship with the River Culm, as a valuable natural asset and amenity space
- Establish an enhanced sense of arrival at the new railway station and investigate opportunities for a small station square and shop to the west of the railway lines
- To minimise additional vehicular traffic on to Alexandria Industrial Estate / Station Road junction
- Develop a scheme that helps enhance and regenerate the Industrial Estate whilst being complimentary to the railway station proposal

Next steps

4.6.11 Next steps will require:

- A review of flood risk associated with the site.
- Further liaison with landowners regarding redevelopment of the site including uses, building form and layout.
- Design and layout to be developed in response and informed by emerging plans for the railway station.
- A detailed review of improved cycle and pedestrian links between the town and the railway station including consideration of a Millennium Way route over the River Culm.
- A review of the visual, public realm and wildlife benefits that may be achieved adjacent to the River Culm.

DIAGRAM TO BE INCLUDED HERE

Figure 54 **Diagram showing design principles for the Alexandra Industrial Estate**

2 Railway Station

Context

4.6.12 Mid Devon District Council is in the process of preparing a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and applying for funding to reinstate the former Cullompton train station. The proposal is progressing well and at some pace. This proposal is likely to include a ticket office, shelters and benches with a pedestrian footbridge over the tracks.

4.6.13 The station proposal lies in close proximity to Alexandria Industrial Estate which is identified as a Regeneration and Enhancement Area. It has the ability to enhance the setting and sense of arrival to the railway station.

4.6.14 It is important to ensure that the railway station provides opportunities for multi modal travel i.e bus, cycle and pedestrian access. Transport interchange facilities will need to complement the provision of the station.

Objectives

4.6.15 Key objectives for the future delivery of the railway station will consider the following:

- An improved setting to the area of the proposed railway station including an improved sense of arrival that may include tree planting, public seating, cycle parking, drop-off and pick-up space.
- An improved sense of arrival into the town from the railway station.
- Station parking to consider future forms of mobility. Station parking to include bike / scooter hire, car club schemes and infrastructure such as electric charging.
- Improved pedestrian and cycle connections between the railway station, the town centre and its hinterlands.

Next Steps

4.6.16 Next steps will require:

- Detailed review of design and layout in response to the emerging railway scheme.
- A detailed review for improved cycle and pedestrian links to and from the station.
- Continued liaison with landowners and partners.

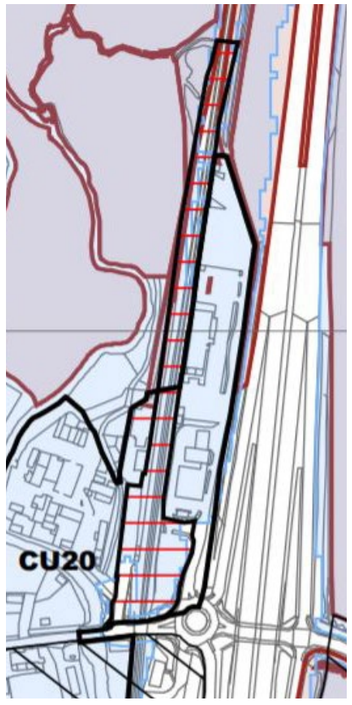


DIAGRAM TO BE INCLUDED HERE

Figure 56 **Diagram showing key design principles for the Railway Station area**

3 Former Tannery Site

Context

4.6.17 The former Tannery site covers an area of land between Exeter Hill and Crow Green. A greater part of the site lies vacant and presents an opportunity for a mixed use redevelopment.

4.6.18 Opportunities should seek to retain the antiques centre building and seek to retain the soft play provision on the site. However, the site is currently underused with vacant and / or areas of 'left-over-space'. This presents an opportunity for a mixed use redevelopment scheme incorporating and raising the profile of both the antiques centre and soft play provision.

4.6.19 The waterway to the south of the site provides an opportunity for an enhanced wildlife corridor. Whilst the area is in Flood Zone 2, this does not preclude development options.

4.6.20 Whilst development would need to be in-keeping with the surrounding scale and character of buildings, redevelopment presents an opportunity for an innovative scheme with the potential to incorporate zero-carbon built forms of development. The site has the ability to improve the sense of arrival into the town via Exeter Road whilst improving pedestrian and cycle links across the site to Crow Green. Active frontages on to Crow Green and Exeter Road will enliven the approaches to the site.

Objectives

4.6.21 Key objectives for the redevelopment of the Former Tannery site will consider the following:

- Establish a mixed use development that is within the town centre; supporting local shops and services.
- Establish active frontage through main entrances onto Crow Green and Exeter Hill to provide a better sense of arrival into the town centre.
- Explore opportunities for alternative forms of development such as zero carbon. development or similar standards. This could be an exemplar scheme for Mid Devon.
- Retain the historic antiques building, rehoming the soft play elsewhere within the site.
- Seek opportunities to relocate any uses such as storage to peripheral town centre locations.
- Enhance the water course for visual and wildlife benefits whilst integrating new cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing town centre wide network of routes.

Next steps

4.6.22 Next steps will require:

- A review of flood risk considerations.
- Liaison with landowners exploring options for redevelopment including uses, building form and layout.
- A detailed review of improved cycle and pedestrian through the site.
- A review of the visual, public realm and wildlife benefits that may be achieved adjacent to the waterway.
- A review of the relocation / rehoming of existing uses as required.

DIAGRAM TO BE INCLUDED HERE

Figure 57 **Diagram showing key design principles for The Tannery site**

4 Higher Bullring

Context

4.6.23 The Higher Bullring has long been the location of the town's market. However, in more recent years the space has felt less of a market square and more of a primary traffic route for those travelling through the town centre. The Higher Bullring has the potential to be reimagined as a flexible public space, with the creation of a larger, level, shared use area. Detailed design and layout will ensure its safe and accessible use for all members of the public including those that may be visually impaired.

4.6.24 Redesign of the space will allow it to be used flexibly to accommodate different events of different scales. Reconfiguration of the parking may allow for the temporary suspension of parking during event days. A comprehensive approach to surfacing, materials, street furniture and utilities such as water and electricity would allow for a co-ordinated approach. This would better facilitate a range of day time and evening uses, including outdoor seating that would contribute to the level and activity and vibrancy in the town centre.

4.6.25 The existing trees are a valuable asset to the appearance of the Higher Bullring, to the surrounding historic buildings and their setting.

Objectives

4.6.26 Key objectives for the redevelopment of the Higher Bullring will consider the following:

- Enhancement of the space for use by a variety of activities
- Comprehensive redesign of the space as a larger, level, shared use area that will met all standards for safe use
- Review a reconfiguration of the parking
- Design and layout to include a comprehensive use of materials and street furniture
- Retention of trees and integration of other biodiversity benefits
- Enhanced sense of arrival into the town centre

Next steps

4.6.27 Next steps will require:

- Survey and other preparatory work- utilities, archaeology etc
- Traffic surveys
- Preparation of a landscape design
- Liaison with landowners, stakeholders and other interested parties.



Figure 58 **Diagram showing key design principles for the Higher Bullring**

5 Improvements to cycling between proposed new rail station and the town centre

Context

4.6.28 Existing pedestrian and cycle provision across town including along Station Road can be difficult; particularly where it is shared with other vehicles and its uninviting due to a lack of dedicated provision. Given the proposal for a new railway station, Culm Garden Village, aspirations to enhance opportunities at Alexandria Industrial Estate and recognition of trips to the facilities at the service station there is a need to enhance pedestrian and cycle provision along this corridor.

4.6.29 A number of partner organisations including Devon County Council and Highways England are investigating longer term transport solutions to address capacity issues in and around Cullompton including looking to address capacity issues at Junction 28. There is an ambition to bring forward pedestrian and cycle provision along this corridor at the earliest opportunity, subject to funding.

4.6.30 Improvements in cycle and pedestrian provision to and from the railway station and town centre will need to be considered in close association with the construction of the Relief Road and Culm Garden Village, as well as with existing routes including those through the CCA Fields.

Objectives

4.6.31 Key objectives to improve the ability to cycle between the proposed new railway station and the town centre will consider the following:

- Improved pedestrian / cycle crossings north and south of Station Road.
- Installation of signage and tactile paving where missing at junctions.
- Investigation of a new cycle route through Alexandria Industrial Estate linking to Millennium Way.
- Integration of the CCA pedestrian / cycle ways into proposals for Station Road.
- Provision of appropriate signage
- Cycle parking provision at the new railway station and in the town centre.

Next Steps

4.6.32 Next steps will require:

- Detailed analysis of cycle and pedestrian options and other related works
- Preparation of detailed design
- Liaison with landowners, stakeholders and other interested parties.

6 Fore Street

Context

4.6.33 Following construction of the Relief Road (2023 – 2024) there is an opportunity to redesign Fore Street. The construction of the Relief Road creates an opportunity to transform the character and function of the high street to the benefit of existing businesses, residents and visitors as well as enhancing the setting of the historic environment.

4.6.34 The need for two way traffic through Fore Street cannot be discounted at this stage and will be the subject of further investigation by Devon County Council. The construction of the Relief Road and the associated reduction in traffic through the high street presents a particular opportunity for the pedestrian environment; an opportunity to rebalance the space given to pedestrians and cyclists versus the car. This can be achieved through a number of measures.

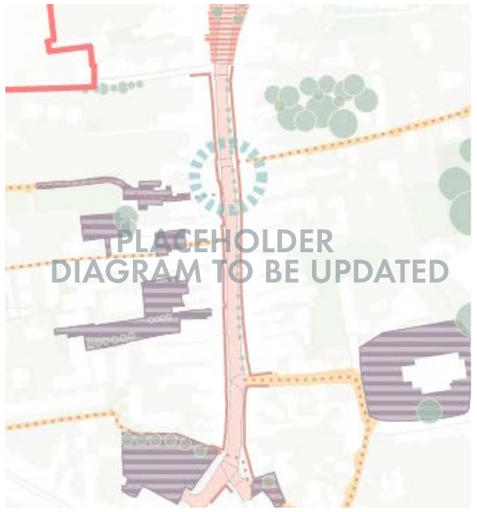
Objectives

- To rebalance the street space given to pedestrians and cyclists versus the car.
- To reclaim space for pedestrians / cyclists and thereby create an environment conducive with supporting local businesses.
- To have a consistent use of materials.
- Consolidation and decluttering of the high street of street furniture.
- Integrated cycle provision along the high street.
- Retention of public transport within the high street including bus stops.
- Designed measures to reduce traffic speeds including narrowing of the carriageway, surface treatments.
- Prioritise pedestrian movement where possible.

Next Steps

4.6.35 Next steps will require:

- Traffic surveys and modelling.
- Liaison with landowners, stakeholders and other interested parties.
- Scheme option development and design.



7 Leat Footbridge

Context

4.6.36 Cullompton's principal green open space is the CCA Fields. These community owned fields are bounded towards their western edge by the leat. This historic landscape feature is an important relic of the town's industrial past and growth; providing water to power the town's three mills.

4.6.37 The leat provides a natural, wooded retreat serving as an important wildlife corridor and recreational destination. The well-used footpath on its eastern bank is connected to the lanes behind the high street by bridges.

4.6.38 This proposal seeks to reinstate a former crossing over the leat. Subject to landowner agreement it presents an opportunity for new and improved connections to the town centre.

Objectives

- To reinstate a former crossing over the leat.
- To seek opportunities for new and improved pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre.
- To achieve an enhanced setting to the leat.
- To enhance the use and enjoyment of the leat in association with the CCA Fields

Next Steps

4.6.39 Next steps will require:

- Survey and other preparatory work including health and safety.
- Preparation of a detailed design
- Liaison with landowners, stakeholders and other interested parties including the Environment Agency.



Figure 59 **Aerial imagery showing approximate location of former crossing ©Google Earth**

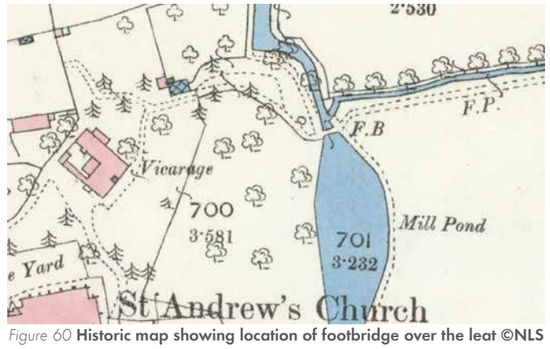


Figure 60 **Historic map showing location of footbridge over the leat ©NLS**



Figure 61 **Historic photo showing footbridge c1950s**

8 Old Cinema Site

Context

4.6.40 The former Regal cinema, located close to the Higher Bull Ring, opened in the early 1930's, with a seating capacity for some 350 people. It remained open until 1975 when the main frontage of the building was remodelled into two retail units. The only real visible evidence of its former use, is the wide opening on the frontage of the building, leading down an enclosed passageway to what would have been the auditorium. It is behind the two retail units on the frontage, that the former cinema building presents an opportunity site. Subject to landowner agreement it presents an opportunity for enhancement and more productive use.



Figure 62 **Location of the Cinema Site ©Google Earth**

Objective

- To seek opportunities in partnership with landowner agreement to bring forward development opportunities and enhancement proposals.

Next Step

4.6.41 The next step will require:

- Development options and feasibility.



5 Heritage Strategy

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Cullompton has a fascinating, diverse past - its history reflected in the great number of designated heritage assets in town. The centre of Cullompton was designated a conservation area in 1977, and within the conservation area there are over 50 listed buildings, including the Grade I St Andrews Church; the Grade II Trotts Almshouse and the Grade I Walronds. There are also several important unlisted buildings and features that make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the town centre. Taking care of Cullompton's heritage will play a crucial part in the regeneration of the town. By protecting and improving Cullompton's old buildings, streets and historic landscape setting, Cullompton's identity will be strengthened; rooted in its history as a market town and as a place of work and business.

5.1.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted in 2003 as a Supplementary Planning Document and the Management Plan was published in 2009. These documents are currently being updated. In 2019 Historic England awarded funding following a successful Heritage Action Zone bid to support heritage-led regeneration projects in the town. This represents an invaluable opportunity for the town's heritage to be a catalyst for Cullompton to realise its former past as a vibrant, diverse and prosperous town. A key part of the masterplan's vision is that Cullompton's unique heritage will be celebrated and enhanced.

5.1.3 This part of the masterplan sets out a heritage strategy for Cullompton town centre. It develops the masterplan principles at Part 3 of this document into a strategy for the preservation and enhancement of the town's historic features. It sets out what makes Cullompton's heritage special and what challenges it currently faces. It explores the benefits heritage can bring to the town and the different organisations that can play their part in realising these benefits. It provides aims and actions for improving the historic environment and a strategy for implementing them.

5.2 Summary of significance

5.2.1 Over its long history Cullompton's fortunes have waxed and waned but its steady growth has resulted in an exceptionally well-preserved street pattern, with its medieval market spaces and squares still evident. Burgage plots are traceable through long narrow plots, emphasised by multiple lanes (courts) extending laterally on both sides of the High Street and Fore Street. Multiple fires over the centuries including an especially catastrophic fire in 1838 means that there are surprisingly few buildings from before the Victorian period. But those that do survive are of high quality and include the timber framed Manor House, and its Jacobean neighbour - the newly restored Walronds. The Parish Church of St Andrew's is one of the finest churches in Devon with an exceptionally rich interior.

5.2.2 Cullompton's key historic qualities are set out on the opposite page.

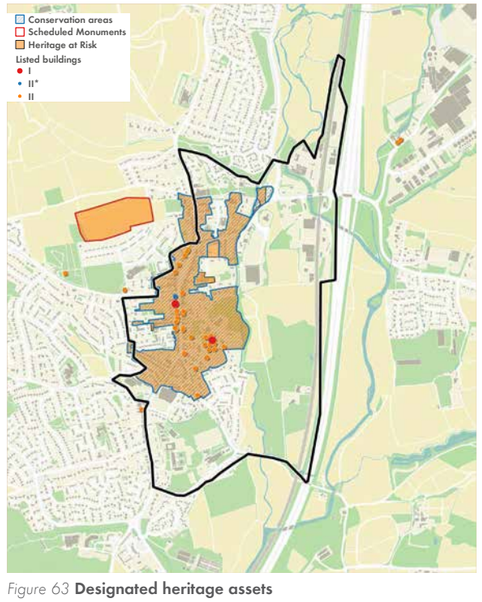


Figure 63 **Designated heritage assets**



COHERENT STREET PATTERN
A coherent street pattern of at least medieval origins with a tight urban grain.



RICH AND VARIED LANDSCAPE
A rich and varied landscape, stemming from buildings of different periods and the gently meandering line of the main street.



HISTORIC LANDSCAPE SETTING
Nestled in a valley with views to the surrounding countryside and Blackdown Hills AONB.



OUTSTANDING BUILDINGS
Some outstanding buildings especially St. Andrew's Church and the Walronds



ST. ANDREW'S TOWER
Landmark quality of St Andrew's tower with views to it from across Cullompton.



OTHER HISTORIC BUILDINGS
Other listed buildings and buildings of local interest, many of group value.



NETWORK OF YARDS AND PASSAGES
Interesting and important network of yards and passages, reflecting former burgage plots.



TRACES OF FORMER INDUSTRIES
Traces of Cullompton's former industries, including evidence of three mills on the Leat.



WEEKLY MARKET
Weekly market, still in use on the original livestock market site at the Upper Bullring.



19TH AND 20TH CENTURY SHOPFRONTS
Surviving 19th and early 20th century shopfronts.



INTIMATE AND WALKABLE
A compact town with an intimate feel, easy to get around by foot.



INDEPENDENT SHOPS
High number of independent retailers contributing to the town's distinctiveness.

Figure 64 **A summary of the key qualities of Cullompton's historic environment**

5.3 Local aspirations for heritage

5.3.1 Cullompton's heritage is considered by local people to be the town's best characteristic - its mix of historic buildings, the Bullring, the town's important involvement in the wool trade and its historic landscape setting all contribute to Cullompton's special character and identity. When testing the masterplan principles with local people in Spring 2020, the principles to 'repair historic buildings and setting' and 'find viable uses for empty historic buildings' were two of the five most strongly supported principles (90% either strongly agreed or agreed). Taking care of heritage is important to the people of Cullompton.

5.3.2 The heritage strategy is informed by the aspirations of local people, many of whom acknowledge the key role of heritage for the town's future. As part of the consultation on the masterplan in Spring 2020, local people were asked 'What are your priorities for making the most of Cullompton's heritage?'. There were 40 responses to the question, with 40% of responses relating to the restoration of historic buildings. The second most popular response related to showcasing Cullompton's history by providing more information in public spaces. Other responses included protecting and restoring other historic features, reducing traffic along the High Street and bringing vacant buildings back into use.





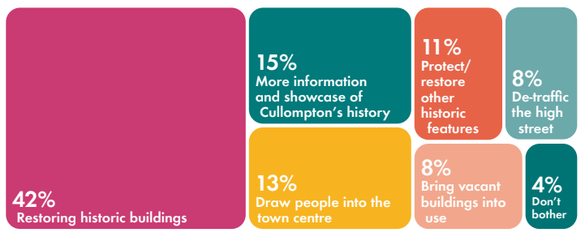






"Improve the look of Fore Street by smartening up those buildings and shop fronts which currently look so scruffy, and by putting in some greenery."

"Create a style guide for shop frontage to ensure buildings look good quality."



Answers to the question ' 'What are your priorities for making the most of Cullompton's heritage?'

"The mix of historic unspoilt buildings."

"Close to rural areas."

"History and the Main Street of ancient buildings and the history of the wool trade. Of course the people are lovely too."

"It has huge potential to be a beautiful high street, distinct as a town from the rural environment surrounding it."

"The church and the Tudor buildings."

"Old buildings, CCA fields, friendly people."

"The old buildings and the Bullring."

"The historic buildings are beautiful but need upkeep and preservation. Also very friendly feeling about the town."

"Bull Ring is a great market and meeting place."

"Walronds and Merchants house."

"That it's an old town."

Answers to the question 'What do you think is Cullompton's best characteristic?'

5.4 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

The SWOT analysis below identifies the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to heritage in Cullompton.

STRENGTHS

- Strong historic identity with many heritage assets including several high status listed buildings in the heart of town
- Fore Street / High Street has a great number of historic buildings with group value and little infill development along it
- Survival of ancient street pattern and yards
- Proximity to Blackdown Hills AONB
- Large number of independent traders
- Regular farmers' market
- Strong and active community organisations including those interested in heritage e.g. Cullompton Walronds Preservation Trust
- Local people who care about heritage







WEAKNESSES

- Buildings in poor condition and poorly maintained
- Unsympathetic alterations and extensions to historic buildings, especially along Fore Street / High Street
- Use of inappropriate materials on historic buildings
- Vacant properties in need of investment and loss of key services e.g. high street banks / pharmacy
- Very limited leisure and retail offer - little to attract shoppers
- Impact of heavy through traffic on condition of historic buildings;
- Poor environment for pedestrians along Fore Street / High Street - narrow pavements and high traffic volumes
- Visual clutter (poles, signs, overhead wires)
- Some lanes and courts are in poor condition - bins clutter pavements and block access
- Lack of planting / greenery in places
- Poor frontage design







OPPORTUNITIES

- Identification as a Heritage Action Zone with associated funding for enhancement and regeneration.
- Planned residential expansion of Cullompton, bringing new demand and increased spending and an opportunity for heritage-led regeneration
- Construction of the relief road and associated reduction in traffic through the centre of the town.
- Other planned investments including the new railway station.
- Opportunity to transform the Higher Bullring into a high quality public space as well as opportunities to improve other public spaces
- Opportunities for an increase in public access into historic buildings, the restoration and repurposing of vacant buildings.
- Promoting the town's heritage including interpretation panels in historically significant locations.
- Covid-19 and a new focus on 'local' - working from home, shopping locally, importance of nearby green spaces, active travel etc.

THREATS

- Incremental alterations e.g. inappropriate repairs / redecoration eroding the historic character and appearance of the conservation area
- Lack of investment in the fabric of buildings - extra cost of restoring heritage buildings mean landlords are reluctant to invest
- Low landlord investments in shopfronts
- Changes in the nature of retail
- Possible Covid-19 harmful impacts on local businesses, residents and broader investment opportunities









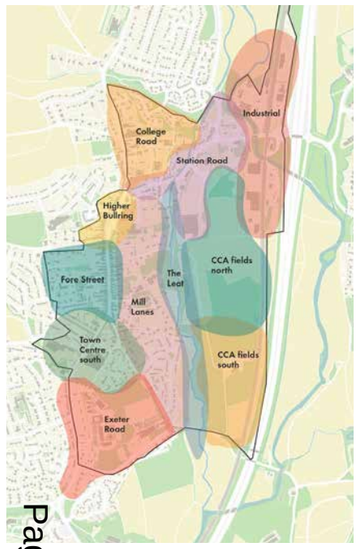




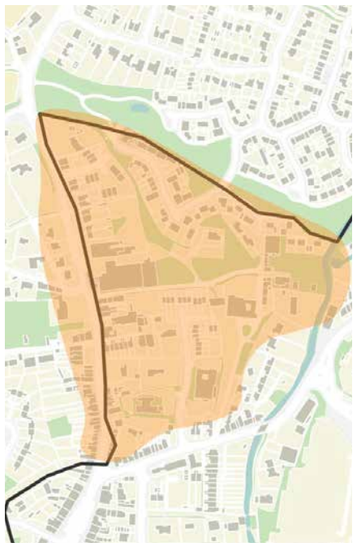
5.5 Character areas

5.5.1 Cullompton's character is diverse and extends beyond the conservation area and its designated heritage assets. To assist our understanding of heritage, the study area can be considered through several overlapping character areas. The boundaries are not definitive but have been drawn up on the basis of predominant land use, building type or historical associations.

5.5.2 To help inform the heritage strategy, we have considered what each area's key characteristics are, the main issues facing each area and the key objectives for heritage.



College Road







IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS

- Grade II Trotts Almshouses
- 19th century cottages and industry
- Historically Higher Street was the northern route out of town
- Almshouses prominent in views from the Bullring and Station Road
- Views towards St Andrew's Church

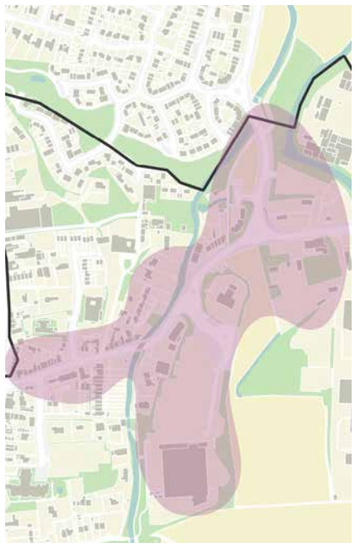
KEY ISSUES

- Traffic dominated environment along Willand Road
- Narrow pavements and few crossing points along this stretch
- Incremental changes to buildings - loss of historic features, proliferation of satellite dishes and other accretions

OBJECTIVES FOR HERITAGE

- To protect and enhance the Grade II listed almshouses and their setting
- To reduce the impact of through traffic
- To improve the pedestrian experience - introduce crossings and planting etc.

Station Road







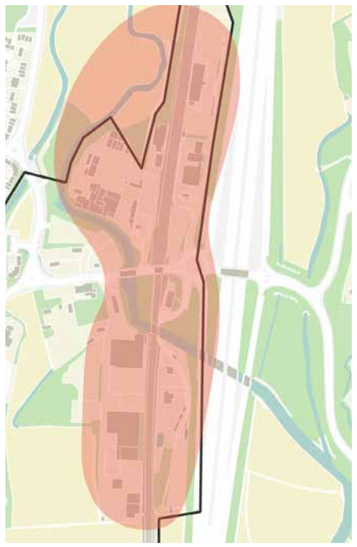
- Arrival point into Cullompton
- Historically important Weary Traveller pub
- Commercial area
- Improving pedestrian experience i.e more places to cross
- The leat is an important feature

- Traffic and highways dominated - poor pedestrian experience
- Access to the river limited and setting could be improved
- Visually prominent commercial buildings
- Large car parking areas

- To protect and enhance the Grade II listed almshouses and their setting
- To reduce the impact of through traffic
- To improve the pedestrian experience - introduce crossings and planting etc.

- Improving the arrival experience into town - role of historic buildings in strengthening identity of the town
- Improving pedestrian accessibility and experience i.e more places to cross
- Open up access and improve environment along the leat

Industry





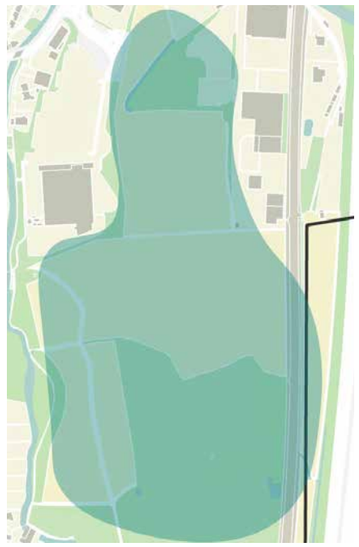


- Arrival point into Cullompton
- Mainly industrial and commercial uses alongside the railway line
- River Culm a key characteristic

- Disconnected from the heart of town
- Impact of junction 28 improvements and construction of relief road

- Reopening of railway station
- Retaining and enhancing historic industrial buildings and promoting mix of uses including industry
- Improving the arrival experience into town - role of historic buildings in strengthening identity of the town
- Improving pedestrian experience i.e more places to cross
- Opportunities for improved public access and environmental enhancements along the River Culm to be explored

CCA Fields North







- Open, green character
- Tree lined footpaths
- Informal and meadow like
- Views to the parish church and other parts of the town
- Maintained by The Cullompton Community Association

- Footpath surfacing
- Littering and dog fouling

- Capitalise on the construction of the relief road to raise the quality of the open space and connections to and from it

Higher Bullring





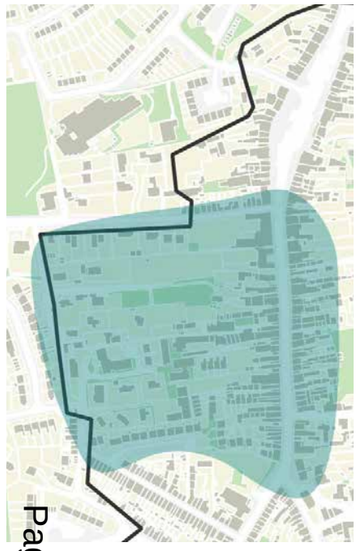


- Principal open space in the town centre
- Its widened form indicating its long history and function as a market place
- Trees make an important contribution
- Listed war memorial provide civic role
- Large, historic properties front the space including several listed buildings that retain their historic features / materials e.g windows

- Through traffic has a negative impact on historic fabric and environment
- Low quality public realm in places
- Loss of historic features and materials
- Potential vacancy issues

- Establish a new focal point for the town through the creation of a public space for events and other activities and to improve the setting of the historic buildings
- Review opportunities to repurpose and refurbish old buildings for new uses or to support existing uses better
- Seek to improve the pedestrian environment through planting, crossings and reduced traffic

Fore Street







IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS

- Main historic street through town
- Concentration of Cullompton's oldest and most notable buildings (most 19th C)
- Varied and eclectic architectural styles
- Historic lanes and courts leading off
- Listed buildings including Walronds and the Manor House Hotel

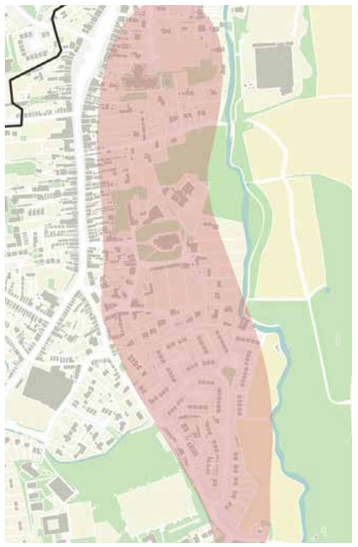
KEY ISSUES

- Impact of through traffic on condition of historic buildings
- Poor pedestrian environment - narrow / uneven pavements
- Unsympathetic alterations to buildings
- Vacant and neglected buildings
- Lack of greenery
- Shopfront signage detracts in places

OBJECTIVES FOR HERITAGE

- To bring vacant buildings into reuse
- To protect buildings from further deterioration and loss of original features
- To improve the appearance of buildings through shop-front improvement schemes
- Protect and reinstate original shopfronts

Mill Lanes





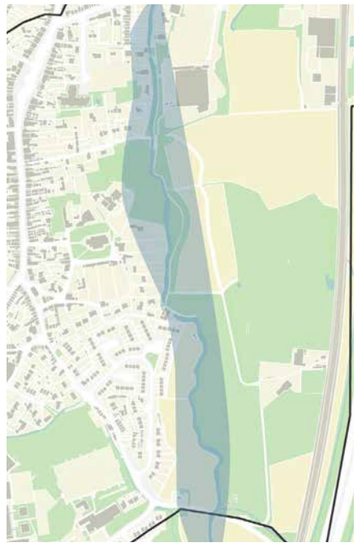


- Courts and lanes that thread from the west side of High Street and Fore Street
- High walls and curving streets
- St Andrew's Church and views to it
- Tranquil enclave around the parish church with its stone boundary walls and cluster of listed houses is particularly special

- Incremental changes and accretions

- To promote this area as a focal point for heritage in the town
- Review opportunities for an increase in public access into historic buildings
- To promote routes through to the leat from the town centre

The Leat





- Historic landscape feature important to the town's growth - stream provided water power for three mills
- Natural, wooded and enclosed feel
- Mature trees and planting on either side
- Well used footpath on its eastern bank connected by bridges to the lanes behind High Street

- Improved connections with the town
- Bank subsidence
- Upgrade / maintenance of bridges
- Littering and dog fouling

- Increase awareness of the Leat and the important role it has played in shaping Cullompton's heritage
- Improve accessibility along and connections to it from the town
- To increase wildlife benefits along it
- Review opportunities to ensure long term maintenance and management of the leat
- Review opportunities to reinstate heritage, including iron footbridge over Leat?

CCA Fields South





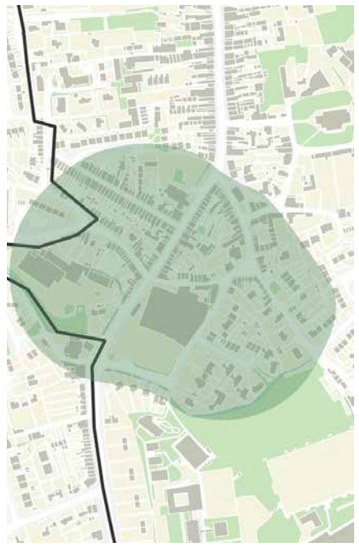


- Open and green character
- Views to the parish church and other parts of the town
- Sports pitches and enclosed children's play area
- Maintained by The Cullompton Community Association
- Tree lined footpaths

- Footpath surfacing
- Littering and dog fouling

- Capitalise on the construction of the relief road to raise the quality of the open space and connections to and from it

Town Centre South





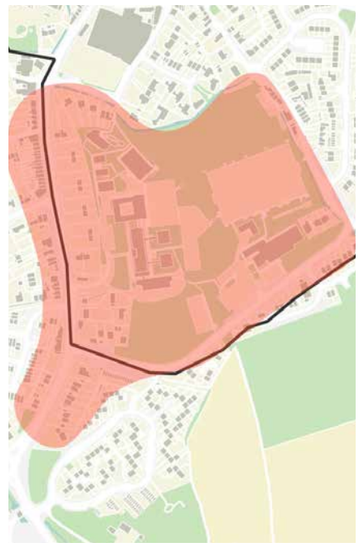


- Historic route through town
- Hayridge Centre a key community asset
- New Road a historically important terrace street of former mill workers cottages
- Cockpit Hill and Pound Square include several houses of interest as well as traces of industrial activity
- Views to the parish church

- Some cottages in poor condition - lack of maintenance / loss of features and materials / accretions e.g. satellite dishes
- Low quality infill development in places
- Traffic along Exeter Hill and cars / parking dominates in streets around

- To protect buildings from further deterioration and loss of original features
- To celebrate this area's history as former housing for mill workers

Exeter Road







- Architecturally diffuse area at southern edge of the conservation area
- Threshold to the town centre
- Includes Cullompton Community College and the sports centre
- Views to the parish church
- Green verges along Exeter Road

- Some houses in poor condition - poor maintenance / loss of features and materials / accretions e.g. satellite dishes

- Protect the historic properties in the area
- Improve the arrival experience from Exeter Road to the High Street

5.6 Benefits of heritage

5.6.1 There is a body of evidence that supports the case for investment in heritage. Recent findings have been summarised by Historic England. On average, £1 of public expenditure on heritage-led regeneration generates £1.60 additional economic activity over a ten-year period (Heritage Counts 2017). Furthermore, research shows that taking care of heritage also brings wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits for local communities:

"The historic environment provides a sense of authenticity, beauty and distinctiveness. This attracts people, businesses and investment, and can provide places with their competitive advantage. Using the historic environment as an asset, and giving it new life, has also been one of the cornerstones of the economic and social revival of our towns and cities" (Heritage Works, 2017).

Regeneration and sustainable growth

5.6.2 Taking care of Cullompton's heritage can help to secure investment from public, private and charitable sectors which will bring wider benefits to the town. Findings by Historic England show that for businesses, the historic environment is as important in deciding where to locate as road access (Heritage Counts, 2010). Investors can have confidence because historic assets are well integrated into the townscape and already highly valued. Promoting an active role for heritage in regeneration will help realise other cultural and economic benefits by reinforcing the sense of place and identity of Cullompton. Furthermore, the re-use of existing buildings is often the most sustainable way to develop (Heritage Works, 2013).

5.6.3 Heritage funding can be paired with existing resources and funding streams to boost the benefits of heritage-led regeneration. The recent funding awarded by Historic England as part of the High Streets Heritage Action Zone project is an opportunity for this.

Tourism

5.6.4 England's heritage attractions play a major role in generating millions of domestic day and overnight trips. 3/4 of adults in England visited a heritage site at least once in 2017/2018. 34% of domestic tourists stated being able to visit a historic building or monument as their 'sole reason' or a 'very important reason' why they took their domestic holiday or short break. This increases to two thirds for day visitors. (Heritage Counts 2019).

5.6.5 In 2015, tourists spent £101 million in Mid Devon supporting the local economy (Mid Devon Visitor Survey 2016). The district attracted approximately 212,000 staying visits and 1.59 million day visits. Results from the visitor survey (2016) reveal that most visitors intended to visit Tiverton (40%), whereas only 8% intended to visit Cullompton.

5.6.6 Positioned just off the M5, Cullompton is well placed to receive visitors en-route to the south west. There is a real opportunity to capitalise on its strategic location and diverse heritage to provide an enhanced cultural, shopping and recreational offer. This would be as a destination in its own right as well as to encourage those stopping en-route to spend more time in the town.

Shopping

Cullompton's heritage provides a fantastic opportunity to raise the town's retail profile and ranking amongst other nearby centres. Shopping is no longer just about the shops - people are looking for a broader shopping experience. Heritage and culture, a distinct sense of place, spaces to dwell and a diverse dining offer can all contribute to an enjoyable leisure and retail experience that entice people into town. A town focused on heritage will draw people in and encourage them to explore more and stay for longer.

Culture and community

5.6.7 Heritage is a key aspect of Cullompton's cultural calendar. The Walronds is a great example of a repurposed historic building, now used for community events and activities.

5.6.8 The ability to share and participate in heritage is an essential ingredient of community cohesion, helping to reinforce identity in Cullompton. Regeneration of the historic environment benefits individual assets, the wider area around them and the communities which value and associate with them.

Health and social well-being

5.6.9 Involvement and enjoyment of the historic environment benefits our health. Access to the historic parks, gardens and other open spaces has significant benefits to our physical and mental health. Research shows how natural views can lower blood pressure and stress and improvements to the built environment have been shown to improve mental well-being (Benefits of Heritage, HLF, 2012). Attentive and inclusive quality design influences social behaviour, and can help reduce crime.

Education and employment

5.6.10 The historic environment provides students with the opportunity to learn about local heritage first-hand. Teaching young people about heritage can help students to develop a broader range of skills e.g. research and analysis, critical thinking and design, which can be applied more widely to the arts, culture and sciences. Heritage can also provide opportunities for important skills training in heritage renovation as part of further education programmes, as well as local employment opportunities. This can help to embed a high skills base in the local community to support high quality building work.

5.7 Partnerships

5.7.1 Delivering the heritage strategy depends on successful partnership working to help to regenerate, conserve and promote the historic environment.

5.7.2 Key partners include:

- Devon County Council
- Mid Devon District Council
- Cullompton Town Council
- Cullompton Town Team
- Representatives from the local business community and community organisations including The Hayridge Centre, Cullompton Community Centre, The Farmers Market, Cullompton Community Association, St Andrew's Church and other places of worship
- Art and cultural organisations including Cullompton Arts House, Walronds Preservation Trust and Cullompton History Group
- Schools and further education including Willowbank Primary School, St Andrew's Primary School, Cullompton Community College, adult education e.g. Learn Devon at the Hayridge Centre, youth clubs and youth activity groups
- National and regional partners including Historic England, Natural England

5.7.3 The Cullompton Town Centre Regeneration Partnership Group has been set up to help deliver projects as part of the HAZ scheme. Many stakeholders listed above are included in the partnership and have contributed a range of cash and non-cash contributions to help deliver the scheme.

5.8 A Strategy for change

Overarching vision for heritage

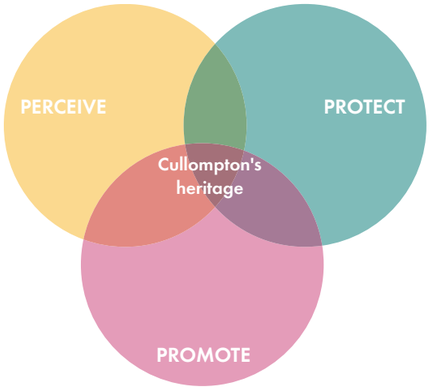
5.8.1 The vision for Cullompton's heritage is
To use the special qualities and historic character of Cullompton as the foundation for future change. To allow the town's heritage to shape a distinctive identity for the town - a place people are proud to call home and a welcoming place to visit.

Aims

5.8.2 The strategy sets out three aims that will help to realise the vision. These are to:

Perceive - gather information to better understand Cullompton's past, its unique qualities and the existing condition of its historic environment
Protect - take care of Cullompton's heritage to prevent further deterioration of its buildings and to bring assets off the 'at risk' register
- **Promote** - celebrating Cullompton's heritage and raising awareness through public realm enhancements, wayfaring strategies and promotional activities e.g. interpretation boards / online presence.

5.8.3 For each aim are a set of objectives and required actions. Underneath each objective is an indication of where in the town the objective applies to and whose responsibility it is. A sense of priority is also given to help inform delivery of the strategy.



Aim 1 - PERCEIVE

5.8.4 Cullompton's heritage has many layers. It is apparent through the 'seen' - the medieval street pattern, old buildings and historic materials and features. It is also glimpsed through the more hidden - street signs alluding to past activities or uses, the social history told through stories and old photographs, or the sense of place informed by the historic valley landscape.

5.8.5 Different people relate to, and appreciate history in different ways. Understanding this is essential for improving the historic environment. Cullompton's history is also always evolving - new stories are being told as the town responds to changing trends. Actions to manage Cullompton's heritage must be rooted in a thorough understanding of the town's history, the current condition of buildings, the challenges the town faces relating to heritage, and the contribution heritage can make to the local community, economy and environment. Managing Cullompton's heritage requires a strategic approach which is evidence-led.









Heritage assets in town

Objective A

Grow our understanding of Cullompton's unique past

5.8.6 The District Council is working proactively with Cullompton Town Council, voluntary groups and local residents to develop its understanding of Cullompton's past and to improve its evidence base for managing its heritage. Interested groups and individuals provide a vital resource for fieldwork and research, filling gaps in knowledge about topics such as vernacular buildings, archaeology, the town's cultural history and its past industries. Having a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the town's heritage will provide a sensitive and effective response to promoting Cullompton as a heritage and cultural destination. The Devon Heritage Centre and Town Hall contains a wealth of information including history books, old maps, photographs, registers and directories that provide a useful resource to grow understanding.

5.8.7 The project to record the history of the cloth trade in the town, as well as the town council's archive project to collect and document significant items from Cullompton's past are great actions already taken that demonstrate a proactiveness to explore the town's heritage. Similarly, the project to expand the oral histories library that allows individuals to learn about the past from long-standing residents of Cullompton and the project to add to the existing local history books that explain the importance of Cullompton's architectural and social heritage.

Key actions
- Pioneer a research project with local primary schools to investigate local history. This could be combined with the oral histories library - young people could interview older residents about their experiences.

Where? Town wide

Priority Medium

Objective B

Understand the role of heritage in town life and the challenges and opportunities it brings to different stakeholders

5.8.8 Integral to the strategy is developing our understanding of the role heritage currently plays in town life - the benefits, challenges and opportunities it brings to local residents, workers, students, business owners, landowners, community organisations and visitors. Establishing a baseline position will help to inform the management and promotion of Cullompton's heritage in the future.

Key actions
- Carry out a survey to understand how is heritage viewed and valued (including the perceived benefits, challenges and opportunities) by people who live, work and have a stake in the town. The survey should inform a review to identify potential opportunity for partnership working and co-operative solutions to any heritage challenges.

Where?
Town wide

Priority
Medium






5.8.9 Cullompton's heritage is at risk. The conservation area is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register and is deteriorating. Unsympathetic developments, poorly maintained buildings and inappropriate alterations and extensions are contributing to the decline of character in the conservation area. Much of the historic fabric is in a fragile condition and in need of investment. The traffic, as well as the erosion of character and appearance (including Permitted Development works and unauthorised works), and the decreasing vitality and viability (empty shops, changing shopping habits) are issues that continue to have a negative impact on the town.

5.8.10 There have been some clear conservation successes since 2009, especially the restoration of the Walronds and the rescue of the Merchant's House, both former buildings at risk. The garden at Walronds is now an enjoyable community resource. The Community Centre by the church and the Hayridge Centre have also been positive moves.

5.8.11 The second aim of the historic strategy seeks to build on these heritage successes, seeking to remove the conservation area, Roman fort and camp and historic buildings off the 'heritage at risk' register where there is the ability to do so. It also seeks to strengthen the protection for all designated and undesignated heritage assets in the town. To do this, a combination of up-to-date management guidance and on-the-ground interventions that prioritise the most vulnerable assets are necessary.

Objective C
Update and strengthen guidance to manage Cullompton's heritage

5.8.12 Appraisals of conservation areas are undertaken to ensure a positive management of change to the historic environment which is sustainable and which protects the special character of the conservation area. Local authorities are legally obliged to review their conservation areas from time to time and the Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016) underlines the importance of regular review of Conservation Area appraisals and management plans.

5.8.13 A review of the existing conservation area appraisal and management plan is currently being undertaken. It will include clear deliverable objectives to help ensure a sustainable future for Cullompton's heritage is delivered.

Key actions
- Review Local Assets Heritage Register and make recommendations for listing
- Review the Buildings at Risk register and seek to develop a strategy for individual buildings to ensure their removal from the register

Where?

Conservation area and its boundaries

Priority
High

Objective D
Bring vacant old buildings into use

5.8.14 The National Planning Policy Guidance (para 3) states that generally the risks of neglect and decay for historic buildings are best addressed through ensuring that they remain valued and in active use that is consistent with their conservation. This may require sympathetic changes from time to time. Whilst vacancy rates in Cullompton are lower than the national average (7% in August 2019), there are buildings at risk of further degradation because of their vacancy. The Council undertook a detailed inspection of all properties in Fore Street and found that 9% of residential properties were vacant. Buildings like the Old Tannery and the Post Office sorting office on Fore Street are examples of buildings that should be protected through reuse.

5.8.15 Bringing vacant buildings back into use, including encouraging homes above shops, can not only improve the historic fabric but also help to bring vibrancy and activity into the town and support evening uses.

Key actions
- Seek to bring vacant buildings back into use to provide new commercial and /or community space.
- Seek opportunities for a permanent venue for the Cullompton Arts House.
- Explore opportunities to fund community initiatives and pop-up shops that might temporarily enhance vacant units.
- Seek to encourage homes above shops through preparation of guidance, engagement with owners and identification of funding opportunities.

Where?

Fore Street, High Street

Priority
High

Objective E
Refurbish stand-out buildings

5.8.16 Refurbishing the town's most outstanding buildings is essential for protecting the historic integrity of the town and for allowing Cullompton's unique identity to shine through. Cullompton has 4 high status listed buildings, all of which are, or have been on the 'Heritage at Risk' register. There are a further 22 Grade II listed buildings in the HAZ area, many of which are in a bad state of repair.

5.8.17 The refurbishment of the Grade I listed Walronds and the creation of a public garden sets an example for how taking care of exceptional buildings can have wider benefits for the town. The building now provides a multifunctional space for a variety of different activities and uses and is a hub for the community.

Key actions
- Within the HAZ area set out a strategy for prioritising historic buildings for refurbishment. Action should be directed at buildings most 'at risk', those in poorest condition and with the potential to contribute to the town centre if refurbished.

Where?

Fore Street, High Street, Church Street

Priority
Medium

Objective F

Improve the condition of Cullompton's historic lanes and courts

5.8.18 A special feature of the town are the lanes, courts and passages leading off from the High Street / Fore Street. The court areas to the rear of the Fore Street buildings reflect the boundaries of the old burgage plots and are therefore important to the historic integrity of the town. They vary in their character - some are open, others run through a covered passage. Some are private and widen into courtyards flanked by residential or workshop units. Others are accessible to the public and provide intimate walking routes, connecting the centre of town with the CCA fields and the residential areas on either side.

5.8.19 They also vary in their condition - there is not a consistent palette of surfacing materials and some are cluttered by bins and modern traffic signage. Many of the residential properties along these routes are in need of maintenance. There is an opportunity to improve the environment of these lanes and to restore a consistent and sympathetic design to the entrance ways which value their historic significance.

Key actions

- Seek opportunities with key stakeholders including landowners and businesses to develop a public realm strategy that will consider surfacing, materials, signage, bin management, visual vistas and wayfinding.
- Explore opportunities to create new and refurbished homes and work spaces in the historic courts and lanes that radiate off the high street.

Where? Lanes and courts off Fore Street

Priority Medium

Objective G

Enhance Fore Street and improve the condition of its buildings

5.8.20 Cullompton has suffered over the years from heavy traffic that congests the centre of town. The traffic has worsened the condition of the historic properties that front Fore Street, causing structural and decorative damage. The heavy vehicles, noise and exhaust fumes detract from the general setting of the town and have worsened air quality. The construction of the relief road presents an opportunity to carry out works to enhance the environment for the pedestrian, cycle and business communities. In so doing, the town centre will become a more inclusive, healthier and safer environment.

5.8.21 It will also help to protect historic properties from further damage. The Council undertook an inspection of all properties in Fore Street and found that 38% were in poor condition due to damp, fire risk, poor repairs and hazardous stairs. The objective seeks to improve the condition of buildings by working with property owners and funding partners. Similarly, the grant scheme support through the Heritage Action Zone programme to support property owners along Fore Street to repair and refurbish buildings.

Key actions

- Seek to transform the character and function of the high street including a review of traffic flows and pavement widths following the construction of the Relief Road
- Undertake a detailed survey of the condition of all high and medium priority buildings

Where? Fore Street

Priority High

Objective H

Protect the Roman forts and camps at St. Andrew's Hill

5.8.22 Cullompton's heritage extends back to Roman times; the town was once home to two Roman forts which served as permanent bases for auxiliary units of the Roman Army. Remains of two Roman camps have also been recorded at St. Andrew's Hill. The Scheduled Monument is of national importance but is currently included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. The register states that the monument has extensive significant problems and its condition is declining. It is particularly vulnerable to arable plouging and needs protecting.

Key actions

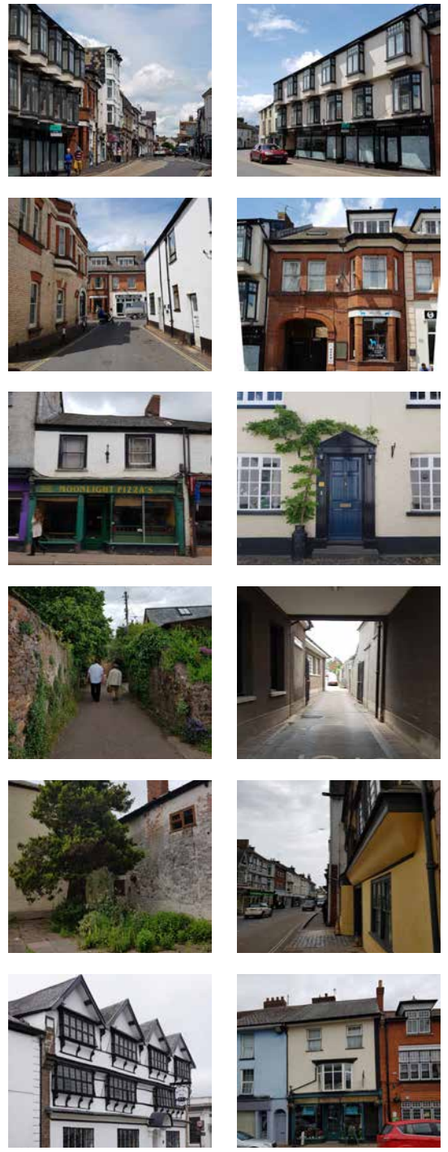
- Explore potential sources of grant aid to restore the condition of the Scheduled Monument whilst also delivering on other environmental objectives
- Explore the role of Historic England Management Agreements, Monument Management Schemes and Heritage Partnership Agreements in helping to improve the condition of the site

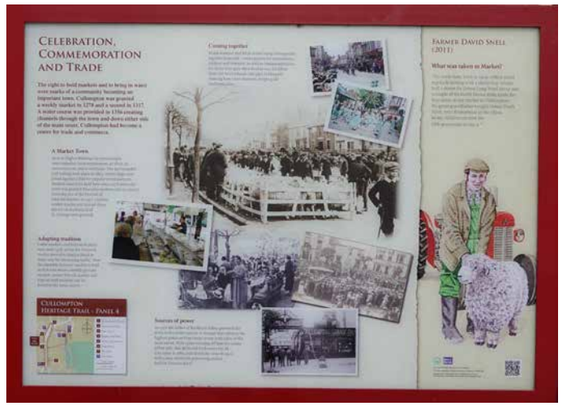
Where?

St. Andrew's Hill, northwest Cullompton

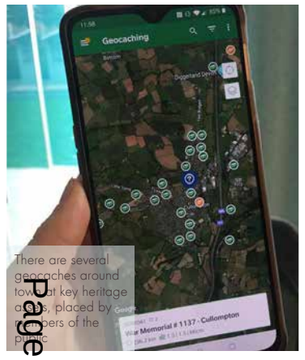
Priority

High

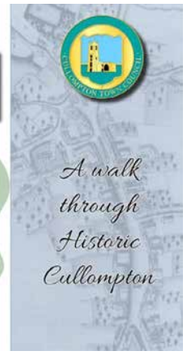




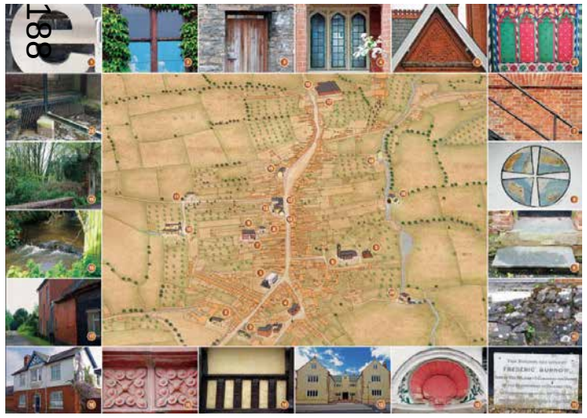


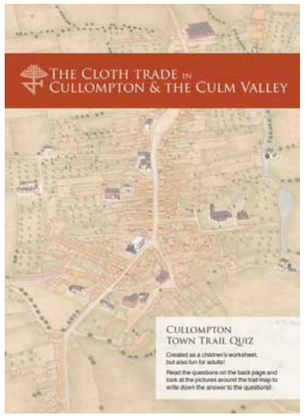


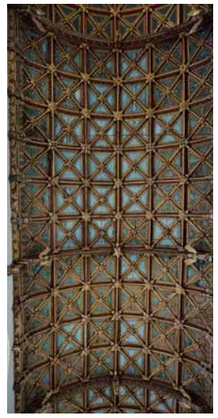














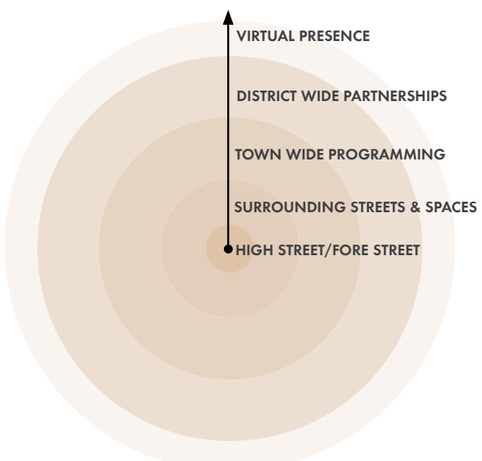


There is an opportunity to build on the successful projects and activities happening around Cullompton to promote its heritage and inform people about what's happening in town

Aim 3 - PROMOTE

5.8.23 The Nobel Prize winning economist, Robert Merton Solow said in 1987 that *"over the long term, places with strong, distinctive identities are more likely to prosper than places without them. Every place must identify its strongest, most distinctive features and develop them or run the risk of being all things to all persons and nothing special to any."* Promoting Cullompton's heritage will strengthen the local distinctiveness of the town, increase pride among residents and draw visitors in. The strategy seeks to celebrate heritage through improving the setting of heritage assets (e.g. public realm enhancements) in the town centre, increasing awareness of heritage in Cullompton's surrounding streets and spaces, and events and programming to raise the profile of the town's distinct heritage. The strategy also encourages strengthening links with other historic and cultural assets in the District.

5.8.24 The objectives build on what is already happening in the town. Cullompton has an established record of heritage projects. The project to record the history of the cloth trade culminated in the Culm Valley & Cullompton cloth trade heritage trail as well as the installation of heritage interpretation boards around the town which have proved popular and have made heritage more visible. The restoration of the Walronds has raised the profile of Cullompton's heritage.



Objective 1: Improve the setting and appearance of historic buildings along Fore Street and in the Bullring.

5.8.25 Enhancements to the public realm will help to create a high quality and attractive environment that is locally distinctive to Cullompton and which showcases the town centre's outstanding historic buildings along this key route.

Key actions

- Seek to commission design work and create a flexible public space at the Bullring for activities and events. A vision for the space should be developed in collaboration with local businesses and landowners and should identify and sustain the significance of the Bullring and the value of its public realm features where they contribute to the quality or identity of Cullompton. Enhancement works should respond positively to its historic context by considering aspects like surfacing, materials, street furniture and accessibility requirements.
- Seek to develop a public realm and movement strategy for Fore Street in consultation with key stakeholders.
- Offer a shop front improvement grant scheme for commercial properties in the conservation area.
- Offer a structural and historic reinstatement grant scheme for the restoration of historic features on those properties within Fore Street.
- Prepare shop front guidance.

Where?

Bullring, High Street, Fore Street

Priority

Medium

Objective J: Increase awareness of heritage in Cullompton's surrounding streets and spaces

5.8.26 This objective seeks to showcase the town's heritage at key points in the town centre which have a story to tell. Key buildings, community services, attractions, and public areas should be well signposted and easy to get to. New development should reveal the significance of heritage through improving the setting of old buildings or public realm enhancements.

Key actions

- Seek to prepare an updated set of interpretation panels for the town in consultation with local stakeholders. To include the leat, old mill buildings and the CCA fields as well as places with an important social history.
- Seek to establish a wayfinding, wayfaring and public art strategy to improve arrival points into the town.
- Explore opportunities for a tourist information centre in the town centre.
- Explore the opportunity to illuminate heritage assets either as a permanent feature or as part of a wider events
- Explore opportunities on-line such as the Geocaching app.
- Look at techniques to encourage visitors to 'stumble upon' hidden gems whilst learning more about the town's heritage
- Seek to create a marketing strategy (online and leaflets) which sets out an agreed and consistent message in consultation with stakeholders

Where? At historic sites and locations across the town and at arrival points into the town.

Priority Medium

Objective K: Raise the profile of Cullompton's distinct heritage through programming and events

5.8.27 The town already has a great reputation for holding successful spring and autumn festivals, celebrating artisan crafts, art and culture, local food and produce, as well as a variety of other events throughout the year. Historic buildings such as the Walronds open their house and gardens to celebrate these town events and organisations like the Farmer's Market help grow them. This is to both showcase what Cullompton and the Culm Valley has to offer as well as supporting local businesses and organisations. There is an opportunity to grow these events to highlight Cullompton's unique offer.

Key actions

- Continue to work with local businesses and community groups to expand the cultural programme of day and evening events focused on food and the arts
- Explore opportunities to open up historic assets to visitors as part of these events, or on a more regular basis
- Explore opportunities such a pop-up museum featuring some of the archival materials held at the town hall and else where
- Integrate relevant historical information into the marketing strategy (outlined in Objective J) to ensure the profile of Cullompton's distinct heritage is championed.

Where?

Town-wide

Priority

Low-Medium

Objective L: Strengthen links with other historic and cultural assets in the District

5.8.28 The town is nearby to some outstanding historic attractions, countryside and local heritage, including Killerton House, the Blackdown Hills AONB and Coldharbour Mill. Cullompton should look to strengthen its links with these assets, through partnerships and joined up working, as well as seeking opportunities to improve and promote walking and cycling connections to the countryside.

Key actions

- Explore possible partnerships with other organisations further afield such as Killerton House and Coldharbour Manor and coordinate District wide events, activities and learning
- Explore opportunities to create new links into the countryside on foot or by bike and to better promote Cullompton's setting within a historic and attractive natural landscape.
- Consider incorporating these elements into the marketing strategy outlined in Objective J.

Where?

District-wide

Priority

Low - Medium



Figure 65 **Connections to the countryside and nearby heritage attractions**

- **Protect St Andrew's Hill monument**
- **Fore Street building and public realm improvements**
- **Enhanced public space at Bullring & building improvements**
- **Stand out buildings - Grade I**
- **Stand out buildings - Grade II***
- **Other listed buildings**
- **Improve laneways:**
  - High priority for improvement (based on current condition and future potential)
  - Medium priority for improvement
  - Low priority for improvement
- **Repurposing vacant buildings**
- **Key areas for awareness raising**
- **Promoting links out to countryside and other historic assets**
- **Conservation area and HAZ zone**



Figure 66 **Zoom in of heritage strategy**

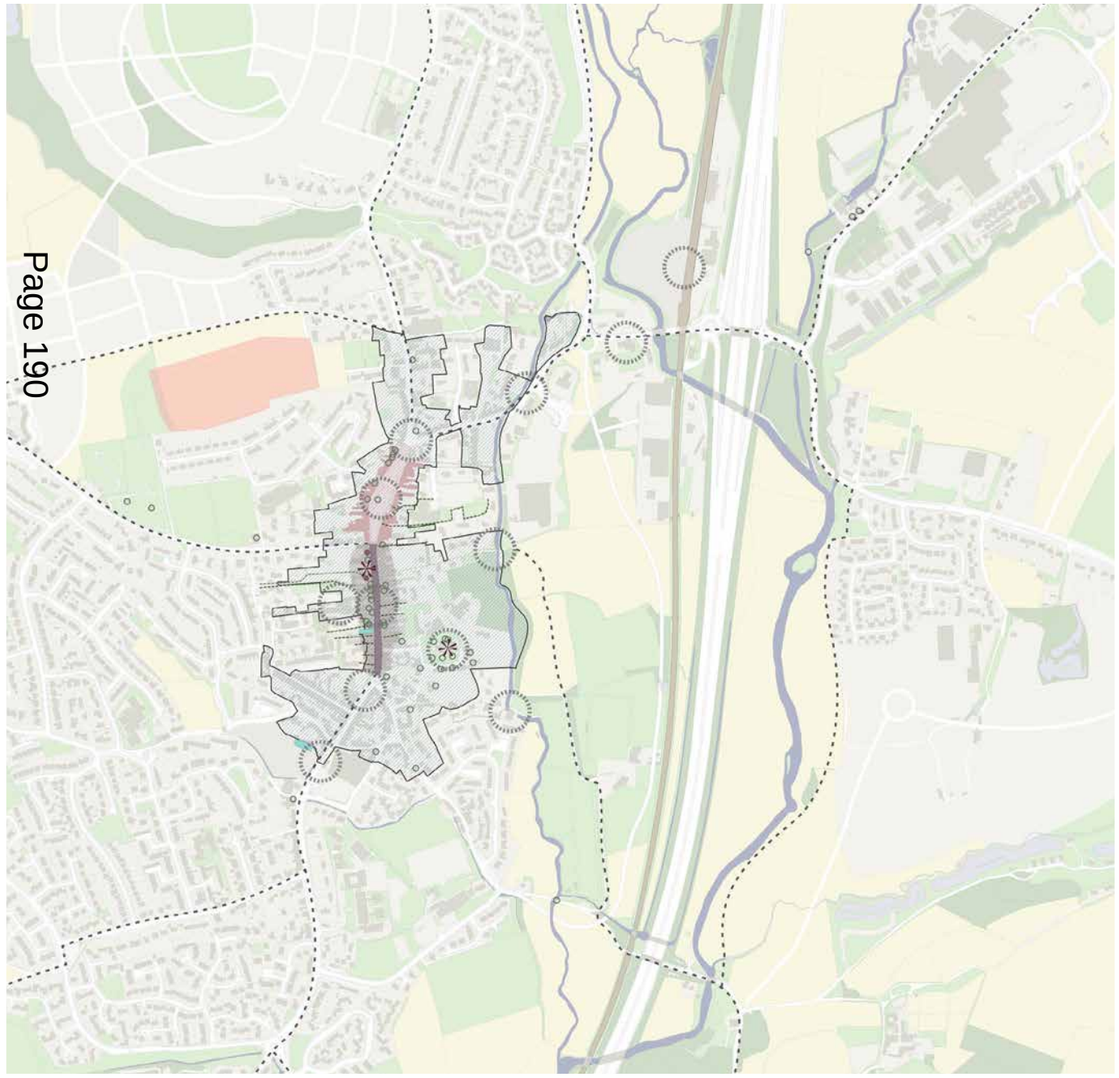


Figure 67 **Heritage Strategy**



Inside St Andrew's Church

6 Delivery, Monitoring and Review

6.9.1 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan provides a clear vision and set of objectives to guide the implementation of a set of key opportunity sites, public realm improvements and smaller scale projects which will work together to transform the town centre of Cullompton. The success of those projects will depend on continued partnership working to secure the delivery of high quality and sustainable interventions in a timely manner.

6.9.2 The masterplan has been structured such that individual projects can be implemented whilst recognising the importance of securing consistency in approach, quality and co-ordination between each project in accordance with this masterplan. This allows for a comprehensive approach to the delivery of development. It is important that these projects relate well and inform other strategic activities in the area such as Culm Garden Village and major infrastructure schemes.

6.9.3 A Delivery Action Plan will form an addendum to this masterplan and is currently under development. This would set out a time scale for interventions and delivery mechanisms.

6.9.4 The masterplan aims to set a basis for a high quality town centre and as such inform future planning applications. This will support a town centre that is underpinned by greener, healthier, connected and accessible green spaces, buildings and streets that seeks to lower the impact of carbon.

6.9.5 Monitoring will be an integral part of regeneration plans for the town. This will include monitoring of delivery of masterplan outputs and also tracking progress towards masterplan objectives. The delivery action plan will be subject to regular review in order to monitor progress towards critical success factors such as town centre footfall, vacancy rates along with quality review of heritage enhancements.



Photos around Cullompton

CULLY'S HIGHLIGHTS























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Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners accepts no responsibility for comments made by members of the community which have been reflected in this report.

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Introductory Text to Delivery Plan Appendix 4

Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan.

Delivery Plan 2022 - 2027.

Foreward

The growth of Cullompton will require the town centre to play a pivotal role in driving forward and growing the local economy.

Town centres throughout the UK are facing significant challenges, including through the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the growth of online shopping, pressure from out of town centre supermarkets and reduced footfall. It is therefore crucial that the proposals set out in the masterplan are delivered to ensure the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre for the future.

This Delivery Plan identifies the priority projects that Mid Devon District Council is keen to see delivered to ensure the enhancement of the town centre over the next 5+ years. The Delivery Plan will be updated to ensure that key projects are progressing, that targets are being achieved and so that our plans and priorities remain relevant based on the most current information possible.

Mission Statement

The delivery of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD 6 objectives, as set out in Chapter 3 of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD, will ensure that the vision for Cullompton town centre is met; that the town centre is a vibrant and attractive destination where residents and visitors will wish to spend time, live and work. Delivery of the objectives will be sensitive to the town's historic character ensuring it will be developed in a sustainable way for the enjoyment of future generations. Alone or in combination the delivery of the objectives are key to the future of Cullompton as a successful town centre.

4 spatial strategies underpin the 6 objectives of the masterplan and are detailed in Chapter 4 of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD. They are as follows:

- Transport and movement;
- Open space and public realm;
- Activity and land use; and
- The environment and sustainability.

Arising from the spatial strategies are a number of actions that focus on areas such as public realm, employment, finding your way around, the historic environment and green infrastructure. Also arising are the identification of 8 key opportunity sites. The actions and key opportunity sites both inform and ultimately deliver the targets set within the Delivery Plan.

Delivery Plan

Underpinning the Delivery Plan is a set of targets that will take place over a number of years. The targets will confirm what is intended to take place, when and how.

This Delivery Plan covers an initial 5 year period. Monitoring how the projects are progressing against targets will be undertaken although the main focus of monitoring is expected to be delivered and led by individual projects – for example the station project will report progress through its own governance and this can then be reflected within the Delivery Plan. This will avoid duplication of effort.

Delivery on the actions and key opportunity sites must conform to the provisions of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2033, and any other adopted strategies or plans.

The Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan identifies Cullompton for meeting the district's long-term development needs. Cullompton is recognized as a key strategic market town and will become the principal focus of development for the district in the medium and long term in accordance with Policies S2 and S11 of the Adopted Local Plan.

The local plan defines the town centre boundary for Cullompton and encourages leisure uses, offices, new homes, attractive spaces and a balanced night time economy.

A project plan will be required prior to each action and key opportunity site coming forward. This will include the process that will be taken to deliver the project including securing funding, attraction of market interest and timescales for delivery.

Purpose
It is important that the Delivery Plan reflects the overarching aims and objectives of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and that the actions and key opportunity sites come forward in line with the ethos set out in the Masterplan.

The outputs of the Delivery Plan will be informed by the vision and objectives contained within the Masterplan.

The purpose of the Delivery Plan is to:

- Help capture and address identified issues relating to the town centre; and
- To take the actions and key opportunity sites, as set out in the Masterplan, ensuring they contribute towards addressing the identified issues.

The actions and key opportunity site targets are set out in the attached table.

Projects: Spatial Strategy

Timescale: S/T: 0- 12 months; M/T: 1-3 years; L/T: 3+ years

Public Realm: Lanes & Courtyards including Pocket Parks at the Methodist Church, Pound Square / front of Hayridge Centre & Community Centre Car Park					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(2); 1(3); 1(5); 2(6); 2(7); 2(9); 3(12); 3(14); 4(16); 4(19); 4(20); 5(21) & 5(23); 6(28); 6(30) & 6(33) See Appendix 2 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Enhancement of the space(s) for enjoyment and use. Consistent palette of materials and street furniture. Enhancement of each space including planting, public seating and cycle parking. Designed to support local shops and services. Designed to enhance biodiversity including opportunities for rain water capture. Retention of the historic character of the space. Partnership working with the landowner & stakeholders to bring forward enhancement.	Explore funding opportunities. On-going liaison with landowners. Survey and other preparatory work including health and safety. Develop options and feasibility in consultation with the landowner(s) & stakeholders.	Delivery: Landowner & DCC. Lead promotor: Cullompton Town Council DCC & landowner	Public sector grant opportunities. Self-funding. S106 contributions	M/T	Enhanced public realm sensitive to the historic setting. Creation of high quality public space(s). Number of users. Increased economic prosperity. Increased visitors and footfall. Increased dwell times.
Public Realm: Town Centre Gateway Treatments at Station Road & Exeter Road / Meadow Lane.					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 1(7); 1(9) & 3(11) See Appendix 2 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Enhanced sense of arrival & celebration of Cullompton as a destination. High quality & improved wayfinding. Consistent palette of materials and street furniture. Sensitive to Cullompton's historic character.	• Liaison with landowners. • Survey and other preparatory work. • Develop options and feasibility in consultation.	Delivery: DCC Lead promotor: DCC in consultation with Cullompton Town Council & MDDC.	S106 contributions Public sector grant opportunities.	S/T – M/T.	Enhanced public realm sensitive to the historic setting. Increased economic prosperity. Increased visitors and footfall.

Partnership working with stakeholders to bring forward enhancement.					
Digital Connectivity					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(8) & 2(9) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Delivery of digital maturity within the business / retail community in the form of skills, knowledge and technology. Promotion of Ecommerce. Partnership working with stakeholders to bring forward improvements. Occupation of vacant units.	Survey and other preparatory work Develop options and feasibility in consultation. Liaison with landowners. Seek synergies with the SPF and REPF programmes to support delivery.	Delivery: MDDC & shop proprietors. Lead Promotor: MDDC.	Public sector grant opportunities. – SPF and REPF may support this initiative.	S/T – M/T.	Occupation of vacant units. Increased economic prosperity. Increased no. of visitors and footfall.
Co-working space					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(6); 2(8) & 2(9 See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Providing opportunity for a mix of uses supporting start-up & existing businesses, local shops and services. Partnership working with stakeholders to bring forward improvements. Improved occupation and enhancement of town centre property(ies).	Review funding opportunities – especially focused on the SPF and REPF where provision has been made to support such initiatives. Survey and other preparatory work. Develop options and feasibility in consultation with landowners and stakeholders.	Delivery: various partners. Lead Promotor: MDDC	Public sector grant opportunities. Self-funding. SPF / REPF.	S/T – M/T	Occupation of vacant units. Increased economic prosperity. Increased no. of visitors and footfall.
Wayfinding: Signage Strategy					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(4); 1(5); 2(7); 2(9); 3(11b); 3(12); 3(14); 4(19); 4(20); 5(21); 6(30) &6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
High quality & improved wayfinding. Celebration of Cullompton as a historic & thriving destination (inc. information boards). Consistent palette of materials and street furniture.	Review funding opportunities Survey and other preparatory work. Develop options and feasibility in consultation with landowners and stakeholders.	Delivery: Cullompton Town Council & MDDC in consultation with the Town Team & DCC.	Public sector grant opportunities. S106 contributions. SPF / REPF.	S/T – M/T	Enhanced public realm sensitive to the historic setting.

Sensitive to Cullompton's historic character. Partnership working with stakeholders to bring forward enhancement.		Lead Promotor: MDDC / Cullompton Town Council.			
Raise the profile of Cullompton's Distinct Heritage Through Programming and Events					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(7); 2(10); 3(11b); 3(12); 3(13); 3(14); 5(23); 5(24) & 5(26) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Celebration of Cullompton as a historic & thriving destination. Partnership working with stakeholders to bring forward events, understanding & local pride.	Develop a year round cycle of events in collaboration with stakeholders inc a 'Roman event' based on archaeological digs recently undertaken.	Delivery: various partners (including MDDC, Cullompton Town Council, Cullompton Town Team, The Walronds & Creative Cullompton). Lead promotor: Cullompton Town Team and the Cultural Team in consultation with MDDC.	Public sector grant opportunities. Inc. Love your Town Centre. SPF / REPF.	S/T	Regular cycle of events. Increased no. of visitors, footfall & dwell time. Increased economic prosperity.
Strengthen Links with other Historic and Cultural Assets in the District					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(7); 2(10); 3(11b) & 3(12) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Celebration of Cullompton as a historic & thriving destination. Partnership working with stakeholders to bring forward events, understanding & local pride both within Cullompton and nearby destinations. An expanded and broaden scope for The Cloth Trail.	Make contact with nearby ventures including Killerton House, Coldharbour Mill and others for shared promotion.	Delivery: various partners (including MDDC, Cullompton Town Council, Walronds & Creative Cullompton). Lead promotor: Cullompton Town Team.	Public sector grant opportunities.	S/T – M/T	Regular cycle of events / collaboration. Increased no. of visitors, footfall & dwell time. Increased economic prosperity.

Projects: Key Opportunity Sites

Timescale: S/T: 0- 12 months; M/T: 1-3 years; L/T: 3+ years

Alexandria Industrial Estate					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 2(9); 3(11a); 4(20); 6(27); 6(28); 6(31) & 6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
• Enhance the sense of arrival to / from the new railway station. • Advancement of the station site as a mobility hub facilitating interchange between different forms of travel including rail / bus / cycle and walking. • Regeneration of the industrial estate complimentary to the railway station. • Improve walking / cycling connections Station Road. • Opportunity for a station square and shop. • Electric bike, scooter &/or car hire. • Public realm improvements • Enriched relationship with River Culm.	Commission a Masterplan for Alex. Business Park & the Railway Station to incorporate the following: Review flood risk. Liaison with landowner(s). Draft design & layout of public realm and complementary land uses in response to emerging railway plans. Detailed review of cycle / pedestrian links. Public transport enhancement options. Enhance vehicular, cycling and walking access including investigation of options to Millennium Way. Review of visual, public realm and wildlife benefits adjacent to the River Culm.	Delivery: Land owner (in consultation with MDDC, DCC & Network Rail). Lead promotor: MDDC	Public sector grant opportunities. Self-funding. S106 contributions.	S/T – M/T	Number of users. Creation of high quality public space. New mix of leisure, residential, community and commercial development. Increased economic prosperity.

Railway Station					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(9); 3(11a); 6(27); 6(28); 6(31) & 6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Incorporation of parking / electric vehicle charging for all future forms of mobility. Improve walking / cycling connections between the railway station, the town centre and its hinterlands. Public realm improvements including tree planting, public seating, cycle parking, space for station drop-off / pick-up.	Draft design & layout of public realm in response to emerging railway plans (M/T). Detailed review of cycle & pedestrian links. Liaison with landowner(s).	Delivery of station: Network Rail Delivery of station supporting infrastructure: Network Rail with Landowners, MDDC & DCC Lead Promotor: MDDC	Restoring your railway funding DFT. Levelling Up Fund. S106 contributions.	Medium term	Number of users. Creation of high quality public space. Footfall between station and town centre. Increased economic prosperity.

Tannery Site					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(1); 1(2); 1(3); 1(5); 2(6); 2(8b); 3(11a); 4(18); 4(20); 5(25) & 6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Delivery of a mixed use development; supporting local shops and services. Creation of active frontages, by means of main entrances on to Crow Green and Exeter Hill to enhance the sense of arrival into the town centre. Review opportunities for alternative forms of development such as zero carbon development. Retain the historic antiques building. Rehome the soft play and storage facilities. Enhance the water course for visual and wildlife benefits whilst integrating walking / cycling routes. Public realm improvements.	Review flood risk. Liaison with landowners. Detailed review of walking & cycling improvements. Review of visual, public realm and wildlife benefits adjacent to the waterway. Review the relocation / rehoming of existing uses as required.	Delivery: Land owner (in consultation with MDDC, & DCC). Lead promotor: MDDC	Grant opportunities. Self-funding.	Long term.	New mix of leisure, residential, community and commercial development(s). An enhanced high quality arrival point to the town centre. Improved public realm. Increased economic prosperity. Increased town centre footfall.

Higher Bullring					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(7); 3(11b); 3(12); 3(13); 3(14); 4(17); 4(20); 5(21); 5(23); 5(24); 6(28); 6(31) & 6(33) See Appendix 2 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Enhancement of the space for use by a variety of activities. Comprehensive re-design of the space as a larger, level, shared use area. Carriage way narrowing & widening of footways for improved pedestrian environment. Reconfigured parking. Consistent palette of materials and street furniture. De-cluttering. Retention and improved setting for the war memorial. Enhanced sense of arrival to the town centre. Retention of the historic character of the space. Public realm improvements including planting, public seating and cycle parking. Re-defined drop-off of deliveries. Improved way finding including signage. Improved pedestrian environment at side roads – prioritising pedestrians over turning traffic	Progress the emerging detailed design of the Higher Bullring. Continued liaison with landowner(s), stakeholders and other interested parties.	Delivery: MDDC, Historic England & DCC Lead Promotor: MDDC	HAZ (Historic England / DCC / MDDC / CTC)	Short term.	An enhanced high quality arrival point to the town centre. Improved public realm. Increased economic prosperity. Increased town centre footfall.

Improvements to Cycling Between the Proposed New Rail Station & the Town Centre					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(5); 2(9); 3(11a); 4(16); 4(18); 4(20); 5(21); 5(23); 6(27); 6(28); 6(31); 6(32) & 6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Improved cycle crossings north and south of Station Road. Installation of signage and tactile paving where missing at junctions. Integration of the CCA pedestrian & cycle~~s~~ways into the proposals at Station Road. Provision of appropriate signage.	Await outcome of LUF. Delivery. HAZ project is promoting inclusion of cycling infrastructure within the revised Higher Bullring public realm scheme.	Delivery: DCC & Landowner (in consultation with MDDC, Cullompton Town Council). Lead promotor: DCC / MDDC.	Levelling up fund. S106 contributions.	Medium term.	Clear and continuous cycle ways between the new railway station and town centre. Increased number of non-vehicular trips.

Fore Street					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(2); 1(5); 2(7); 2(9); 3(12); 3(13); 3(14); 3(15); 4(16); 4(19); 4(20); 5(21); 5(23); 6(28); 6(29); 6(30); 6(31) & 6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Rebalance the streetscape for the pedestrians and cyclists. To reclaim space for pedestrians and cyclists thereby creating an environment that supports local businesses. Consistent palette of materials and street furniture. Consolidation and decluttering of the High Street of street furniture. Integrate cycle provision along the High Street. Retain public transport including bus stops. Review short term parking & deliveries. Improved pedestrian environment at side roads – prioritising pedestrians over turning traffic.	Detailed traffic analysis and modelling including the impact of Cullompton Relief Road. Detailed survey of utilities and other underground features. Preparation of detailed design. Liaison with landowners, stakeholders and other interested parties.	Delivery: DCC (in consultation with landowners, MDDC, Historic England, Cullompton Town Council & Culm Valley in Business). Lead promotor: DCC	Grant opportunities. S106 contributions. Historic England funding opportunities.	Medium term.	An enhanced high quality town centre public realm. Increased economic prosperity. Reduced number of vacant properties. Increased town centre footfall. New mix of leisure, residential, community and commercial development.

Leat Footbridge					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(2); 1(3); 1(4); 1(5); 2(7); 2(9); 4(19); 4(20); 5(21); 5(23); 6(28); 6(30); 6(31) & 6(33) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
To reinstate the former crossing over the leat. To seek opportunities for new and improved pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre. An enhanced setting to the leat. Enhanced use and enjoyment of the leat in association with the CCA fields. Enhanced awareness of the historic importance of the leat.	Survey and other preparatory work including health and safety. Preparation of detailed design. Liaison with landowners, stakeholders and other interested parties.	Delivery: DCC & landowner (in consultation with MDDC, Historic England, Cullompton Town Council, Environment Agency, Cullompton Community Association). Lead Promotor: DCC / MDDC.	Grant opportunities. S106 contributions. Historic England funding opportunities. Self-funding.	Medium term.	Achievement of a new additional crossing. Enhanced public realm sensitive to the historic setting and biodiversity. Increased town centre footfall.

The Old Cinema Site					
Meeting Masterplan Objective: 1(2); 1(5); 2(6); 2(7); 2(8b); 3(12); 3(14) & 5(21) See Appendix 1 for Full List of Objectives					
Key features	**Next Steps**	**Lead partner**	**Funding**	**Priority**	**Measure of success**
Seek opportunities in partnership with the landowner to bring forward development opportunities &/or enhancement. Providing opportunity for a mix of uses supporting local shops and services. Review opportunities for introducing alternative forms of development / repair / maintenance such as zero carbon.	Liaison with the landowner. Survey and other preparatory work including health and safety. Develop options and feasibility in consultation with the landowner.	Delivery: Landowner Lead promotor: MDDC / CTC.	Public sector grant opportunities. Self-funding.	Medium to long term.	• Bringing a larger town centre building / site into active use. • Enhanced public realm sensitive to the historic setting. • Increased town centre footfall. • Increased economic prosperity. • New mix of leisure, residential, community and commercial development.

APPENDIX 2: Masterplan Objectives

Masterplan Objective (No)	Objective
1.	**Cullompton's distinctive historic buildings and landscape should be enhanced and restored.**
1(1)	Find viable uses for empty historic buildings including more and improved residential accommodation in the town centre.
1(2)	Seek to improve the appearance and setting of the historic buildings through the planning process and through on-going repair and maintenance by private individuals.
1(3)	Protect, enhance and create key views, green spaces and waterways with consideration of their biodiversity and amenity roles. Seek to provide more green spaces.
1(4)	Enhance the attractiveness, use and public enjoyment pf the CCA fields following the delivery of the relief road.
1(5)	Increasing Cullompton's attractiveness as a place to work, visit and enjoy
2.	**Cullompton's centre should rediscover its historic role as a place of work.**
2(6)	Seek out the potential of vacant and under used sites and buildings in the town centre to complement the existing employment offer and enhance town centre vitality. This could provide different types of work space that meet today's needs.
2(7)	Celebrate the town's history and how it can contribute to Cullompton's identity and future offer. Potential opportunities exist to create a unique offer.
2(8a) 2(8b)	Enhance infrastructure to meet the needs of business including WiFi connectivity and speed with consideration of deliveries and servicing. Secure productive use of historic buildings through occupation that meets modern day requirements.
2(9)	Improve the town centre's attractiveness and offer to those working in Cullompton's peripheral employment areas including its accessibility via improvements to physical links.
2(10)	Forge connection between businesses and nearby higher educational institutions.
3.	**An enticing experience for visitors will aim to draw people into Cullompton's town centre.**
3(11a) 3(11b)	Transform the 'gateway' into the town centre to create a positive first impression. Encourage holiday-makers en-route to the south west to venture beyond the M5 service station.
3(12)	Raise the profile and make use of Cullompton's main attractions, historic buildings, courts lanes and open spaces.
3(13)	Strengthen Cullompton as a food and drink destination promoting its café's, restaurants and Farmer's Market and forging links with producers in the local area.
3(14)	Enhance the retail, leisure, food and drink offer within an improved historic environment to encourage visits and dwell time.
3(15)	A holistic view of the town centre's parking provision and on-going requirements.
4.	**Cullompton's spaces should be reclaimed and redesigned to support a vibrant community life.**
4(16)	Alleviate traffic along the high street and redesign the space creating a better pedestrian and cycle environment.
4(17)	Establish the Bullring as the town's primary outdoor civic space framed by historic buildings enabling flexible use by the community.
4(18)	Upgrade the approaches to the town centre including the leat pathon Station Road and on Exeter Road in the area of the Hayridge.
4(19)	Assess opportunities to bring the historic courts and passageways off Fore Street in to use with signage, surfacing and lighting improvements.
4(20)	Link new developments through a network of attractive spaces enhancing connectivity to the town centre and reinforcing its purpose.
5.	**Cullompton should be a sustainable toen for its growing community: with homes, education, community and recreational facilities.**
5(21)	Make it easy for all new resident to shop locally and identify with Cullompton as their home town.
5(22)	Support Cullompton's schools outside the planning system to encourage opportunities for life-long learning.
5(23)	Ensure recreational outdoor space and leisure facilities support healthy living and social interaction for all.
5(24)	Support and expand Cullompton's popular street markets to cater for a growing community.
5(25)	Provide new homes in the town centre to increase vitality, footfall and spend.
5(26)	Explore the potential for the communiyy and voluntary sector to forge partnerships to support community services.
6.	**It will be easy to move around on foot, on bicycle, by bus and by train.**
6(27)	Create high quality pedestrian and cycle links to the proposed train station, Culm Garden Village and other planned development.
6(28)	Give more space and priority to people getting around on foot, cycle and by bus in Cullompton, including between the town centre and the proposed train station.
6(29)	Encourage uses which are reliant on large delivery vehicles to relocate from the historic core where possible. Consider how servicing and delivery needs can be accommodated within an enhanced town centre pedestrian environment.
6(30)	Improve links between Fore Street and the CCA fields.
6(31)	Address points of conflict between road traffic, cyclists and pedestrians where possible.
6(32)	Establish strategic cycle links between Cullompton and Willand with improved cycle access to Exeter.
6(33)	Improve signage to encourage exploration around the town by foot and cycle.

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Draft Mid Devon Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

December 2022

1.0 Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Purpose, scope and content

1.1 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD will set out the relationship between Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) planning policy and guidance whilst identifying its purpose as bridging the gap between high level policy aspirations and delivery on the ground. This is to ensure that the development achieves high quality design and sense of place in a coordinated manner.

1.2 The Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD is set out in 6 Chapters. A brief description of each part is provided below:

Introduction:	Sets out the role of the Masterplan, project process and engagement undertaken
Context:	Sets out the context of the town with a summary of issues and opportunities
Vision & Objectives:	Sets out emerging themes and objectives within a spatial framework
Masterplan:	Provides an overview with a review of specific topic areas
Heritage Strategy:	Sets out Cullompton's historic significance with a review of public realm improvements, governance and delivery
Delivery Guidance	Provides a review of the interdependencies, phasing and funding opportunities

Relationship with the National Planning Policy

1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019), in Chapter 7 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' sets out that *"Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation"* (paragraph 85, NPPF). Policy S11, Cullompton of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework. It identifies Cullompton as a fast growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon. Cullompton is identified as an area for growth, being well located and supported by infrastructure and facilities. Policy S11 is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework; outlining opportunities by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the town's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains. The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD will guide town centre development opportunities to ensure the community has sufficient access to services and employment opportunities as well as setting out clear expectations for the quality of development.

Relationship with the Mid Devon Local Plan

1.4 The Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 was adopted July 2020. It was examined by an Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate and was subject to main modifications.

1.5 Applications for development must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise as required by section 38(6) of the Town

and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

1.6 Local Plan Policy S11, Cullompton, will provide the policy baseline for the more detailed guidance included in Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD:

> ***Policy S11***
> ***Cullompton***
> **Cullompton will develop as a fast growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon. The town will become the strategic focus of new development reflecting its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity. This strategy will improve access to housing through urban extensions and expanded employment opportunities. There will be significant improvements to the town's infrastructure and connectivity, including the reopening of the railway station, and improved services for its population and nearby rural areas. Proposals will provide for approximately 3,930 dwellings, of which 1,100 will be affordable, and 73,500 gross square metres of commercial floor space over the plan period.**
>
> **The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:**
>
> **a) Make any necessary strategic mitigations to maintain highway capacity, safety, integrity, and sustainability including the M5 and local highway network in conjunction with current and relevant infrastructure plans;**
> **b) Promote further public transport improvements within Cullompton and to other urban centres (particularly Tiverton and Exeter) and improved access to the rail network by the reopening of Cullompton Railway Station;**
> **c) Continue measures to support the implementation of the Cullompton Air Quality Action Plan including the construction of new highway links to relieve the town centre and enhanced walking and cycling opportunities around the town;**
> **d) Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other by promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability;**
> **e) Provide community infrastructure such as education and enhanced open space to support new development proposals;**
> **f) Enhance the tourism and visitor role of the town and surrounding area; and**
> **g) Support measures to reduce flood risk within Cullompton and make provision for green infrastructure.**

1.7 During the preparation of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan the Council has also applied the following policies from the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 in addition to policy S11:

- S1 - sustainable development priorities
- S2 - amount and distribution of development
- S6 employment
- S7 town centres
- S9 environment

- DM1 high quality design
- DM14 town centre development
- DM15 development outside town centres, and
- DM25 development affecting heritage assets.

1.8 The Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 – 2033 has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), which has incorporated a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Local Plan Review has also been subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment.

Status of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD

1.8 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD will be adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document. The SPD will not be part of the development plan and does not introduce new planning policies into the development plan. However, it will be capable of being a material consideration in determining planning applications.

2.0 SEA and SEA Screening

Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 The requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) arises from the European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment" (hereafter referred to as the SEA Directive). This has been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 as updated (referred to as the 'SEA Regulations'). This legislation places an obligation on local authorities to undertake SEA on any plan or programme prepared for town and country planning or land use purposes and which sets the framework for future development consent of certain projects.

Screening

2.2 The 2008 Planning Act has removed the requirement to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for an SPD. However, this has not replaced the requirement to establish whether an SPD requires Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is required in some limited situations where a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) could have significant environmental effects.

2.3 In order to establish whether SEA is required the fundamental consideration is whether the document is likely to have 'significant environmental effects'. This is done through a screening assessment. If the screening assessment indicates that there could be significant effects, an SEA is needed.

2.4 A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive was published by the Department of the Environment, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005). This sets out practical guidance on applying the SEA Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. The practical guidance includes a flow chart (figure 2) which illustrates the process for screening a planning document to establish whether a full SEA is needed.

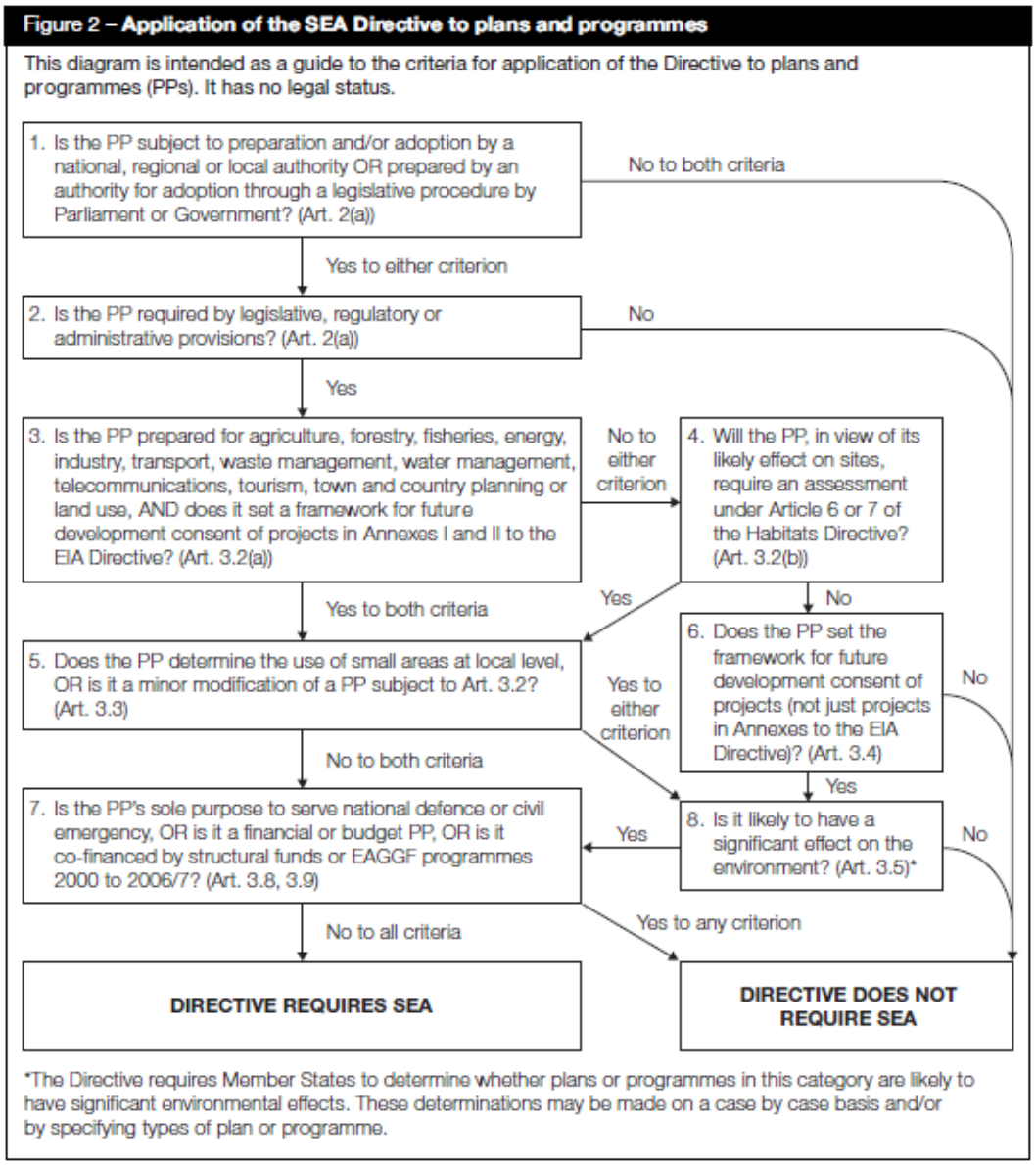

Diagram 1: Application of the SEA Direct to plans and programmes (Figure 2 extracted from 'A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive')

2.5 Table 1 below sets out the Council's response to the above questions in order to clearly assess whether there is a requirement for the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD to be subject a full SEA.

2.6 Table 2 provides the Council's assessment of likely significant effects of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD on the environment, in accordance with the screening report process in Table 1.

Table 1: Screening of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the SPD subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art.2(a))	Y	The preparation and adoption of the SPD is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The process in preparing the SPD is in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012. **Go to STAGE 2**
2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art.2(a))	Y	Although the SPD is not a requirement under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, if adopted it will add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan and will be a material consideration in planning decisions. It is therefore important that the screening process is precautionary and considers whether it is likely to have significant environment effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive. **Go to STAGE 3.**
3. Is the SPD prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	Y	The SPD has been prepared for the purposes of town and country planning. It supplements policies in the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 by providing detailed guidance as to how these policies are interpreted. The area covered is more than 5 hectares and the masterplan will be used in the development of dwellings, employment and other major developments. Although the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Plan does not create new policy or identfty specific sites for development. **Go to STAGE 5**
4. Will the SPD, in view of this likely effect on sites require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art.3.2(b))	**Not Applicable** The SPD has been subject to a separate Habitat Regulations Assessment screening which has concluded the SPD is not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects and further 'Appropriate Assessment' is not required.	
5. Does the SPD determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a	Y	'The SPD will be material consideration in planning applications for new developments. It

	minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art 3.2? (Art.3.3)		provides detailed guidance to adopted Local Plan policy (minor modification).' **Go to STAGE 8**
6.	Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	**Not applicable**	
7.	Is the SPD's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	**Not applicable**	
8.	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.4)	N	See Part 2, assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment. This concludes that the SPD is unlikely to have a significant effect on the Environment. **DIRECTIVE DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA** of the SPD

Table 2: Determining the likely significance of effects of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD on the environment

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to -		
a) The degree to which the SPD sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	N	The SPD, if adopted will help implement Policy S11 Cullompton of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 and contribute to the framework for future development consent. The Local Plan has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and therefore SEA.
b) The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	N	The SPD is in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 policies. The SPD will not significantly influence other plans and programmes, it supplements the Local Plan which has been subject to SA and therefore SEA.
c) The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with	N	The SPD will help the integration of environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable

a view to promoting sustainable development;		development as part of the development proposals. This includes enhancement of the Cullompton Community Association fields, retaining and enhancing existing habitats whilst strengthening links to the town centre and public rights of way beyond the town.
d) Environmental problems relevant to the SPD; and	N	The environmental problems are consistent with those typically found in Mid Devon, these include air quality, flood risk, noise and biodiversity. Planning policy in relation to these environmental problems is principally established through the National Planning Policy Framework and the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033. However, it is expected that the SPD will provide specific guidance on how net gains can be achieved through long term management and maintenance and the creation of new 'green spaces'.
e) The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	N	The SPD is not directly relevant to the implementation of European legislation including the Water Framework Directive.
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to -		
a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	N	The SPD seeks to ensure development is of an appropriate scale, suitably designed with consideration of the impact on amenity, character of area and environmental impact. Therefore positive social and environmental impacts are predicted. Long-term significant adverse effects are not anticipated.
b) The cumulative nature of the effects;	N	The SPD is in conformity with the strategic policies of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033. It is intended that the effects will have a positive cumulative effect in the area

		enhancing biodiversity, achieving ecological net gain and sense of well-being for future residents.
c) The transboundary nature of the effects	N	There are not expected to be any significant trans-boundary effects. The SPD seeks to provide good practice in ensuring Cullompton can realise its full potential as a sustainable commercial hub for an expanding town.
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	N	The SPD is likely to have a positive impact on human health by encouraging high quality accommodation and development. There are no significant risks to human health.
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	N	The SPD applies to the Cullompton Town Centre with the impacts likely to be felt by those residing in Cullompton and the rural hinterland of which the town centre serves.
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – (i) Special nature characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) Intensive land-use	N	Cullompton Town Centre has a number of heritage assets. These are covered by other policies in the Local Plan and specific legislation. The SPD seeks a positive approach to maintain, improve and enhance the distinctive historic buildings and landscape setting of these assets through careful consideration of landscape and settlement form. The SPD seeks to guide development in keeping with the principles of national, regional and local strategic policy and seek to prevent over intensive development.
g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised natural, Community or international protection status.	N	The SPD seeks to retain and enhance those areas of community and local priority importance.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1 This SEA screening has identified that the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment.

3.2 The SEA screening has also found that there is no requirement for the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD to be subject to a full SEA.

4.0 Next steps

4.1 This screening opinion will be subject to consultation with the three designated consultation bodies – Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency.

4.2 The screening opinion will be published alongside the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and will be subject to a stage 2 public consultation.

Draft Mid Devon Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report

December 2022

1.0 Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

Purpose, scope and content

1.1 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan will set out the relationship between Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) planning policy and guidance whilst identifying its purpose as bridging the gap between high level policy aspirations and delivery on the ground. This is to ensure that future investment supports and regenerates Cullompton town centre in a co-ordinated manner.

1.2 The Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan is set out in 6 Chapters. A brief description of each part is provided below:

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1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019), in Chapter 7 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' sets out that *"Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation"* (paragraph 85, NPPF). Policy S11, Cullompton of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework. It identifies Cullompton as a fast growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon. Cullompton is identified as an area for growth, being well located and supported by infrastructure and facilities. Policy S11 is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework; outlining opportunities by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the town's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains. The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan will guide town centre development opportunities to ensure the community has sufficient access to services and employment opportunities as well as setting out clear expectations for the quality of development.

Relationship with the Mid Devon Local Plan

1.4 The Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 was adopted July 2020. It was examined by an Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate and was subject to main modifications.

1.5 Applications for development must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise as required by section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

1.6 Local Plan Policy S11, Cullompton, provides the policy baseline for the more detailed guidance included in Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan:

Policy S11

Cullompton

Cullompton will develop as a fast growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon. The town will become the strategic focus of new development reflecting its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity. This strategy will improve access to housing through urban extensions and expanded employment opportunities. There will be significant improvements to the town's infrastructure and connectivity, including the reopening of the railway station, and improved services for its population and nearby rural areas. Proposals will provide for approximately 3,930 dwellings, of which 1,100 will be affordable, and 73,500 gross square metres of commercial floor space over the plan period.

The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:

a) Make any necessary strategic mitigations to maintain highway capacity, safety, integrity, and sustainability including the M5 and local highway network in conjunction with current and relevant infrastructure plans;
b) Promote further public transport improvements within Cullompton and to other urban centres (particularly Tiverton and Exeter) and improved access to the rail network by the reopening of Cullompton Railway Station;
c) Continue measures to support the implementation of the Cullompton Air Quality Action Plan including the construction of new highway links to relieve the town centre and enhanced walking and cycling opportunities around the town;
d) Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other by promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability;
e) Provide community infrastructure such as education and enhanced open space to support new development proposals;
f) Enhance the tourism and visitor role of the town and surrounding area; and
g) Support measures to reduce flood risk within Cullompton and make provision for green infrastructure.

1.7 During the preparation of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan the Council has also applied the following policies from the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 in addition to policy S11:

- S1 - sustainable development priorities
- S2 - amount and distribution of development
- S6 employment
- S7 town centres
- S9 environment
- DM1 high quality design
- DM14 town centre development
- DM15 development outside town centres, and

- DM25 development affecting heritage assets.

1.8 The Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 – 2033 has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), which has incorporated a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). It has also been subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment. Both the HRA and SEA of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan concluded that the policies within the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan will not have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (Habitats sites), either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

Status of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan

1.9 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan will not be part of the development plan and does not introduce new planning policies into the development plan. It will, however, be capable of being a material consideration in determining planning applications.

2.0 Habitat Regulations Assessment

Habitat Regulations Assessment

2.1 A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to one of the several distinct stages of Assessment. These must be undertaken in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to determine whether a plan or project may affect the protected features of a European site ('habitats site') identified under these regulations before deciding whether to undertake, permit or authorise it.

Screening

2.2 All plans and projects which are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the conservation management of a habitat site, require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects on that site. This consideration is typically referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment screening' and should take into account the potential effects both of the plan/project itself and in combination with other plans or projects.

2.3 Where the potential for likely significant effects cannot be excluded, an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site, in view of the site's conservation objectives must be undertaken. A plan or project may be agreed but only after having ruled out adverse effects on the integrity of the habitats site. Where an adverse effect on the site's integrity cannot be ruled out, and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project can only proceed if there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest and if the necessary compensatory measures can be secured.

2.4 In April 2018, the Court of Justice of the European Union delivered its judgement in Case C-323/17 People Over Wind & Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta ('People over Wind'). The judgment clarified that making screening decisions as part of the HRA and for the purposes of deciding whether an appropriate assessment is required, mitigation measures cannot be taken into account. Mitigation measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a plan or project, can only be taken into account at the appropriate assessment stage.

2.5 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan has been 'screened' for the purposes of the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) to assess whether it may affect the protected features of a 'habitats site' identified under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

3.0 Habitats site

3.1 A Habitats site refers to any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

3.2 There are no Habitats sites within Mid Devon although there are 11 such sites within 10km (Table 1); the closest being the Culm Grasslands SAC which lies immediately adjacent to the north western boundary of Mid Devon District.

Table 1: Habitats Sites within 10km of Mid Devon District

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	Ramsar Sites
• East Devon Pebblebed Heaths • Culm Grasslands • South Dartmoor Woods • Holme Moor and Clean Moore • Dartmoor • Exmoor Heaths • Quants • Exmoor and Quantock Oakwoods	• Exe Estuary • East Devon Heaths	• Exe Estuary

3.3 In addition to these 11 sites, Natural England wrote to the Council on 30th March 2021 to advise on matters regarding development in relation to the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site, which it has pointed out will affect a very small part of Mid Devon district that falls within its catchment area. An indicative map for the catchment includes parts of the parishes of Clayhanger, Hockworthy, Holcombe Rogus and Culmstock and it is understood that Natural England is refining this map. The Somerset Levels and Moors are designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the Habitat Regulations 2017 and listed as a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention. While the SPA is designated for its international waterbird communities, the Ramsar site is designated for its internationally important features including the floristic and invertebrate diversity and species of its ditches, which is shared as a designated feature of the underpinning Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Natural England has advised that in light of the unfavourable condition of the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar site, before determining a planning application that may give rise to additional phosphates within the catchment, competent

authorities should undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment proceeding to an appropriate assessment where a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out, even where the development contains pollution mitigation provisions. The development types affected include: additional residential units and commercial development; infrastructure that supports agricultural intensification; anaerobic digesters; and other developments that result in additional phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moors catchment.

Potential Impacts on Habitats Site

3.4 There are a number of categories that can affect Habitats Sites which include:

- Physical Loss
- Physical Damage
- Non-physical disturbance
- Water table/availability
- Toxic contamination
- Non-toxic contamination
- Biological disturbance

4.0 Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 – 2033 HRA

4.1 As the competent authority under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) (now 2017 as amended) Mid Devon District Council was required to assess the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 as part of the HRA process.

4.2 A full HRA Report for the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 was undertaken in March 2015 (updated as an HRA Addenda (August 2016), updated again December 2016 and again October 2019). The full HRA Report for the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 concluded that the Adopted Local Plan is not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (referred to in this report as Habitats sites) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Main Modification to Policy S11 Cullompton during the Mid Devon Local Plan Review was found not to change the HRA findings that were reported as unlikely.

5.0 Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan HRA Screening

5.1 When taking into account the Mid Devon Local Plan Review 2013-2033 HRA screening, likely significant effects for the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan on European Sites remain uncertain - relevant policies in the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan being Policy S11 Cullompton, S1 sustainable development priorities, S2 amount and distribution of development, S6 employment, S7 town centres, S9 environment, DM1 high quality design, DM14 town centre development, DM15 development outside town centres, and DM25 development affecting heritage assets. The uncertainty remains even though the HRA for the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan concluded that it is not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of a European site (referred to in this report as a Habitat sites). This is also regardless that a number of policies in the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan mitigate the potential impact of development at Cullompton; this because mitigation cannot be taken into account at the screening stage in-line with People Over Wind & Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17 Case. Whilst the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan does not introduce new policies or proposals outside the scope of the Adopted Local Plan and

Cullompton town centre is located some distance from the nearest European sites, the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan in-combination with other allocations identified in the Adopted Local Plan, in and around Cullompton, would result in fairly large-scale development which could affect European sites through increased pressure for recreation space and increased vehicle traffic with associated air quality. Non-physical disturbance from development (e.g. noise, vibration and light pollution) would not be expected as a result of development at Cullompton, due to the distance from European sites. However for the reason of potential impact identified through recreation pressure and air quality, in-line with the Local Plan Review HRA, it is not entirely possible to rule out with the possibility of some likely significant effects. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken as set out below.

6.0 Appropriate Assessment

6.1 The Adoption of the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013- 2033 has been subject to an HRA Appropriate Assessment and concluded that it will not have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (Habitats sites), either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

6.2 The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan does not introduce new policies or proposals outside the scope of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033. The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan does not result in development itself but seeks to guide development in the masterplan study area. For the above reasons, the findings and results of the HRA for the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 are applicable for the Appropriate Assessment of the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan .

Recreation Pressure

6.3 In considering the identified possible impact of increased pressure for recreation space, many of the European sites around Mid Devon are vulnerable to the effects of erosion/trampling from recreation (e.g. heathland habitats) and several sites include birds and other qualifying species that could be affected by disturbance, in particular the sites to the south of Mid Devon (Exe Estuary SPA and Ramsar Site, East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC and East Devon Heaths SPA).

6.4 However, the distance of most European sites around Mid Devon from the District, and in particular the locations that will be the main focus of development (Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton) means that a significant increase in day-to-day visitor numbers at any of the European sites for activities such as dog walking is not considered likely.

6.5 While there may still be some increase in visits to sites such as Dartmoor SAC, South Dartmoor Woods SAC and the East Devon Heaths SAC which are known to be popular visitor destinations, there are a wide range of mitigation measures already in place. These include, for example, the Dartmoor National Park Management Plan and the South East Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy that should help to avoid adverse effects. In addition, policies within the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 will help to ensure that green infrastructure is included within development sites.

6.6 In October 2019 a HRA Addendum presented an assessment of the proposed Main Modifications raised by the Planning Inspector during the independent examination of the Mid Devon Local Plan (2013-2033). It concluded that the HRA for the Mid Devon Local Plan remain, that the Local Plan (taking into account the Proposed Main Modifications) was not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (referred to in this report as Habitats sites), either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. The Main Modifications included CU11 Cullompton of the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033. The HRA addendum found that the proposed Main Modifications to Policy CU11 did not change the HRA findings.

6.7 Therefore, it is concluded that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan proposals, alone or in-combination with other plans and proposals will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites as a result of increased recreation pressure.

Vehicle Traffic

6.8 Air pollution from traffic is most likely to affect European sites which have plant, soil and water habitats amongst their qualifying features but some qualifying animal species may also be directly affected, or indirectly affected by deterioration in habitat. Therefore, where European sites do not include species that are vulnerable to these impacts amongst their qualifying features, air pollution-related effects can be ruled out. The qualifying heathland habitats of the Culm Grassland SAC are known to be vulnerable to the effects of air pollution and due to its proximity to a strategic road (A361), it was identified in the HRA for the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 as having the potential to be affected by air pollution as a result of proposals in the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033.

6.9 Nitrogen dioxides (NOx) are considered to be the key pollutants from traffic emissions. Deposition of nitrogen compounds may lead to both soil and freshwater acidification, and NOx can cause eutrophication of soils and water.

6.10 For the Culm Grasslands SAC, in considering the identified possible impact of increased vehicle traffic, the Adopted Local Plan 2013-2033 Appropriate Assessment included a transport model used to obtain traffic data for assessment year of 2033 i.e. the end of the Adopted Local Plan period, when all of the development in the Local Plan would likely to be completed and occupied, and the traffic impacts will be greatest. The Appropriate Assessment of air pollution effects on the Culm Grasslands SAC found that the combination of Local Plan allocations would increase NOx levels immediately adjacent to the A361, over the plan period. However, the effects would be very localised within the SAC. A negligible increase in nutrient nitrogen and acid nitrogen deposition would occur from the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033, although critical loads for these are already being exceeded and will continue to do so in 2022, despite expected decreases in background concentrations. The most appropriate mitigation for the effects of air pollution at the Culm Grasslands SAC is to target agricultural sources of nitrogen (which is outside the remit of the Local Plan), although improvements to vehicle emissions nationally, and sustainable transport initiatives, for example those encouraged in the Adopted Local Plan, will also contribute to the mitigation of impacts on the SAC's qualifying features. It was concluded that the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 proposals would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Culm Grasslands SAC.

6.11 In October 2019 a HRA Addendum presented an assessment of the proposed Main Modifications to the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 raised by the Planning Inspector. It concluded that the HRA for the Mid Devon Local Plan remained, that the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 was not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (referred to in this report as Habitats sites), either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. These proposed Main Modifications include the proposed Main Modifications to the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 Policy S11 Cullompton, S1 sustainable development priorities, S2 amount and distribution of development, S6 employment, S7 town centres, S9 environment, DM1 high quality design, DM14 town centre development, DM15 development outside town centres and DM25 development affecting heritage assets. The HRA addendum found that the proposed Main Modifications to Policy CU11 did not change the HRA findings previously reported.

6.12 Therefore, it is concluded that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan proposals, alone or in-combination with other plans and proposals will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites as a result of increased vehicle traffic.

Appropriate Assessment Conclusion

6.13 The Appropriate Assessment considered in detail the potential impact identified at the HRA screening stage i.e. recreation pressure and increased vehicle traffic. From these findings it is concluded that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan proposals, alone or in-combination with other plans and proposals will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 This screening report has identified that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan is not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects and further 'Appropriate Assessment' is not required.

8.0 Next steps

8.1 This screening opinion will be subject to consultation with the three designated consultation bodies – Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency.

8.2 The screening opinion will be published alongside the Draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan at Stage 2 of the public consultation. It has previously been taken through Stage 1 public consultations as endorsed by the MDDC Statement of Community Involvement.

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Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Appendix 8

Version 1.0 – 09/12/2022

Date of assessment	09/12/2022
Lead Officer	Christie McCombe
Department	Economic Development
Scope of Assessment	The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will provide a clear strategy to ensure that Cullompton town centre meets its full potential as an attractive, thriving, vibrant place with a strong economic function, now and into the future.
Brief Outline of the Policy or Service	The MDDC Corporate Plan 2020-2024 sets out the District Council's ambition to support and drive forward sustainable and prosperous communities and economy over a period of time. The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will provide a strategy for Cullompton town centre to support this ambition.
Main users / beneficiaries	The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan has been produced in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and has been subject to two stages of public consultation. The users and beneficiaries of the document will be: • Residents of Cullompton; • Businesses of Cullompton; • Those who visit Cullompton for business or leisure from outside the town or District; • Town Council; District and County Council & associated delivery bodies.
Information about users, research or other evidence	The District Council has committed to the production of a Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan; agreeing a budget for the engagement of consultants in 2019 to undertake research and develop a draft masterplan for the town centre. The document will enhance the economic prospects of the town including its look and user experience. A consultant contract for Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan was awarded in July 2019. Consultants were engaged and work commenced on the Draft Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan in 2019. The draft Masterplan SPD has been produced in the context of strategic projects planned in and around Cullompton including the NW Urban Extension, the

	proposed Culm Garden Village, the Cullompton Relief Road, Cullompton Railway Station, Heritage Action Zone project and updated Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan. Also within the Policy Context of the (now) Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033; the (now) Adopted Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Devon Climate Emergency Declaration, national and local census and market statistics. Multiple meetings have been held with Cullompton Town Council, stakeholders, the District and County Council to discuss the town; its constraints and opportunities as a means to scope the content of the Draft Masterplan SPD. A stage I public consultation was undertaken during 2020 and a Stage II public consultation during 2021. The Draft Masterplan SPD was presented to PPAG during November 2021.
Stakeholder involvement and consultation	Multiple meetings have been held with Cullompton Town Council, stakeholders (including local residents and businesses), the District and County Council. Feedback from consultation events have been taken into consideration when making any changes to the masterplan document.
Equality Issues identified	The masterplan should not see any one group or individual treated less favourably. As a public sector organisation we uphold the best interests of the community including all policies and legislations regarding equality and diversity. All Officers and consultants involved in its production are required to work to company codes of conduct. They will be methodical and inclusive in their approach to all actions from initiation to adoption of the Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan. The outcomes of the Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not adversely affect any vulnerable users and will not create a negative impact on any protected group.
	Impact on Protected Groups
Age	All the public consultation has been undertaken to allow accessibility for all. This has included on-line and in-person consultation events with opportunity to submit comments electronically, by paper or in discussion with an MDDC Officer. All public consultation venues have been accessible to any age group. The District Council has welcomed and embraced positive consultation engagements throughout the production of the Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan process. The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan seeks to deliver positive impacts for all protected groups through the enhancement of the look, user experience, vitality and vibrancy of the town centre providing an enhanced business community and leisure experience in Cullompton.
Disability	The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not result in a negative impact on any individual due to disability. Enhancement of the public realm, business and leisure experience in the town centre will provide an improved user experience.
Gender	The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not result in a negative impact on any individual due to gender. The Masterplan SPD and Delivery plan is not focused towards any one user group; instead seeking to deliver an enhanced town centre for all.
Marital status, family circumstances or caring responsibilities	The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not result in a negative impact on any individual due to marital status, family or caring circumstances or responsibilities. The Masterplan SPD and Delivery plan is not focused towards any one user group; instead seeking to deliver an enhanced town centre for all.
Race / Ethnicity	The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not result in a negative impact on any individual due to race or ethnicity. The Masterplan SPD and Delivery plan is not

	focused towards any one user group; instead seeking to deliver an enhanced town centre for all.	
Religion / Belief	The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not result in a negative impact on any individual due to religion or belief. The Masterplan SPD and Delivery plan is not focused towards any one user group; instead seeking to deliver an enhanced town centre for all.	
Sexual Orientation	The Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will not result in a negative impact on any individual due to sexual orientation. The Masterplan SPD and Delivery plan is not focused towards any one user group; instead seeking to deliver an enhanced town centre for all.	
Other	N/A	
Issues and Recommendations	**Issue**	**Recommendations**
	Poor accessibility around the town & with the proposed re-opening of the Railway Station.	**Enhanced pedestrian / cycle ways including along Station Road, the CCA Fields, Alexandria Industrial Estate, The Tannery Site, the Iron Bridge leat crossing and enhanced public realm including Higher Bull Ring & Fore Street.**
	Air Quality	**Delivery of the Cullompton Relief Road facilitating the enhancement of Fore street.**
	Poor number of town centre uses, services and facilities	**Enhancement of the historic environment and buildings including the public realm, the provision of grants through the Historic Action Zone to revitalise the town centre for employment & leisure uses & activities.**
	Climate Change	**Enhanced biodiversity (pocket parks), sustainable modes of transport and carbon neutral means of construction.**
Overall Recommendation	This assessment has indicated that the Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan will have a minimal impact on protected user groups. An alteration to the masterplan is not proposed as recommendations are identified and included within the Draft Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan to provide mitigation where issues are arising. There will be no significant alteration to the Draft Masterplan SPD as a result of this EqIA. Should any negative impacts appear during the course of Adopting the Masterplan SPD and Delivery Plan the District Council will reduce or remove the impact where possible. The Masterplan SPD & Delivery Plan is being produced to enhance & maintain Cullompton as a viable and vibrant market town.	
Approved by	Signed off by service manager or head of service	
Approval date		

Action Plan	Based on your recommendations, what actions need to be taken as a result of the EqIA to mitigate the negative effects on different groups as a result of the proposal? Fill in the Action Plan overleaf identifying the lead officer, milestones and completion dates.

Review	The Delivery Plan will be updated to ensure strategies and key projects are progressing, that targets are being achieved and to ensure plans and priorities

	remain relevant. This provides opportunity to monitor and review their impact on protected user groups.
Review Date	This EqIA will be reviewed concurrently with the Delivery Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan						
Issues identified and groups affected	Actions to be taken	Timescales of actions	Who is responsible for delivery	Intended outcomes	Performance measures	Reference to service or other plans

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CABINET **AGENDA ITEM**
7 FEBRUARY 2022

EAST CULLOMPTON MASTERPLAN SPD

Cabinet Member Cllr Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer Richard Marsh, Director of Place

Reason for Report: To inform members of the outcome of the public consultation and to consider the draft masterplan that has subsequently been produced taking these comments into account, and to seek a recommendation to Council to adopt the revised East Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **That Members note the comments received at the Stage 2 public consultation (Appendix 1) and proposed changes set out in Appendix 2.**

2. **That the Cabinet recommend to Council that the Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document for East Cullompton (Appendix 3), which incorporates changes made following the Stage 2 public consultation, be adopted.**

3. **That delegated authority be given to the Director of Place to amend and finalise the document to reflect any agreed changes following Planning Policy Advisory Group and Cabinet meetings.**

Financial Implications: The consultant contract was awarded following a procurement process. The cost of the contract is funded through Homes England capacity funding. There will be no financial implications arising from adoption of the document as it adds detail to existing planning policies only.

Budget and Policy Framework: The budget for the production of the SPD utilises Homes England capacity funding (see Financial Implications).

The Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 requires strategic allocations to have an adopted Masterplan SPD in place before planning permission can be granted. Once adopted, the revised and updated Masterplan would have Supplementary Planning Document status and will be a material consideration for planning decision making purposes in relation to the East Cullompton allocation.

Legal Implications: The process for preparing and adopting the draft Masterplan SPD is in compliance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Risk Assessment: Policy sets out that masterplanning should take place before applications are submitted. Delay in adoption of the Masterplan SPD could in turn delay the delivery of housing on the site as well as affect the confidence of land owners to promote their land. Adoption of the masterplan will provide greater planning certainty and assist the site coming forward for delivery.

If the Masterplan SPD is not adopted, the Council may become vulnerable to planning applications being submitted which do not accord with the Council's aspirations for the East Cullompton and could lead to uncoordinated development which would not meet the Council's quality aspirations.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues are identified for this report.

Impact on Climate Change: The draft Masterplan SPD has regard to climate change within the confines of adopted planning policy. A Supplementary Planning Document cannot introduce new policies, or expand on existing adopted policy, but the SPD does expect developers to follow the guidance set out within the document when assessing the carbon impacts of their proposals.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The draft Masterplan SPD will provide guidance on the planning and delivery of a strategic site for Mid Devon. The draft Masterplan SPD directly relates to all four Corporate Plan 2020-24 priorities: Homes, Environment, Economy and Community.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A draft Masterplan SPD for East Cullompton was approved for consultation at the 9 August 2022 Cabinet meeting and public consultation took place between 21 September and 1 November 2022. The consultation included 6 staffed events at Cullompton Farmers' Market, The Walronds, Cullompton, Cullompton Tesco, Kentisbeare Village Hall (x 2) and Willand Village Hall. There were also display boards at The Hayridge, Cullompton and Kentisbeare Village Hall, and a dedicated consultation website. The consultation was advertised by letter, press release, posters and on social media.

2.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

2.1 There were 6,928 website visits during the consultation period, most directed from a search engine, the Culm Garden Village website, Facebook or QR codes.

2.2 A total of 207 people attended the staffed events.

2.3 A total of 52 people commented via the consultation website. In addition, 20 emailed public responses and 2 completed paper questionnaires were received, as well as 7 responses from landowners/promoters.

2.4 Consultation responses were also received from Cullompton Town Council, Kentisbeare Parish Council and Bradninch Town Council, Devon County Council, Historic England, Network Rail, Lead Local Flood Authority, Natural England, National Grid, National Highways, Sport England, Environment Agency and Blackdown Hills AONB.

2.5 Details of all responses received are included in **Appendix 1**.

2.6 Some of the responses related to issues that are outside of the scope of the SPD, the focus of which is to add detail to existing Local Plan policies. These

responses included comments on the wider garden village proposals that will be subject to consideration in the Council's emerging Local Plan, and changes to the triggers for infrastructure delivery that are either set out in Local Plan policies, or subject to parallel workstreams.

2.7 Where the responses relate to detail in the SPD, the document has been amended to reflect these responses wherever this would improve the document and better reflect consultee requirements and aspirations. Where changes have not been made, these decisions have been justified. **Appendix 2** is a summary table of changes requested with commentary on whether or not the changes have been made.

2.8 The revised Masterplan SPD document following public consultation is attached at **Appendix 3**.

3.0 REVISIONS TO DRAFT MASTERPLAN SPD FOLLOWING CONSULTATION

3.1 The following key revisions have been made to the draft Masterplan SPD as a result of the consultation. Please also see the table at **Appendix 2** for full details of the changes made and not made.

3.2 A373 Honiton Road. Following advice from Devon County Council Highway Authority, references to a 20mph speed limit along Honiton Road have been deleted as this is not achievable for an A road. The SPD retains the need for further technical work to be carried out and the emphasis on the need for design solutions to slow speeds.

3.3 Town Centre Relief Road. The text has been updated to reflect the policy position that the TCRR must be delivered before occupation of new homes within the urban extension. This is subject to any changes arising from the Junction 28 capacity modelling currently being carried out by Devon County Council and any further technical work agreed by Devon County Council to demonstrate higher or lower capacities.

3.4 Road network. Link to Kingsmill Industrial Estate added and text updated to clarify that streets could take a different alignment to those shown in the Masterplan, subject to preferred junction location.

3.5 Active travel. Approach to delivery of active travel crossings between East Cullompton and Cullompton clarified. Infrastructure delivery table amended to include delivery of active travel in early phases and in line with capacity improvements to J28.

3.6 Primary school. Text amended to include flexibility on location of primary school to north or south of Honiton Road and addition of requirement for safe school access and appropriate space for drop off away from primary streets.

3.7 Healthcare. Text added to expand on potential uses within community hub and multi-use community building, including a health hub. Officers are in discussion with the NHS about healthcare provision within East Cullompton.

3.8 Fordmore Farm community hub. Text clarified to explain why Fordmore will be principal centre, that it will expand to provide broader range of uses including further retail and community space, that it will be accessible (via primary street and active travel) and that it would have potential to expand further if proposals for the wider garden village proceed. Further explanation added on what community hubs should contain and that some residential will be permitted within community hubs where it does not detract from intended character or limit community hub functions.

3.9 Commercial area. Text changed from 'integrating employment' to 'integrating commercial' to make it clearer that appropriate retail will be permitted in the commercial area. The text already refers to appropriately scaled retail being provided in this area. This is to allow larger scale retail uses where these are not appropriate within the community hubs.

3.10 Sports and leisure. Text amended to confirm size of space at Fordmore Farm is sufficient to provide a multi-pitch hub rather than individual pitches but final location of sports pitches to be confirmed through planning applications. SPD makes specific reference to sports being provided in accordance with MDDC's Playing Pitch Strategy. Reference to community buildings to include catering for a range of indoor sports and activities.

3.11 Green space. Text expanded on green space uses, including allotments and what can be included within the community greens and green corridors. Community growing space such as orchards in community greens and traditional allotment sites provided separately within strategic GI. Changes made to make clearer the requirement that detailed proposals demonstrate an appropriate building and landscape treatment to rural edge.

3.12 Fords. Following representation from the Environment Agency, text has been amended so that fords are not prioritised, but the aspiration for some fords to be included as crossings to remain to reflect the placemaking principle of celebrating water, with the requirement for alternative routes to be available and signage to ensure safety.

3.13 Self-build. Additional text on self-build added as guidance for developers.

3.14 Pylons. Text changed to include a 10m green corridor above any undergrounded electricity lines and wording added that where powerlines are undergrounded, they do not have to follow the existing overhead line which could allow better accommodation of easements.

3.15 Heritage. Maps to be changed to refer to indicative settings of heritage assets with further assessment required for planning applications. SPD strengthened to specify further work required by developers prior to their layouts being set. Text changes made to archaeological assessment.

3.16 Biodiversity net gain. Wording changed so that the off-site BNG can be delivered in suitable areas that provide accessible greenspace for the allocation or adjacent to the allocation boundary. Text changed to expand the explanation of the country park.

3.17 Country park. This is outside the area for the East Cullompton Masterplan SPD but could start to be delivered through off-site biodiversity net gain and sports facilities.

3.18 Process. Process diagram not sufficiently clear on where Design Code and Phasing and Infrastructure Delivery Plan fit within the planning process. The diagram has been updated and the approach to both these documents clarified. Both documents will need to be agreed developed and agreed with landowners / developers. The text on the Design Code within the body of the SPD has been updated and expanded to clarify the strategic nature of this document. Appendix 1 setting out the Design Code contents has been deleted.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

4.0 A draft of this Cabinet report and Appendices, including the revised Masterplan SPD, was taken to Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG) on 17 January 2022. PPAG approved the draft East Cullompton Masterplan SPD to be taken to Cabinet on 7 February 2023 with no amendments.

4.0 HRA/SEA SCREENING

4.1 A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required in accordance with Regulations and Directives on any plan or programme prepared for town and country planning or land use purposes and which sets the framework for future development consent of certain projects. Planning Practice Guidance states that SPDs do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan. Officers do not consider that the East Cullompton Masterplan SPD would have significant environmental effects that were not identified during preparation of the Local Plan.

4.2 However, for completeness, HRA and SEA reports were prepared as part of the public consultation material. The screening reports indicate that the draft Masterplan SPD is ‘unlikely to have significant effects on the environment’ not already assessed through the preparation of the Local Plan.

4.1 Historic England has commented that the draft SPD does identify the risk of harm to heritage assets. However, given the small number of heritage assets concerned, they consider that undertaking a full SEA would be a disproportionate task to ensure the protection of the heritage assets. A reasonable alternative would be a discrete study that focused on the small number of affected assets. A thorough and focused study would obviate the need for a full SEA.

4.2 An initial heritage assessment was undertaken to inform the SPD and the SPD identifies areas where there is a risk of harm to heritage assets and requires that as planning applications come forward, developers will be expected to fully consider the impacts on these heritage assets including through the submission of a heritage chapter in their accompanying Environmental Statement. Officers

are continuing to engage with Historic England to ensure the ongoing approach to heritage is robust, but do not consider that a full SEA is necessary.

4.3 Natural England has commented that based on the information provided, they concur that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed SPD that have not already been assessed within the Sustainability Appraisal of the adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2033.

4.4 In relation to the HRA screening, whilst Natural England agrees that it is likely that the SPD will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites, they would advise that the reasons for reaching this conclusion should include consideration of whether the SPD provides the design framework needed to ensure that all the mitigation measures identified as necessary in the Local Plan HRA will be fully incorporated into the development. The HRA identifies that provision of green space and protection and enhancement of biodiversity sites are likely to mitigate impacts on European sites. The SPD makes provision for both provision of amenity green space habitats and includes a requirement for developers to demonstrate biodiversity net gain. Further assessment will be required by developers through Environmental Impact Assessments to be submitted with planning applications.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 An analysis of the consultation responses has been undertaken and amendments made the draft Masterplan SPD. Once adopted, the revised Masterplan SPD will provide an updated framework to guide development in a coordinated and comprehensive manner and will have full weight in decision making as a material planning consideration.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consultation responses
Appendix 2: Summary table of changes requested with commentary on whether or not the changes have been made
Appendix 3: Revised draft East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

Contact for more information	Tina Maryan, Area Planning Officer 01884 234336 tmaryan@middevon.gov.uk
Background Papers	Cabinet report 9 August 2022 Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 9th August, 2022, 10.00 am - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK Background documents on the Culm Garden Village website Home | Culm Garden Village

Circulation of the Report	Councillor Richard Chesterton, Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration

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Appendix 1 - Answers to survey questions

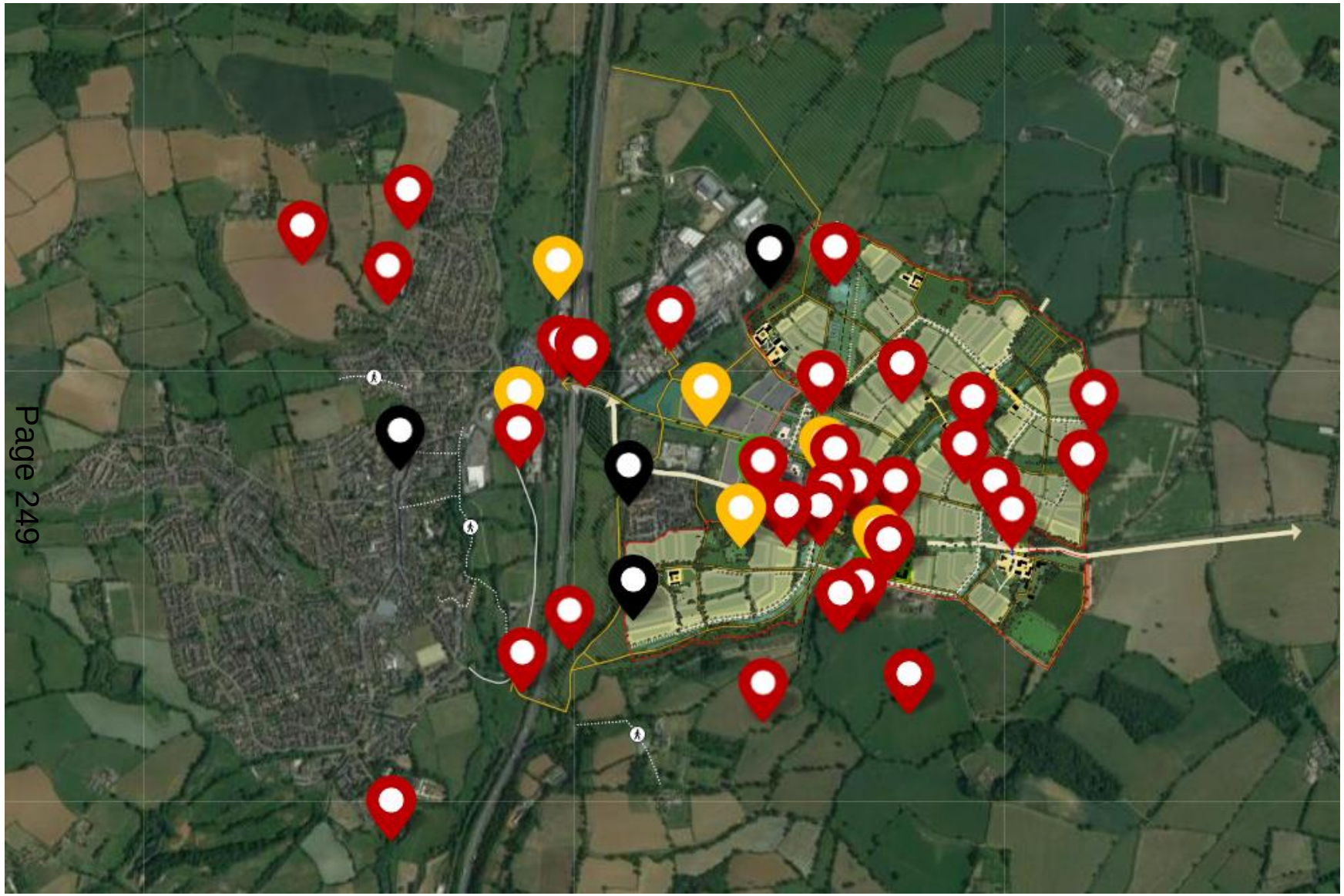
Category	Question	Transport	General Development	Facilities	GI/BI/Landscape/Sustainability	Flooding
Planning for a different future	What are your views on the opportunities and challenges that the Masterplan is seeking to respond to?	I have no issue at all with the general idea of this as I fully understand the need for new homes and work opportunities. As a resident of Culm Lea, I do however, have a problem with the additional traffic that this will create along Honiton Road towards the motorway which even now, if often queued way past Mole Valley. I therefore want to know what is going to happen around junction 28 to prevent the whole of Cullompton being totally gridlocked	Unless its for local people only , then it is a complete con trick. Saving the environment by building more housing ? I think that is the thickest statement for a long time! And what is Mid Devon District Council doing getting involved when the area is under the jurisdiction of East Devon District Council?	Sustainability. All new buildings, regardless of who will own it, should be net zero for their whole life which includes being run by renewable energy. Facilities should be designed to complement Cullompton's existing facilities which serve the existing residents. It's short sighted to remove these so currently happy residents move out to better places. A hardstanding multi-use pitch would be good. We don't have anywhere kids can learn to ride their bikes, rollerblading, basketball etc. The skate park gets too busy for everyone.	For ancient or veteran trees (including those on the woodland boundary), the buffer zone should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5 metres from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree's diameter. This will create a minimum root protection area. Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone.	Point 3 is critical but the major issues will be a] surface water run-off from the massively increased paved areas - how will development mitigate against combined sewers being overloaded? b] have the Sud's schemes been definitively costed and who will manage the maintenance of these schemes once the development work has been created? c] has the high water table across the development site been fully recognized? d] has modelling been done to ensure that East Cullompton development doesn't create any "backing-up" issues for villages upstream (notably Kentisbeare where there was a flood event in 2012? Points 4 and 5 are well made and hopefully the Connecting the Culm project will ensure that high quality nature-based solutions will be at the forefront of planning to ensure that flood-risk is properly mitigates across the whole development site but also in the River Ken.
		All these changes would require a major change to the road network of the area. The main Honiton Road which runs through this site was not considered adequate for a recycle centre back in 2013, there is now more traffic flow and congestion on this road and the development is being allowed to start prior to any upgrade work to the road network. This will result in even more congestion particularly at J28 of the M5, with no promise of the road improvements actually being undertaken. The plan to start the development around the Fordmore Farm development will encourage more traffic along the main Honiton route along with construction traffic - how is this planned on being dealt with?	I think the key challenge that the plan needs to respond to is building a community that actually works, and sadly I can't see that at the moment. On the one hand it is meant to be part of Cullompton, and yet with the railway, motorway & river in between this simply will not happen. At the same time the larger "new town" is being built without a central focus, and is in danger of just being urban sprawl extension. The absence of a clear focus/centre does not mean that people will go into Cullompton, but will simply drive into Exeter (or wherever they are working). As yet this village/town/extension doesn't know what it is, and being planned in two stages does not help.	Secondary Schools - I've seen in a couple of the new housing developments primary schools will be built but the secondary school is already over prescribed and where will these primary children go once, they are old enough? We already drive to Willand because the schools in Cullompton were over prescribed. Dentists - we haven't been able to get an appointment in over a year that's only going to get worse. Infrastructure - Personally I find it really hard to believe we've just been moved to three weekly refuse collections to 'aid recycling and reducing carbon foot print' more like we're putting in over 2k in houses and can't afford to collect anymore waste. If it really was about recycling, you'd collect it weekly like they do in West Devon where we moved back from in January. It would be nice to see a new recycling centre in the East Cullompton development where people could recycle cardboard, plastic, metal etc. Overall I'd like to see the reinstatement of the railway and expansion of motorway junction prior to any more developments along with the provision of a new secondary school and green spaces where you can actually walk the dogs off lead and the kids can play. We keep hearing about the jobs and great things the town will get from these developments but as far as I can see we get nothing. No new services, entertainment or resources are being provided for existing residents just ugly large developments of more houses for people to live in and to commute out of a dire boring commuter town with no real community.	Your comments on 'movement of water on the site' 'utilising water courses' is quite comical. Have you seen the state of the local river in Cullompton? It is polluted and horrible. There is a real opportunity to build something which actually responds to the climate emergency and decreasing wildlife but this will take real guts to do. Every house would need to have renewable energy. Large areas around the site should be rewilded. Houses built using sustainable materials. Unfortunately most of these projects only care about making money and not achieving these things.	
		I have concerns about the general infrastructure of the town and its current inability to fully support residents needs let alone adding more large developments. The motorway junctions - these cannot already support the growing traffic coming into what is a commuter town. Cullompton has excellent links to Exeter, Taunton and Bristol being on the M5 corridor. We live in Head Weir and have already seen a significant increase in traffic at peak times in the AM and PM where the cars queue well down Millennium Way and up into town and across the motorway bridge which makes it a nightmare to drive in and out of the town. The railway station could certainly relieve some of this but the need for expansion to the slip ways is inevitable. Sometimes you can queue for over 30 minutes just to get down the hill past the Weary Traveller.	Loss of a small semi-rural town - we were attracted to Cullompton because it was a small, quiet mid Devon town. It will no longer have that nice small communal atmosphere, it's already been over developed, and it feels like we're living in a monopoly board under the thumb of a thirsty development tycoon. So many natural habitats have been destroyed leaving the wildlife with only flood plains to live on and the landscape blighted by ugly new builds that aren't fit for purpose.	Horn Road is within Kentisbeare Parish. Sports facilities should be within Cullompton. The boundary of Kentisbeare Parish should be respected as per S14 of the Local Plan. The 20 minute principle is quoted but then not built into the plan- location of schools, commercial hub, social and care facilities.	There must be a green buffer zone to Kentisbeare to ensure is maintains its identity as a village.	
		Point 2 is critical but the delay to the "ring road" through the CCA fields and the lack of detailed costings (and options) for J28 make the whole connectivity piece incredibly difficult. Hopefully there will be more than one foot-crossing point in the scheme and hopefully one crossing which is pedestrian only.	I believe that this is a great plan for future generations. My family have lived in and around Kentisbeare for at least 7 generations. I have seen much change over the years as has my dad and grandad. The transport links to Kentisbeare are not great and with the plans to include better links it would be so much better for the older generation who can no longer drive and also the younger generation who have not yet learnt to drive. The employment opportunities for young people would then also be greater and the social opportunities for the older generation increased. Unfortunately you will come up against those who have moved into the village from away who suddenly don't like change. Most of those houses they have moved into were not original to the village and have been built over the last 50 years so without that development they would've had nowhere to buy (this includes my own house which was once the site of the milking parlour where my dad had his first job. As a true local person we have to welcome developments and change not for us but for our children and those that follow.	Point 7 seems to allude to the development of the Fordmore site as a community mixed-use hub - this suggests a very strong developer-led bias - why would a significant community hub be sited at the east extremity of the proposed development? The current proposed "community hub" features look particularly weak in the current edition of the masterplan. Point 8 seems aspirational but difficult to deliver as the employment designated land in East Cullompton will inevitably become the focus for employment within the community of East Cullompton (the M5 and J28 being natural barriers).	Point 12 suggests the "need" for a water park (in what is already a rural area has somehow already been established and will therefore take effect - how has the "need" been determined?	
		I would agree with a lot of the opportunities listed, but feel that this is going to be a very expensive development in which developers are going to have to fund large parts of the infrastructure. Infrastructure, in particular the Cullompton Town Centre Relief, changes to junction 28 and Honiton Road need to be addressed before any large scale development takes place. How will Mid Devon District Council get developers to fund infrastructure before large scale housing? If the costs are too high for developers will want change the housing density and cut corners on the environmental issues to make their profits.	I still think there are a number of "issues" with the updated masterplan and sometimes the constant re-iteration of an aspiration won't necessarily result in that aspiration coming into effect. For instance IF the East Cullompton development goes ahead I do NOT feel that there is a good chance of Cullompton and East Cullompton becoming one community and the M5 is a massive barrier to that aspiration. Indeed I think that in years to come East Cullompton is more likely to become like Cranbrook and people will be asking for a new town council for East Cullompton - and the long term projection of housing that might be built will only serve to reinforce this point.	Point 13 seems to go against the idea of creating community - surely the sports pitches should be in the centre of the community not at the eastern extremity - this suggests they are "placed" at the eastern extremity so further future development will surround them? Do the sports pitches encroach into Kentisbeare parish and if they do then the "green buffer" promise is at best being diluted and probably ignored?	The adopted plan did not include any reference to a sports club 'to the east of Horn Road'. This goes over the Kentisbeare Parish boundary and residents have already made clear their opposition to any encroachment into the parish. A desire not to have 'a hard edge' to the end of the proposed Garden village should not include a blurring of boundaries and properly rural areas need to be preserved. Assurances were previously given that there would be a buffer area which would remain as agricultural land.	
			Cullompton and any development East of Cullompton will never be one community - they are separated by a substantial river, an incredibly busy motorway and a high speed railway. Any redevelopment of the motorway junction and road network is already estimated as costing 100's of millions of pounds - this is not a responsible or acceptable use of public money - it will also add a huge amount onto the cost of every house. If by emphasising the movement of water through the site you mean - this is important because you are proposing to build on a flood plain - then this should be viewed as a massive no.. not an opportunity! If this is not what the question means then I have no idea what you mean. There is not meant to be development east of Horn Road, it is totally wrong - ignoring the views of the residents and breaking all trust with them - by proposing sports clubs in the area.	I assume the challenge will be to provide housing for local people however due to its proximity to M5 more people will relocate to the area already over populated for the amenities available. Our hospitals, doctors and dentists are already full to capacity who will provide healthcare with employees already leaving the profession due to low salaries etc.		
			Local homes for local families, not a second home owned place - our countryside is not for that.			
Priorities for growing Cullompton	What are your thoughts on the idea of encouraging more people to walk, cycle and use public transport and providing day to day services and facilities as part of a 20 minute place?	Yes I totally agree but in the winter, walking and cycling are never going to be a feasible option for most people and public transport is ridiculously expensive and again, in winter, it's not much fun hanging around for buses.	Building 2,00 Homes ie extra 6,000 people will not help people walk cycle and use public transport. If you want set up a new cycle track then go ahead but without the extra homes.	The current schooling is already struggling to cope with the existing local population. This new development will definitely need a new primary school to absorb the extra demand. Also, the College Surgery in Cullompton is at capacity. What are the plans for expanding the local medical and dental services?	The Woodland Trust is supportive of sustainable travel. However, it is important that the routes chosen for these networks do not harm irreplaceable habitat or woodland creation sites.	
		After building the inner relief road please pedestrianise Fore Street except for buses and make it one way and re open the railway station with room on trains for bikes.	It's a nice idea... but I don't think it will draw people into Cullompton. People may walk within East Cullompton, but I fear will drive into "old" Cullompton, if they come in at all.	I currently live in Nightingale Lawns and have things within a 20 minute walk. Yet soon I will have to drive to access things like the rugby club so it's all hypocritical. Lots of positive publicity but overall for the people from all of Cullompton, there will be no reduction in travelling time to access facilities. Just new houses near facilities and old ones losing them. Yet the new houses are still too far away from the high street so no-one will have everything now.	Great, please reduce development on the floodplain and above net biodiversity gain + recovery	
		A 20 min cycle is quite far. Encouraging more people to cycle and walk is a must but it must be combined with infrastructure which is fit for purpose. Pavements along quiet roads which are nice to walk on, cycle lanes where the cyclist has priority over cars, undercover storage for bikes at key locations.	20 minutes in principle but not in the plan. Covering agricultural land with houses does not 'reverse the decline in wildlife'. Building 5000 houses does not satisfy 'One urgent priority is the need to move away from places that rely so heavily on people out-commuting by private car each day. It stimulates it!	Admirable, you just have to ensure adequate facilities are provided		
		Encouraging less reliance on the car would be a good thing if public transport was provided and an affordable cost, the reduction in the size of roads will create the same issues of inability for buses, ambulances, emergency vehicles etc to access the site, as seen on numerous developments in the area.	As residents within the delightful village of ' Kentisbeare' we currently enjoy the well-being factor favouring walking cycling, good air quality, low night-time light pollution and surrounding farmland. We do not need a few minutes walk to a park or greenspace with water course as existing natural habitats offer contact with nature. Existing lanes and public footpaths already characterise this area. Protection of the vegetation and local habitats will not be possible if there are to be thousands of additional homes/work units/ schools. Increase in human habitation will impact on the transport pollution, noise and crime levels within the area.	The concept of 20 minute place is a good aspiration - developing the infrastructure so that people don't use the A377 is absolutely crucial. However the current construct seems to have very peripheral community hub designations so where will the "heart" of East Cullompton actually be as Mole Valley and the designated employment space seem to be geographically central but very unlikely to deliver community "heart"		
		It's a great idea in principle but not so practical when you have young children that can't walk far or people with disabilities that may need access to a car/ specialist transport. I would still need a car to commute to places of work but I would walk around town but again if I need to do a full supermarket shop lugging it home isn't practical or if I was to buy something heavy and cumbersome and had to transport it home	I think it is a marketing gimmick - most of the facilities being planned on the edge of the housing development the chances of residents walking or cycling is very remote - any public transport will take many years - the station we are told will have no parking but will be a considerable distance for most residents - and we are told trains only running every couple of hours.			
		Anything that encourages using public transportation and alternatives to cars is very welcome Considering how busy the M5 is currently, I can't see that people won't have the choice but to walk/cycle however the Honiton Road will also be over stretched so safe I don't think so! Public transport how long will it take to open a station at Cullompton and is it really viable?	Excellent idea. But not easy to get to the railway station from the garden village. The development should be located on the west side of the motorway adjacent to the railway station at junction 27, and use the east side of junction 27 for industrial. From there, people could easily walk and cycle to parkway. It's not too late to change the plan!			

Category	Question	Transport	General Development	Facilities	GI/BI/Landscape/Sustainability	Flooding
Priorities for growing Cullompton	Do you agree with the current vision and key principles set out under Planet, People and Place?	I don't necessarily believe that treating Cullompton and East Cullompton as one place will necessarily reduce out commuting or reduce carbon emissions. People will travel out of the area to seek, high skilled, high paid jobs if they cannot be found or developed in Cullompton. On the upside if Cullompton becomes a destination town people will travel in. Village scale for housing, yes, but don't like the idea of compact (could be interpreted as high density).	I think much of it sounds good on paper, making it a reality is a different matter! I expect Cranbrook sounded good on paper!! I see little as yet to foster any sense of community? Are you in conversation with the local church, as they are key community builders?	I agree with the principles but Cullompton shouldn't be developed to the detriment of existing residents. Losing the cricket club and rugby club to the new development in East Cullompton is pointless when they're so well established. There are plenty of houses available nearby should people wish to live near them.	I agree we need more housing, but the infrastructure needs to grow with it. The planet and nature needs to be taken into account to, I agree. Please, please, can all the new housing have solar panels fitted as they are been built? I honestly cannot understand why this is not been done as standard on ALL new housing built in the UK. This alone would get us to Carbon Zero so much quicker.	This site also has a high tendency to flood which will only increase as our climate warms.
			No, when you are prioritising building on green field sites, I could never consider it Planet first, it's more like Pawning the Planet for Profit.	Build a sense of community and sense of belonging around existing activities and uses and around the new village centres. Make them pedestrian-friendly and keep them largely traffic-free. There are no village centres. A village is perhaps 1,000-2,000 people with a hub of shop(s), school, religious buildings, social meeting premises. Where are they all?	I fail to understand how developing this quantity of green field land will encourage and sustain wildlife, with the removal of trees, hedgerows and open quiet spaces, not to mention the removal of vegetation, flowers and berries. I would also like to see developers providing solar panels to ALL buildings as standard practice along with the highest standards of house insulation etc.	Transform water management and habitat creation in this part of the Culm Valley to reduce flooding, increase biodiversity and to make water and wildlife central to day-to-day life in East Cullompton. Not demonstrated by the plan. Wildlife will be driven away and the only water in day to day life will be flooding.
			The principles are fine but are not delivered by the plan. It is a case of window dressing and hiding the true nature of the plan. Regard Cullompton and East Cullompton as one place, make them interdependent and mutually supportive. This will strengthen the local economy, making the town more resilient. It will reduce out-commuting, reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and reduce noise and dust. The plan is far larger than Old Cullompton with less facilities. Neither the existing or the new show any scope for interdependency. Offer choice and make better homes and workplaces that are flexible and adaptable for changing lifestyles. Build sociable streets and rural lanes that encourage neighbourliness, outdoor living and outdoor play. Make sure everyone is within a few minutes walk of a park or a greenspace or the opportunity to follow or cross a watercourse. This is not supported in the plan. Make it compact and village-scale, combining well-crafted buildings and spaces that are pedestrian-friendly. Make it safe by reducing traffic speeds to 20mph or lower. Bring the scale of infrastructure down with narrower streets and spaces, something more in keeping with a village character. Bring the rural character of East Cullompton alive by incorporating existing rural tracks, the hedgerows and the mature Oak trees that characterise this area. Make the active travel and bus routes between East Cullompton and the town into green lanes that are rural in character. The A373? A Green Lane. Celebrate the presence of water and the crossing of, or the following of, watercourses part of the experience of daily life, such as the route to school or the workplace, or the journey to and from the new station or to the local shops. Nice prose, eloquent dream but really?		I think the principles described in Planet, People and Place are all very laudable but my confidence in these principles actually being delivered is extremely low. Will all housing units be EPC A rated, will developers be mandated to fit Solar PV, solar thermal and ASHP or GSHP in every house unit? Will building regulations be changed to ensure that developers deliver this climate critical change to how houses are being built? Combine locally-sourced clean energy with reduced energy demand and energy- efficient, durable and adaptable buildings. Where is this locally sourced energy coming from? Protect natural resources, including existing vegetation and local soils and local habitats. Reconnect and strengthen local landscapes and increase woodland cover. You cannot protect what you destroy only the margins that are left. Use innovative and modern methods of construction to minimise waste and reduce pollution. Improve human health and well-being by favouring walking and cycling over other modes, improving air and water quality and improving contact with nature. Favouring is a human choice not something you can plot. Building footpaths not roads makes it happen. How does being in the middle of 5000 houses improve contact with nature? One finds natures where humans have not developed.	
			In the current United Kingdom climate, whereupon the cost of living is rising and the availability of numerous food products being affected by trade prices, surely it is more important to retain our farmland (especially in counties/farming areas like Devon) and think about growing more of our own produce to help people, place and planet. Focusing on the town of Cullompton and looking at ways forward to improve the High Street trade should be the first priority before considering the removal of farmland for the possible influx of thousands of additional people! One reason Devon is such a successful tourist focused county is because of the rural areas that attract people during their recreational pursuits, which will be in question should more built up areas evolve mirroring the downfall of some other counties.		Not sure that I could see much evidence, oh yeas some solar panels - however, who cares about our planet let alone country? Our reservoirs are at an all time low - gas and electricity in short supply, yes earth/air heat pumps will aid this crisis but hardly affordable, home prices will be high and with current mortgage rates once again raises the question who will buy these properties. I agree but am concerned that they will not be fully met. The planet section needs to be more radical.	
			No - to all of them - the development will be deeply damaging to the planet and the people in this area of Mid Devon - "Protect natural resources, including existing vegetation and local soils and local habitats. Reconnect and strengthen local landscapes and increase woodland cover." - by building 5000 houses???? That is not possible ! This is not a village it is a town - and it will bring to the area at least 10,000 people and nearly as many cars - the pollution and disruption caused by this can in no way be seen as helping health. Most of these new residents will have to travel to work - it is the wrong development in the wrong place and totally wrong for the planet.			
			It is exactly that, a vision. Like all visions it seeks to create something new and 'wonderful'. Phrases like 'celebrating the presence of water' ignores the realities of rural mud and the other joys of country living. What will be created will be a form of 'sanitised' country living with artificial 'village centres' where actual 'contact with nature' may or may not be a part of daily life. All very admirable.			
East Cullompton Masterplan	What are your views on the masterplan for East Cullompton and the locations of development, open spaces, streets and facilities that are shown?	You still have one major arterial road? How will a huge back up of Honiton Road traffic go?	Complete and Utter Madness . East Devon will end up looking like the West Midlands.	Where are the promised sports facilities within this development?	Preserve the green farmland to the east to create a natural and embedded agricultural buffer zone	
		NONE of this should be built until the traffic issues are resolved. New houses are already being built on the other side of the motorway, and how the roads are going to cope is anyone's guess. I believe there should be a complete moratorium on any new houses until the motorway junction is sorted, the town centre bypass is built, and the railway station reopened.	Initially, Kentisbeare Parish Council boundary had the likelihood of a green buffer zone to limit building lines. However, it would appear that the prospect of a school and other facilities is now encroaching within the boundary and extending up to Dead Lane Cross. How are the Council allowed to extend within the boundary?	The development looks good but it should be additional to the existing facilities in Cullompton and not replacing them. People should be encouraged to be outdoors in all weathers. We need more facilities suitable for use through the winter e.g. hard standing playgrounds/multi use pitches, undercover picnic areas and seating etc.	It's an outrage that so much green space is being given over to housing developments when there is a desperate need to protect against loss of habitat. Over 60 percent of the UK's wildlife biodiversity has been lost and its because of developments like this. This is just propaganda and buzz words designed to lull the public into the weak belief that this is somehow environmentally friendly and not destroying countless eco-systems.	
		How will the additional traffic be managed? A new motorway junction is required under Local Plan Policy but it is impossible to see how this will be afforded for such a small number of houses and Highways England has confirmed it would not fund under RIS because it's not providing a strategic benefit but just supporting the CGV housing estate. Is a garden village actually a garden village if it can only be made to work by such heavy reliance non the motorway? Where is employment development in EC and CGV going to go? Over 80% of working people currently commute out and without significant employment development at Cullompton an even higher percentage will need to commute out - by car, as you can't walk or cycle down the M5 and the alternative routes are largely unsafe for cyclists or people on linked trips taking their children to school and carrying on to work. When is the modelling work showing what is needed going to be publicly available? Rumours are circling that MDDC is trying to achieve what they need by shifting people out of their cars but this is totally unrealistic given how reliant the existing settlement at Cullompton is on private car travel. Highways England have been banging on about needing assessment and significant funding to cope with the predicted traffic but this does not seem to be acknowledged or accepted by MDDC. When are we going to have proper commitment to delivery the road improvements that they say will be needed?	Move it all to the west side of Junction 27 before it's too late.	The primary school has been allocated a space next to the main road this is a dangerous area for young children to be especially early in the morning at commuting time. It will also cause more congestion at drop off and pick up times along an already over used road. There is no allocation for a secondary school is this going to be added in an expansion program to an already large development? I can see no allocation for a doctors surgery or dentist, there are currently not enough of these services in Cullompton and the surrounding areas how is this to be addressed?		
		Road crossings, are they footbridges? The A373 is already experiencing serious overloading and needs careful consideration.	I don't have the internet, so only saw the plans and can't say that they were that enlightening except that this masterplan is eating up all of our lovely countryside. The reason people like to visit our lovely country. Do we really need this 'master plan' - I think not.	Primary school location not at the centre of community		
		No planned expansion of the motorway junctions is also a poor oversight and Stagecoach can't even provide buses to Exeter anymore so are they really going to cover these new routes?	It all looks great. A good balance of areas. As long as the housing development has adequate parking for at least two vehicles per house.	My overall view of this development is that East Cullompton will become a separate community from the existing town of Cullompton and all the connectivity promised will NOT deliver a single community or growth for the existing town. With respect to the current masterplan the main weakness is the lack of a real community hub at the centre of the proposed development with 3 small hubs being in peripheral locations.		
		Primary school is off Honiton Road which will increase traffic and congestion along Honiton Road as will the primary and secondary streets exiting onto Honiton Road. The location of the school is not central to the development and will not encourage those living further away to walk. They will use a car.		I am sorry to be negative again - but the attached map is almost impossible to decipher - all I can see is that the mixed community hubs appear to be on the edge of the proposed development which is a strange place to put a hub! Aren't hubs usually in the middle??? Could you explain please!		

Category	Question	Transport	General Development	Facilities	GI/BI/Landscape/Sustainability	Flooding
Activity & Landscape	Do you agree with the approach of the masterplan to seek to build on activities already taking place including an expansion around Fordmore Farm for the principal community hub?	Again, where will all the extra Cullompton bound traffic go?	The local community especially the Kentisbeare community have already specified the need for a buffer zone between Horn Road and Dead Lane; by pushing development of a community hub that far down the Honiton Road, the boundaries further east of the development will encroach on the Kentisbeare parish. Community wishes should be respected once they have been sought.	You're not building on activities already taking place, you're moving the activities from Cullompton into this new development e.g. cricket and rugby. There is no improvement overall. In fact, it will be worse for many people. It's a waste of money to just move things already in Cullompton. Money should he spent on the things we need but don't have or need more of e.g. places to go in bad weather, primary and secondary schools, NHS dentists, WiFi hotspots, homeless shelter etc. Not sure, just labelling it as a community hub doesn't really explain its benefits, a lot of these places are built then sit empty because the public don't use them. It would be good to have open playing fields and premises that charities can use to host events and community projects such as fetes and book fairs.		
		No, I feel that the location for a school (s) is dangerous due to proximity to the particular Honiton to Cullompton Road.	If the street view picture above is an illustration of the type of buildings that will be put there they are totally out of keeping with a rural settlement, the area looks soulless, yet another development of modern buildings with no variety in features. I like the idea of the green spaces within the streets but who is going to maintain them in times of more and more Council spending cuts are residents going to have to pay a maintenance charge to keep the area look at its best?	That depends hugely in what else is going to go in there (as yet this seems very vague?). Will there be some form of shared community centre/facility? Shared with school, possibly health, possibly church? What will make it the centre? How will the Honiton Road be managed there?		
		Fordmore Farm is at the extreme edge of the plan, its access to the A373 is an accident waiting to happen without serious remodelling so no I disagree.	It would seem that the family ownership of 'Fordmore Farm' has already been forward planning with the anticipation of thousands of homes. Infrastructure on Honiton Road is and will struggle with the extension of their business. Not least thinking about the properties nearby that must be feeling the increase in traffic noise/pollution.	There is a farm shop at junction 27 already. Fordmore Farm is on the very edge of the development and on the busy A373 - is new not yet established - wrong place		
			No - I do not agree that the expansion around Fordmore Farm as the principal community hub is a good idea. This is at the eastern fringe of the proposed development and it smacks of two issues: a] this development is being developer led (by key land holders) - not community led and b] if Fordmore is developed then there is already a strong assumption that there will be further future development to the east and eventually Kentisbeare will be "lost" as an independent and thriving village (just look at what Cranbrook has done to its surrounding area)!	Once again, the question is access. The sure what the community hub includes - who will use it. Agree on seeking to build on activities already taking place but don't agree that Fordmore Farm should be a principal community hub as it's not central to the main housing development.		
				Impressed by the 'foresight' of those who bought Fordmore Farm.		
				Fordmore Farm is the wrong place. It is at the corner of the planned development, never to be a hub Initial development should as close to where existing facilities are as possible, that is close to Cullompton. This should also help unify the two areas		
	What are your views on the way the masterplan proposes to deliver green and open spaces across the site and the emphasis on including water a key feature?		Realistically, the landscape already offers immense 'well-being' to existing locals and the masterplan is just a way of trying to describe the already beautiful landscape in a different way! Green spaces exist but the difference will be that there will be 'brick built spaces attached to smaller green zones'.	Green and open are good but adequate facilities must be there too. Water feature is 'nice and fanciful' but irrelevant and costly to maintain	The country park is 'potential'. It probably won't happen so shouldn't be included when considering green and open spaces. As long as houses, buildings etc have enough parking and roads are straight and easy to cross, it will be lovely to visit. You can't walk far in Cullompton without coming across a stream. That's nothing new or special. Where is the renewable energy? Where is the innovation to be a sustainable development?	
			Do you know I think it's all pie in the sky and at the end of the day greed. That would appear to be the way the world sadly is.		This is an excellent aspiration. The Woodland Trust encourages councils to require new developments to have 30% tree cover. Existing trees should be retained wherever possible. Water is an important habitat, but ecology should be looked at holistically, and trees provide important shade to water for invertebrates and fish. Wildflowers and Trees are important for many invertebrates which support other biodiversity and pollination.	
			None of it has any substance so hard to comment.		I think that you would need to make the green space larger to make up for the style of housing planned	
					The green spaces are all at the perimeter of what looks like a huge housing estate. No view on the water. These need to be more than just "the only way to use floodplain and land under pylons" which it feels like they are at the moment? This is at minimal cost to constructors who cannot use this land anyway.	
					No. It would be nice to see the inclusion of some allotments or community gardens or orchards where people could grow their own food to sustain their families rather than relying on imported goods from the supermarket. Better dog walking parks could also be provided as public safe green spaces where dogs can be walked safely. More hedges and mature trees could be saved and included. what protections will there be to ensure these aren't wiped out in future expansions? The more open space the better how ever I do suspect that the green spaces will be areas that can't be built on and the waterways will be the flood prevention areas and rivers unless I am just being cynical.	
					Outdoor space is so important and brings communities together.	
					The planning of green and open spaces is good but the proposal for a country water park in what is already a pretty rural area looks a bit weird. If the emphasis is on flood mitigation then this should be honestly portrayed. Has a demand study been undertaken for the proposed water park? Will this inevitably attract significant visitor numbers and put strain on the minor roads in the proposed country park area? Including water seems sensible, given the amount of it in the area. Likewise green spaces.	
					Really good, blue health (Exeter uni) has been proven	
Mobility, placemaking and other	Do you agree with how the SPD proposes to approach transport and mobility including crossing of the M5, local streets, changes to Honiton Road, public transport and emphasising active travel options?	NO NO NO, if the required changes to the only route across the motorway and junction 28 improvements are left until after all these houses are built, it will never be done!! Improvements to Honiton Road towards Fordmore will be pointless if you still have the total bottleneck approaching junction 28. Any further development is dependent on a new J28 extension, as outlined by the inspector, therefore it is fanciful to be pursuing these options until the precise nature of this junction has been agreed.	It seems foolish to start building without having first sorted some of the major infrastructure questions? The danger is you end up with another Swallow way (complete disaster!) Public transport and active routes may be desired, but are they realistic? Too many houses are built with not enough parking space (to encourage other means of travel), and all it results in is too many cars parked in dangerous places! There needs to be a balance of ideals and realism. Maybe the planners need to be forced to live in the new community! To ensure they don't just produce something great in theory and then just walk away!	Using the Fordmore Farm area as a site of development at the edge of the area will encourage too much development down the Honiton Road, the main community hub should be in the centre of the development not at the edge.		
		Great idea but would be better to improve the existing Cullompton area. We have just lost our bus service to Exeter and now need to walk to the main road to catch it. Not a problem for us but it will be for many people. Why can't the money be split so the existing parts of Cullompton and the new areas can all be like this plan? No doubt the reality will be like the new part of Swallow Way/Kingfisher Reach. Cars parked all over the sides of the road and difficult to cross in places with poor visibility and kerbs strangely high sometimes.	At west junction 27 there would be no need to cross the M5.			
		It is difficult to tell at this stage. The cycling routes need to be planned with public consultation. Bike lanes are often poorly planned and will be essential in encouraging sustainable travel. How long would it take for people to cross the M5 by foot? Is this actually realistic?	I think the planners have fallen into the trap of trying to rejuvenate Cullompton by building a new town next to it. The town council certainly wants this. If the objective is to create more housing and a true garden village, then Cullompton is the wrong location. It's so ironic that JN 27 just up the road is crying out for it.			
		Honiton Road is not a suitable place for development of this kind and would need significant updating before the plan should even be considered. Public transport staffing would also make the public transport plans not viable. There aren't enough public transport staff in more suburban towns and cities let alone in this proposed area.				
		I feel that the road network needs to be improved prior to any construction.				
		No the Junct 28 access has yet to be decided is vague and its the most important access. Many people will commute out of the town, its vital to put provisions in for that. Who will pay for the maintenance of these cycle routes and new roads when Mid Devon Council can't even afford to upkeep the existing ones they have?				
		Expansion of Junction 27, with the train service, petrol station already in situ would make more sense instead of changes to the Honiton Road. References to enhancing public transport and enhancing travel options sounds great, but realistically people enjoy the benefit of privacy, comfort, accessibility of their own vehicles especially in the current climate with covid19.				
		The key issues are and will remain as: 1 the Cullompton Relief road, 2 The J28 amendments to enable good traffic flows at ALL times, 3 the major improvements needed to A377 through the whole proposed development (but equally importantly further to the east and right through to Dulverton as a minimum). If these are NOT delivered East Cullompton simply will not work				
		Agree extra crossings and access to M5 required for both cars and pedestrian travel. Public transport needs to be cost effective, reliable and convenient. If there is good and effective public transport. I don't see the need for car clubs.				

Category	Question	Transport	General Development	Facilities	GI/BI/Landscape/Sustainability	Flooding
Mobility, placemaking and other	Do you agree with how the SPD proposes to approach transport and mobility including crossing of the M5, local streets, changes to Honiton Road, public transport and emphasising active travel options?	Given that the proposal is to turn what is currently a rural, agricultural area into a semi-urban (suburban?) area, the approach to transport seems sensible. A lot will depend on the way J28 is dealt with. It should definitely allow for increased access northwards as well as southwards; the original proposals did not appear to allow for this.				
		The crossing the M5 is as it is now, inadequate. Changes to Honiton Road are vague and stop abruptly at Fordmore Farm, leaving traffic beyond that point in an even worse state. Increased traffic will flow towards Honiton as well, even without the obvious deadlock that will grow at J28 There is only so much you can do to provide access to the M5, widen the Honiton Road, considering the huge amount of extra transport- not only cars but delivery lorries etc. Do you feel it is satisfactory Cullompton as a town will cease to exist. Once accident/ incident on the M5 will totally bring Devon to a standstill.				
	What are your views on the placemaking aspirations and design requirements which will seek to shape the type of place that East Cullompton will become?	No issues with the development, just the roads	Focus on ways to encourage people to visit Cullompton town centre and improve the business aspect of the town to appreciate in the way Honiton is so highly regarded. Use the un-occupied premises within the town for business and residential purposes. I don't understand what 'place making aspirations' means. The design requirements look fine within the boundaries but more consideration needs to be given to the areas that exist outside of the immediate boundary areas.	I think the current masterplan is "skewed" with no heart to the proposed development and this has been replaced by the idea of 3 small community hub areas the most significant of which is on the eastern fringe (Fordmore) and suggestions that sports pitches should be developed on the eastern fringe as well - why are the sports pitches and the community hub not being centred around the proposed site for the school?	I don't really understand this question as you are using strange language choices. It would be great to make this an eco development showcasing the regions commitment to net zero with the majority of houses having solar panels and renewable energy. It would also be good to have space allocated to self builds as this allows people to build houses shaped around their needs not those of big developers.	
		Having the road through the developments with the school is not a safe placing	Placemaking' is a term I had not heard of until reading this document. CNU (Congress for the New Urbanism), whose mission is to champion 'walkable urbanism', defines it as, "the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in. Great. Some of us felt that we had found that place in the existing rural environment and that it did not need re-making. Given that it apparently is to be re-made the aspirations sound suitably aspirational. Shame you won't listen to existing residents.		Why is it a potential country park? Surely with significant new builds the country park is more than essential not potential. The green space hub towards Cullompton side is not large enough	
		I am not sure that Mobility hubs will be successful in a rural setting where public transport is limited to non-existent.	A lot of this sounds good... but!... Nothing higher that 3 stories please			
	Do you have any other comments regarding the East Cullompton Masterplan SPD?	Train station is ESSENTIAL	The sustainability of people, planet and place beyond the immediate boundaries of the plan needs to be borne in mind; placing such an emphasis on development at the boundaries is going to impede on existing sustained communities. The proposal to include 'a minimum of 10 gypsy sites' seems unviable. Is this the entire gypsy population of Devon? How many homes per site?	Existing facilities should be maintained for existing residents. New facilities should be added to cater for increased number of residents.	Development should be lower carbon, buildings should use renewable energy sources, more thought for enjoying these spaces in bad weather and looking after under privileged people e.g. homeless shelter, halfway house etc.	
		I think the train station is the only sensible option of the whole plan	Should be scrapped. Assess the exact requirement for the needs of local people of East Devon only and build accordingly 200 to 300 at most.	To me it still lacks a centre, and is housing rather than a community.		
			In a time where people can't even afford to heat their own houses is it really the time to be building new unaffordable housing? What guarantees will there be to ensure that the local housing needs are met prior to new people migrating to the town? Many of our friends and family can't make it onto the property ladder as they can't secure mortgages or afford to live so why build houses when they are still forced to live with older family members and can never hope to buy one? Our old house was subject to a covenant that ensured that only people who have lived in Devon for at least three years could purchase it which gave us our first chance to get on the ladder when we were pipped to the post for so many other properties, if there is to be development at least let it benefit local people directly.	What infrastructure will be put in place, before the housing, nurseries, schools, doctors, surgeries, dentists, hospitals. Where will be all the recycling-refuse be deposits, hopefully these will be all taken into consideration before the masses arrive.		
			Building more houses/works units/ schools etc is not progress! It keeps the building industry in business provides short-term job options but does have a long term effect on the existing residents within an area, who have already chosen to live in a place that does not have a large town, city population.			
			As previously. This is a development for future generations and I welcome it.			
			I have a very strong view that NO further development east of the motorway should take place until the Cullompton relief road and J28 are properly sorted out and delivered			
	What are your thoughts on how Section 5.6 of the Masterplan SPD sets out an overall approach to the timing and delivery of the development and its related facilities and infrastructure. Do you agree with the early phases forming around proposed community hubs?	Cannot see how the development will work before the road network is improved	As previously stated this development is dependent upon the road network and upgrade and no development should take place until this has been resolved. The real need in the community is affordable housing for people on low incomes this needs to be a priority over community hubs that won't be used until the development is nearing completion. But you're not listening to the community of Cullompton. It's just all so hypocritical.	No - the community hubs are far to far from the core of the proposed development and are instead at the boundaries.		
		Again... I believe nothing should be done until the motorway junction is sorted and bypass built. Then the plan needs to be clear that this is part of the Garden Village... so it's a proper full plan, NOT two different things	Hopefully it will never be built. Yes, need to make sure that this is not a building site for the next 10 years.	The community hubs - ford more farm shop is currently the right size for the roadside it is situated at. A		
		Infrastructure needs attention first and not the likelihood of some properties being built before the Honiton Road is re-landscaped.	Infrastructure before housing development.	No, no more houses should be built in Cullompton till we start to see some of this new infrastructure - e.g. schools, dentists, doctors first then your community hubs.		
				I do not agree with the early phases forming around the proposed community hubs as I strongly believe that although Fordmore is a good site it is NOT central to the development and it strongly suggests that there will be further development to the east. The focus should be on delivering community assets (sports fields, community buildings, shops, doctors etc.) around the proposed school and more at the heart of the proposed community. I accept that there will be development at some stage but the current SPD is full of poor compromises which strongly suggest that the developers and land holders have the "whip hand" and the community is not being listened to		
				I don't really understand why it would be helpful to start development near to a farm shop on a busy A road?? - I presume this is because it suits the land owner and the developer. - It will certainly not allow the residents to walk to school, doctor or supermarket.. and I am sure it will be many years before anyone will sensibly consider cycling on the A373.		
				Early phases around proposed community hubs would appear to make sense. However, the questions which arise are who would actually run these (until there is a fully-fledged community) and what would they contain?		
Question or query			Why has the East Cullompton Extension been allowed to cross over into the Parish Of Kentisbeare. If the unwanted extension is going to happen it should remain within the Cullompton boundary.		During the recent building of the Persimmon Housing development on Willand Road, I witnessed the sad felling of an ancient oak tree (over 250 years old). Can you give an assurance that trees over 30 years old will be preserved and if not how many trees over 30 years old will be felled to make way for the new development?	
			Is the East of Cullompton development dependent on the town centre relief road? ie if the relief road cannot be built for whatever reason, does this mean the East of Cullompton development (and the Garden Village) cannot be built?			

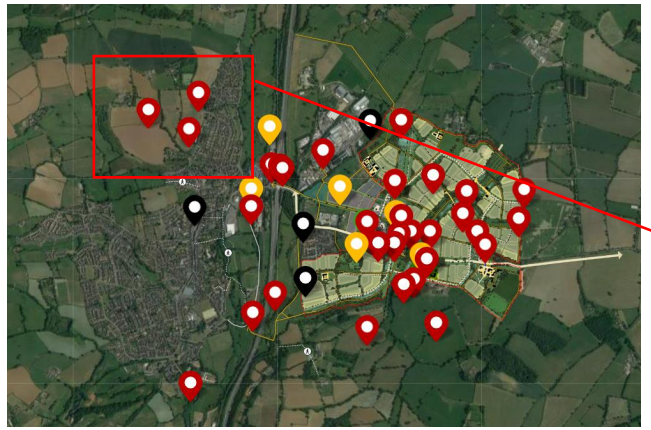
Appendix 1 Interactive map comments



✓ Something I like

✓ Something I want to see improved

✓ An idea





Town centre, fore Street

Where is this?

Town centre, fore Street

Your comment or suggestion:

We have all the houses being built but no mention of a relief road for Cullompton town , it only takes one vehicle to stop in the town and within minutes you have a standstill, this still needs to be address asap

5 people like this

Town Centre but comment here to reinforce other comment

Where is this?

Town Centre but comment here to reinforce other comment

Your comment or suggestion:

Not just one vehicle to stop but one to be parked there all day. Because traffic can pass n the other carriageway there is no obstruction according to the Police

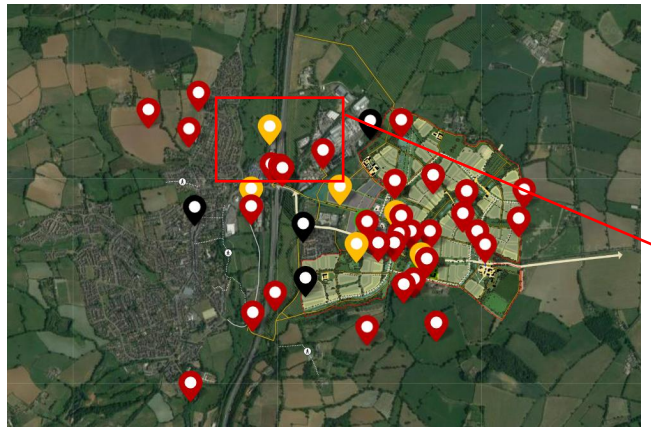
Nobody has liked this yet

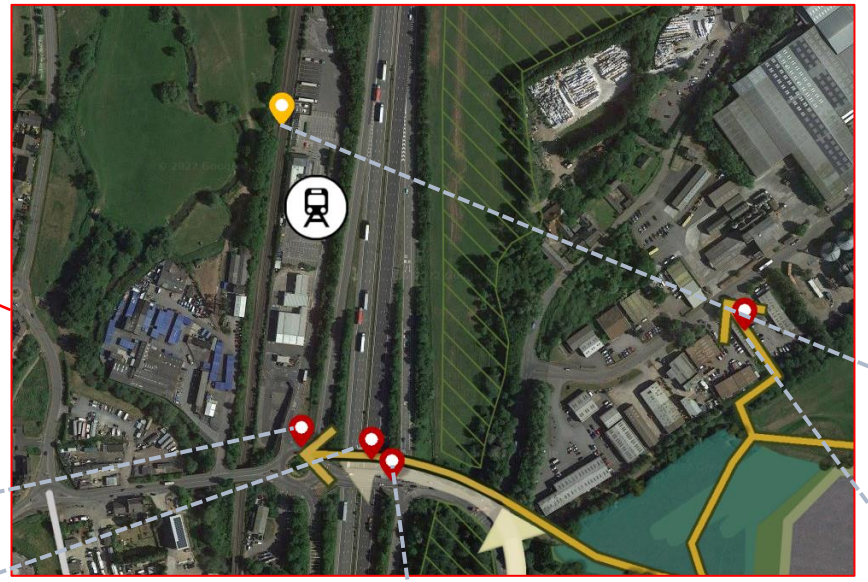
Comment

Your comment or suggestion:

What about allowing these houses. That's more than 2000 houses in Cullompton. No justification for allowing another green field sites to be bricked over

5 people like this





New railway station site

Where is this?

New railway station site

Your comment or suggestion:

I read in the local media yesterday that the new railway stations gone from 2023 to 2025 for being developed. This is far too late. With over 2k in houses in North cully being built and the 5k in the east you'll need the railway ASAP. Cullompton always been a commuter down people are going to be attracted to the M5 corridor not the sense of community. It's vital to have more sustainable transport options for all these people

Nobody has liked this yet

M5 Junction 28

Where is this?

M5 Junction 28

Your comment or suggestion:

The lack of hard commitment to constain development until adequate infrastructure is in place is depressing. No hard commitment that I can see about the Link Road, and the reference to what Network Rail may or may not do re the Station is pitiful. With events to date, its difficult to have confidence that adequate constraints/conditions will be exercised on the developers. I have worked across the UK on significant infrastructure projects over the last 40 years and have seen what effective planning controls can leverage from Developers so why so lack-lustre here?

1 person likes this

J28

Where is this?

J28

Your comment or suggestion:

What will be done to improve this junction? With all the added traffic, from the new houses that will be created, this junction will be unable to cope with rush hour traffic and commuters. Traffic already backs up at peak times everyday at this junction and through to town. Will the road improvements be prioritised and put in place before the bulk of the construction work takes place?

1 person likes this

Kingsmill industrial estate

Where is this?

Kingsmill industrial estate

Your comment or suggestion:

What is this? Is the plan to demolish the existing industrial estate to make a new road?

Nobody has liked this yet

Cullompton Train Station

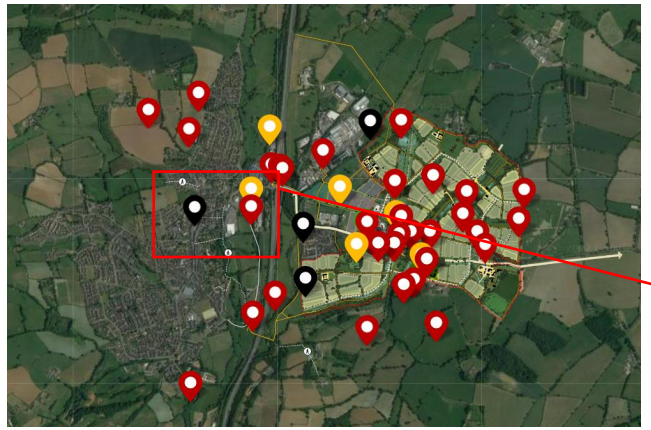
Where is this?

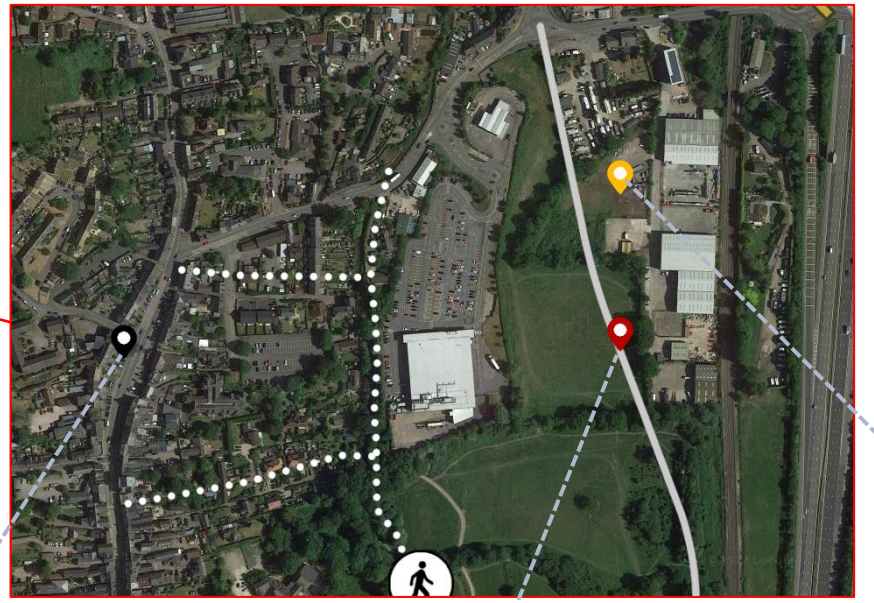
Cullompton Train Station

Your comment or suggestion:

Reopening of Cullompton train station is vital as part of this development. This should be completed before the houses are finished and should also include a cycle network so that people can get safely to the train station on bike. A CHEAP car park should also be included in the train station to encourage people to use the train rather than driving in to Exeter or Taunton.

3 people like this





Higher Bullring Cullompton

Where is this?

Higher Bullring Cullompton

Your comment or suggestion:

All the people that live in East Cullompton or are part of the Garden Village will not be able to easily park when they drive to Cullompton About 10 spaces are being removed from the Higher Bullring to "improve" the area for bigger events for more people to attend. Not Sure where any on of them will park

1 person likes this

Inner Relief Road (via CCA fields)

Where is this?

Inner Relief Road (via CCA fields)

Your comment or suggestion:

No obvious comment linking this long overdue development to the SPD. At Kentisbeare presentation it was stated that the Inner Relief Road (via CCA Fields) had to be completed BEFORE the Garden Village was STARTED. Recommend that it be clearly stated in the SPD that the Inner Relief Road be completed BEFORE the Garden Village is started. Indeed a section for such preconditions be added to the SPD document.

7 people like this

Cullompton Inner Relief road and Cullompton railway station.

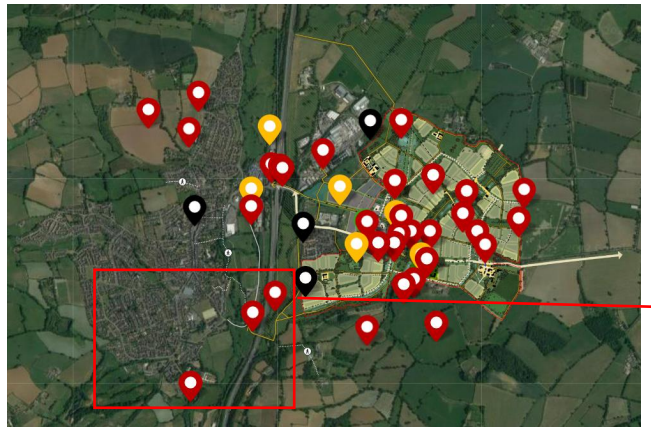
Where is this?

Cullompton Inner Relief road and Cullompton railway station.

Your comment or suggestion:

I feel that the Cullompton inner relief road needs to be completed and the Cullompton railway station re opened (should never have closed in 1960s) before any houses are built in the Cullompton Garden Village. Please please look first at the infrastructure.

3 people like this





B3181 to Exeter

Where is this?

B3181 to Exeter

Your comment or suggestion:

There should be plans for this route to Exeter to be accessible without going through Cullompton town centre. There is already too much traffic in the town centre as it is.

Nobody has liked this yet

Southern end of Inner Relief Road

Where is this?

Southern end of Inner Relief Road

Your comment or suggestion:

No obvious provision for the possibility of linking the southern end of the Inner Relief Road (through CCA fields) to the relief road shown by Jenny Clifford when presenting the Garden Village running to the south of Honiton Road starting just east of the last house in Honiton Road and running close behind the existing houses to S Cullompton

Clearly if both roads are implemented then it would be COST EFFECTIVE to arrange for the intersection to be implemented at the same time. This should be a condition not an afterthought.

3 people like this

Motorway junction

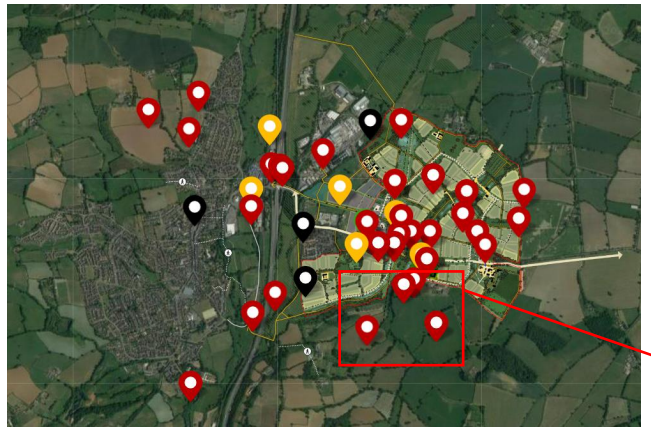
Where is this?

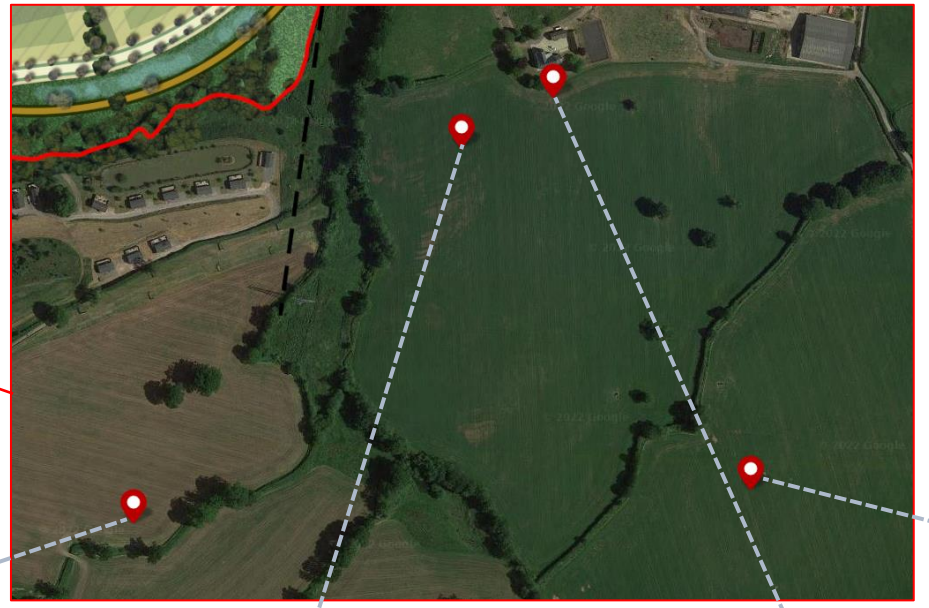
Motorway junction

Your comment or suggestion:

There is no way this motorway junction is going to cope with the amount ov traffic these hosing developments are going to generate. The motorway closed today and as usual the town bottle necked within minutes. The relief roads must be built before any more developments. Traffic congestion is not going to contribute to your eco plan. Also the bridge as a pedestrian is a nightmare to cross due to the volume of traffic and lack of crossings. That needs to be taken into consideration if you are expecting people to walk and use green corridors

Nobody has liked this yet





Comment on the whole plan

Where is this?

Comment on the whole plan

Your comment or suggestion:

Developments as big as this will only be successful long term if the infrastructure is properly designed and executed. Main areas where cost is not happily accepted by the developers are drainage, sewage and flood prevention. It is important that these aspects are properly sized, even oversized, based on the prediction of further expansion. Do not see and real assurance that this will be the case.

1 person likes this

This development is too big, too many house too fast

Where is this?

This development is too big, too many house too fast

Your comment or suggestion:

We've already had 2k odd in houses going in right now into North cullompton. The works at Mill Gardens already cut our Internet off for a month and the college practice is on a generator again because their cables been cut...again. the houses going in at the blood site made that road a nightmare to navigate with them developing entrances on to the main road at the same time as Mill Gardens. It's too much disruption to local residents and wildlife at once. These developments need to be staged over years not months. It's too much and the towns existing community are going to suffer as well as the wildlife. Its awful, kind if regretting moving back here to be honest

Nobody has liked this yet

Aller Barton

Where is this?

Aller Barton

Your comment or suggestion:

How can you build a housing estate right up to a large working dairy farm? Not only will it be rife with people wandering into the farm creating a theft risk but there's also issues from a health and safety perspective. It's completely brainless.

5 people like this

The Whole Plan

Where is this?

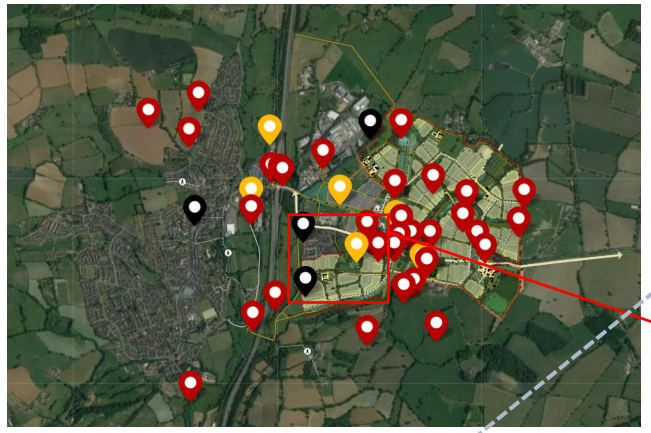
The Whole Plan

Your comment or suggestion:

Having selected the tag to read the comment I am unable to select the "like button". No wonder there are no "likes" for any of the comments - smacks of a stacked deck!!!

Side note: I can select the other buttons in the bottom row (for example Facebook)

1 person likes this





Cummings Nursery Site ✕

Where is this?

Cummings Nursery Site

Your comment or suggestion:

Is this temporarily closed meaning it will reopen again? With so much money being made from development a little extra on getting the right information on the map may help.

Nobody has liked this yet

Comment ✕

Your comment or suggestion:

Isn't this area subject to flooding?

2 people like this

Comment ✕

Your comment or suggestion:

Is access via Greenhouse Gardens to be permitted for delivery of bulding materials and general building work? Access direct to building site from Honiton road (A373) would be preferred option by majority of residents.

Nobody has liked this yet

Honiton Road (A373) ✕

Where is this?

Honiton Road (A373)

Your comment or suggestion:

Buried in the planning is a bit on the need for changes to Honiton Road. No detailed plans are evident but it proposes the use of 20mph speed restrictions. Just wondering how this will be enforced. The road currently has a 30mph limit but many motorists blatantly flout this limit. On the rare occasion we have speed cameras the traffic flows very slow compared to the norm. Are we still having the Garden Village relief road that was planned to run from A373 (between last house and farm entrance) that runs south of the existing houses to south Cullompton? This will reduce load on the road.

Nobody has liked this yet

Honiton Road (A373) ✕

Where is this?

Honiton Road (A373)

Your comment or suggestion:

Clearly the existing plans show that unless the southern relief road discussed when the Garden Village was first mooted (or a northern relief road as suggested at the Kentisbeare presentation) is implemented the traffic on Honiton Road will substantially increase. All of the houses at the eastern end of Honiton Road have individual direct vehicular access onto Honiton Road. For these houses it is already difficult to get onto the road, especially if turning right). Given the failure of other traffic schemes to limit traffic speed in Cullompton (for example High Street, Silver Street in Willand, Tiverton Road) it is questionable that any traffic calming scheme will work. This is especially true if it is remembered that Highways may impose other restrictions on this road which is classed as an A road.

2 people like this

Field just south of 29 Honiton Road (last house) ✕

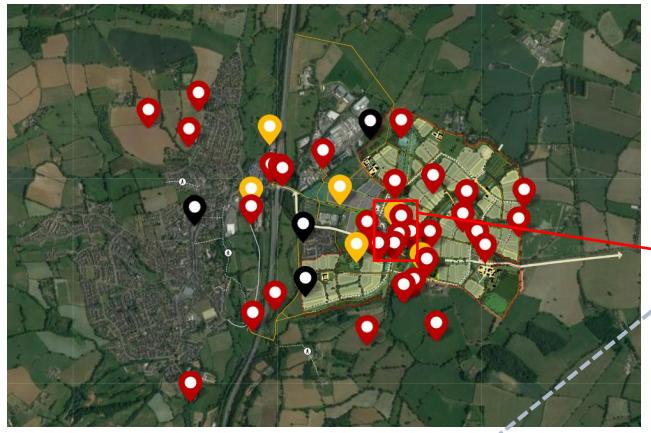
Where is this?

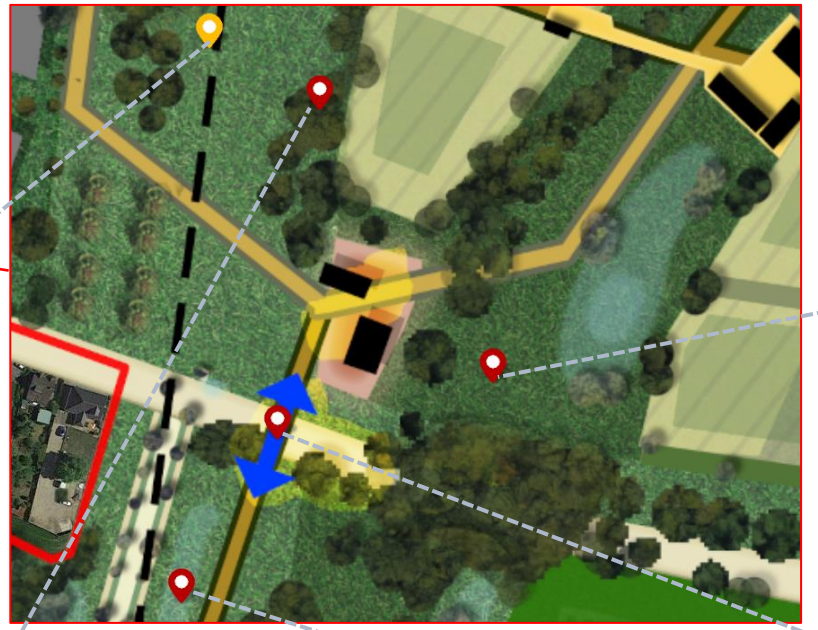
Field just south of 29 Honiton Road (last house)

Your comment or suggestion:

When the Garden Village was first presented by Jenny Clifford there was a relief road linking the A373 starting just east of the last house in Honiton Road and running to the north of the road shown in this presentation. It just clipped the corner of the field behind 25 - 27 Honiton Road. There is no reserved area for this item that was voted on in the previous presentation. If I understand the plan correctly the area is designated for housing. For some not a significant change but quite relevant for those living in Honiton Road.
If this significant modification from the original plan what other "adjustments" have been sneaked into the plan?

Nobody has liked this yet





Any land you don't build on

Where is this?

Any land you don't build on

Your comment or suggestion:

Would be great to allocate some land for allotments that people could use to grow their own fruit and veg locally to reduce the amount of miles our food travels and to become more self sustainable. There are limited existing allotments with lengthy waiting lists and not all of lush have the garden space needed to have a veg patch

Nobody has liked this yet

Relief rd

Where is this?

Relief rd

Your comment or suggestion:

Where's the new relief road
This council should get its priority's right
Before making big plans

4 people like this

Between last house in Honiton Road and Farm entrance

Where is this?

Between last house in Honiton Road and Farm entrance

Your comment or suggestion:

Some time ago it was determined that there would be a relief road that linked Honiton Road (about where the 40mph sign is) around the southern side of the houses and linking up to existing roads in the southern end of town. This would then allow the Garden Village traffic that wanted to go to S Cullompton (for example Aldi or Bradnich) to avoid the M5 bridge. Has this relief road been cancelled thus forcing all traffic along the existing road (A373/Honiton Road) to add to the chaos at the M5 Junction?

Nobody has liked this yet

Blue Double Headed Arrow across Honiton Road

Where is this?

Blue Double Headed Arrow across Honiton Road

Your comment or suggestion:

What is this? Not detailed in the key for the illustration

2 people like this

Zones for nature, ecosystem services, enjoyment, water catchment management etc

Where is this?

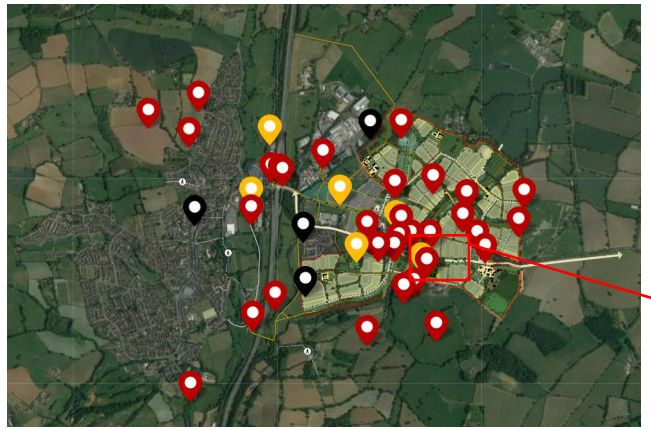
Zones for nature, ecosystem services, enjoyment, water catchment management etc.

Your comment or suggestion:

At first glance there seems to be a few broad green spaces / corridors reserved within the Masterplan map. However, I am curious about why broad corridors are missing / weak in other areas e.g. southern end. Please seek to improve?

I wonder how the layout was informed by ecological evidence and recommendations - plus, on the other hand the (emerging) Nature Recovery Strategy would help inform opportunities for habitat enhancement. Stakeholders need to understand this aspect. Also there is an argument to optimise NOW because the nature gains can't be put back in at a later stage. Bear in mind the baseline landscape was perhaps not ideal - so there are potentially opportunities not identified (some species/groups and habitats would not be found in the surveys).

2 people like this





School - are you going to put in a secondary school?

Where is this?

School - are you going to put in a secondary school?

Your comment or suggestion:

Cullompton secondary school has struggled for years with the space it has left to expand. We barely had room for all our years when I was there over 15 years ago. Could the secondary school be relocated to this site with new facilities that can accommodate the growing student population?

Nobody has liked this yet

A school next to an 'A' road

Where is this?

A school next to an 'A' road

Your comment or suggestion:

It looks like a blundells road problem in the making!

3 people like this

just off Honiton Road close to Primary School site.

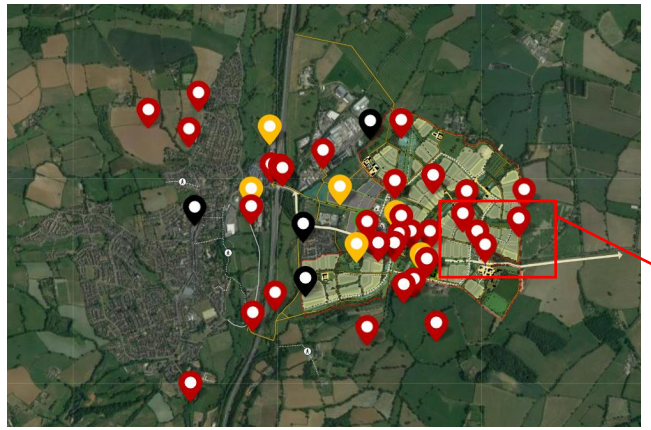
Where is this?

just off Honiton Road close to Primary School site.

Your comment or suggestion:

East Cullompton needs some food shops. Suggest a large supermarket goes in this location, ASda or Morrisons, also East Cullompton needs a new food pub for the very large community. Pub should be built in early stages of construction, so should supermarket. East Cullompton also needs other retail, eg, halfords, screw fix, homebase, shoe fare, currys, superdrug, The Works or WH Smith stationers. If there is no retail in East Cullompton it will just turn into a commuter village and ecveryone will get in their cars and drive to Taunton or Exeter. So the point of the GV beinbg a cycle friendly zone will be lost. Cullompton High street is very small and all the shop units are very small, so big new retail will not detract from High Street but make East Cullompton a destination point.

Nobody has liked this yet





Comment

Your comment or suggestion:

I saw in the FAQs that there is a requirement that at least 28% of the new homes built must be affordable, 28% is a pathetically small proportion of the new homes to be allocated to affordable housing, I hope that this can be increased in the final plan. Also will this affordable housing be shared ownership only? What will the fees be? A lot of the time shared ownership is just as unaffordable due to the extra monthly costs of rent, ground and service charges. Will this affordable housing be ring-fenced for local buyers, with a connection to the area?

1 person likes this

Who's going to pay for these 'green landscaping places' to be maintained?

Where is this?

Who's going to pay for these 'green landscaping places' to be maintained?

Your comment or suggestion:

Will this site be subject to maintenance fees on top of council tax? Personally these kind of schemes but me off buying new builds, its like paying rent for the land your house is built on which for people who already struggle to get on the housing ladder is off putting. Especially when there is no regulation on these charges and they can just be upped whenever the developers like with no cap. We've recently moved back here and it was so hard to find a house free of this entrapment. If the council wants to grant permission for large housing developments they need to pay for their maintenance. Its like buying a pet then expecting the breeder to pay for its lifelong care when you're thr registered owner. They need to take some accountability and foot the bill.

Nobody has liked this yet

A373 crossings for pedestrians

Where is this?

A373 crossings for pedestrians

Your comment or suggestion:

I hope these are bridges to accommodate safe access across the busy A road as the plan is to make every where accessible within 20 walking or cycling minutes.

1 person likes this

The entire perimeter of the proposals

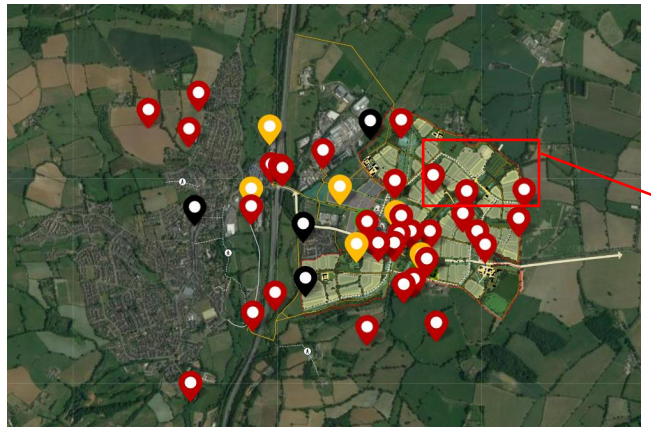
Where is this?

The entire perimeter of the proposals

Your comment or suggestion:

A large part of the perimeter of this masterplan is a perimeter road with housing behind. There is no feathering of the masterplan out into green lungs, or softening down into parks or recreational areas needed by this scale of housing. What this does point to is further and further expansion in the future, bolting on more housing and desecrating farmland and existing habitats. Put a softer, greener edge to this masterplan so that the abruptness of the buildings is contained, don't use perimeter roads and provide evidence of the curtailment to the future expansion further outwards; or be truthful about the intention for this masterplan to be part of an even greater, even worse addition to an already disjointed, problematic unsuccesful small town. Fix the existing town problems/connection, use brownfield land first and provide a measured masterplan solution. This is none of those things.

7 people like this





Comment

Your comment or suggestion:

Will any of this new housing actually be affordable for local people like myself? All of the recent new developments created in and around Cullompton have focused on "luxury" 3,4 and 5 bed homes that are vastly more expensive than the average budget of local people. These new homes seem to be intended to house people from outside the local area, putting more pressure on our already over stretched local services and infrastructure. Please focus on providing the housing that is actually needed by local people who have grown up in this area first.

1 person likes this

Comment

Your comment or suggestion:

Will these new homes have adequate parking? I understand that the plan is that every part of the development will be accessible via walking/cycling, however, people living here will still most likely need a car/vehicle to commute to and from work or to get to Exeter and Taunton etc.

1 person likes this

Eastern boundary

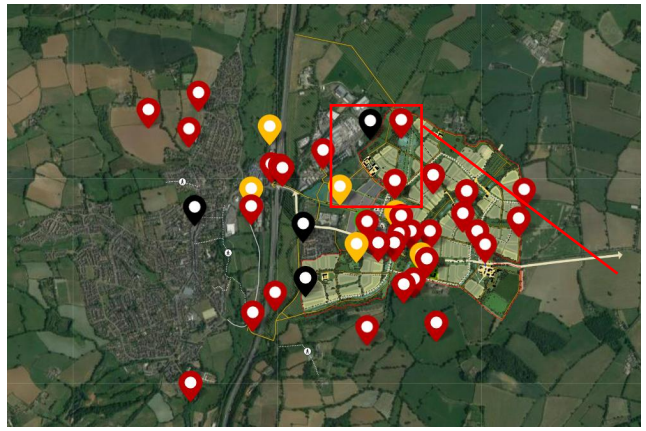
Where is this?

Eastern boundary

Your comment or suggestion:

Not entirely sure this will be the boundary and the pledge not to encroach onto Kentisbeare Parish will be broken intentionally.

2 people like this





Are these reservoirs or admitting you know the area will flood?

Where is this?

Are these reservoirs or admitting you know the area will flood?

Your comment or suggestion:

Have you reached out to southwest water to discuss future water supply for these vast developments? Considering most our local reservoirs are still at 20 % shouldn't we be focusing on reducing the strain on our water resources until a planned action has been implemented?

A new road from Kingsmill Lane behind East Cullompton jopining Honoiton Road with a roundabout in th Aller Barton area.

Where is this?

A new road from Kingsmill Lane behind East Cullompton jopining Honoiton Road with a roundabout in th Aller Barton area.

Your comment or suggestion:

Honiton Road is a very busy A road. Making it a 20mph zone is crazy if there is not an alternative route for large HGVs and other routes. So build a new Road from Kingsmill Lane up behind the back of Est Cullompton connecting to Honiton Road by a roundabout in the area of Aller Barton. This would take all the heavy traffic off the exsting Honiton Road. WHEN THERE IS A NEW ROAD TO TAKE HEAVY TRAFFIC AND ONLY WHEN THAT IS BUILT AND OPEN COULD THE EXSTING HONITON ROAD BECOME A 20MPH ROAD.

Nobody has liked this yet

Yellow line parallel to Honiton Road

Where is this?

Yellow line parallel to Honiton Road

Your comment or suggestion:

This route is still an outline plan. There is plenty of scope for making this route a bespoke alternative to Honiton Road rather than trying to modify Honiton Road. For example ensure that all vehicular access is via service roads and not directly onto the road

1 person likes this

The Culm Garden Village

Where is this?

The Culm Garden Village

Your comment or suggestion:

May be someone could show the original outline of the Culm Garden Village on the same map so that we can see how it fits into what is now being called East Cullompton. I think the whole area for East Cullompton is Much bigger than the Culm Village and people will be confused and think it inly refers to the same area as it is not being shown as different.

Nobody has liked this yet

Fordmore farm shop this is due to be expanded

Where is this?

Fordmore farm shop this is due to be expanded

Your comment or suggestion:

A problem. Even when fully expanded Fordmore farm shop will never be able to provide the range of goods such as a supermarket like Asda or Morrisons. Therefore there should be plans in East Cullompton to bring in a new large supermarket store.

Nobody has liked this yet

Appendix 1 Public consultation email responses

Transport	General Development	Infrastructure	Principle/Questions/Other	Wider Garden Village	Flooding	Env/GI/BI/Landscape	Facilities	Affordable Housing
There should be no further building in Cullompton at all until the relief road is built. This applies to all sites east and west. Cullompton town centre will die completely unless the relief road is built in the next few years	The effect of the plan should not detract from the viability and prosperity of Cullompton Town. It should also not have a detrimental effect on the rural nature of smaller communities nearby.	Increased demand placed on health and social care in the area. Have the GP practices/RDEH and local hospitals/ambulance services agreed that they can absorb the rising numbers of patients?	It is imperative that the village boundary is preserved as well as the appearance and character, although it appears on the map that the development proposal already encroaches into the Parish. The area on Kentisbeare side of the development should remain as agricultural land. Why the need for green spaces when there is prime agricultural land already. Why a garden village when there are tiny or no gardens?	Moving to the wider issue and 'potential areas of consideration' the map shows this passing over the boundary of Kentisbeare Parish, passing Horn Road and reaching Dead Lane. Many representations have been made that the development should be kept out of the Parish of Kentisbeare and that a natural gap be maintained at the Cullompton edge of the development (Buffer Zone) to preserve the nature and character of historic Parish. The scope is looking at putting large school(s) and sports facilities within Kentisbeare. Policy S14 of the local plan specifically protects the Parish (and other similar parishes) from development that does not preserve and where possibly enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside…Policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses.		The use of high-grade agricultural land for housing. Open spaces are integrated into the plan but the rural nature of the east side of Cullompton will be lost forever.	Fordmore Farm is seen as a central hub for the Garden Village providing retail and other services. As mentioned above, the current access onto the A373 is poor. I would also like to question the effect on Cullompton shops and services of this 'out of town' development. Have the retailers in Cullompton been asked their views?	I do understand the pressure to provide more accommodation in the Southwest. BUT this should be affordable and include social housing with a firm commitment from any developers. They should be held accountable for promises that are made.
Extra traffic generated by even a small development feeding into the A373 from the M5 to Honiton. This is a very poor, narrow, and bendy road with the pinch point at the Junction 28 M5. Developing the Fordmore complex will compound the problems. Are there plans to have a filter system (like the entrance to Mole Valley Farmers) to reduce congestion as the complex grows?	East Cullompton and Cullompton being regarded as one: The East proposal significantly overshadows the old town in scale. There is nothing in the plan to make them interdependent. The lack of employment will stimulate out-commuting, increase carbon emissions and by its very existence will damage existing air quality, noise and dust.	I am led to believe from various conversations that the main infrastructure, relief road, motorway junction, new flood defences and station alone will cost in excess of £150 million pounds. That ignores upgrade to the A373 which is already struggling. All these and more are necessary even for the 2,500 houses- that is £60,000 extra cost per dwelling- is there no better way for MDDC to add houses to the district? What is the rational for 5,000 houses- I have not seen any. Is it imply to spread this enormous cost out reducing it to £30,000 per house.	There is a huge mental health crisis in this country. This vast development with cramped and a lack of affordable housing (whatever that actually means) and with houses built before schools and health care it is a disaster in the making. People need space.	Page 51 of the SPD includes the statement that 'surrounding villages remain clearly separate from Cullompton in terms of identity and village setting'. Page 39 states the requirement of a 'green buffer with Kentisbeare' as a key finding from the Stage 1 consultation. However the map on Page 6 contradicts this by referring to it as a 'Potential Area of Consideration' which offers no guarantee that the area will be preserved from development.		Increase Biodiversity? Wildlife exists throughout the chosen area, from rabbits, deer, foxes and badgers to bats, owls, buzzards. That ignores the other fauna and flora that inhabit the fields, ditches and hedgerows that has evolved over centuries in harmony with man. Protect natural resources? You cannot protect what you destroy with concrete, tarmac, houses etc.	Other facilities seem likely to follow according to the East Cullompton Masterplan. As well as depleting Cullompton of leisure activities the relocation will affect the nature of nearby rural communities.	
Junction 28 is a major obstacle to the development east of the motorway. Apparently over 20 options are on the table!! NOTHING must happen until the Junction is improved AND the work completed. With the current economic position in the UK guaranteed funding could be hard to find.	And as for thinking of it as part of Cullompton joined together by the River Culm. It is not joined but divided by it, by the railway line and by the motor way that cuts through it. A footbridge or two, the little lane at Old Hill and the A373 are not going to unite the development with the town so acknowledge that and design accordingly.	Our second concern is infrastructure which has also previously been raised through consultation and discussion. This development should be planned and constructed responsibly. No development on this scale should be carried out without substantial infrastructure being delivered first. It is unthinkable to consider a development of this size without addressing this initially – we have many concerns, but in particular we would like to highlight the A373 as a major concern.	Yet again we are being asked our views on the expansion of Cullompton only for you to ignore them. With the relocation of Cullompton Cricket Club the Council has already broken its promise not to build within the parish of Kentisbeare, and that all community hubs should be within a 20 minute walk. The local community no longer trusts you to serve on our behalf. It has been proved time and time again that the Council has no control over the developers, so we all know that more than 1100 houses will be built before any improvements to Junction 28 are carried out and that a net zero loss of hedgerows within the marked area is a load of bull excrement. NO to 5000 houses on the east side of Cullompton.	We have two main concerns; the first of these being the green buffer zone between Horn Road and Dead Lane, which has repeatedly been referred to through consultation and various discussions including via the Parish Council. We respectfully ask that MDDC respect the wishes and concerns of the local community who have identified this area as an area of particular importance to them that should be protected to ensure that it cannot be developed. It should consist of perhaps tree planting and some walkways only.		We remain concerned at the potential for unavoidable damage to biodiversity and local landscape throughout the lifetime of this project.	If building starts at Fordmore before the M5 J28 is sorted and major improvements to the A373 are carried out, there will be terrible bottlenecks and accidents with unthinkable consequences for Kentisbeare which will be a rat run. With homes what about health care and school provision as these are already over subscribed as it is.	
Cullompton Town Centre currently is very deprived and despite best efforts appears to be in decline. The relocation of the Cricket Club from the town is a big mistake as residents will no longer have ease of access to the ground. They will have to travel by road to get to the new site (Kentisbeare Seconds?) – again the A373 will be affected / pollution increased.	To have a soft edge to the development and 'feather' it into open countryside begin that in Cullompton Parish and preserve the agricultural land that runs from the Parish boundary across Horn Road and Dead Lane to the village itself. There is significant wildlife, including deer, rabbits etc and historic biodiversity here that can blend with the new artificial edge of the proposed development.	Further development East of Cullompton requires underpinning by an infrastructure that is in place before any building commences. The current economic problems do not bode well for firm commitments for funding.	Really concerned to see from the recent Master Plan that you have now almost doubled the original footprint for the village and now included within the "potential area of consideration for wider Garden Village and Country Park" our property and other listed buildings not to mention wildlife areas that are of importance. I do not understand how a Council can railroad rules in terms of listed buildings and what assurances do we have in terms of a new build village being built in areas of importance with wildlife and listed buildings?	I would, whilst writing, like to reiterate strongly the view held by a majority in Kentisbeare and by our Parish Council that we do not wish the Kentisbeare Parish boundary to be breached. All development should remain on the Cullompton side of Horn Road, including the 'relocated' sports club.		Climate Emergency – we are in a time of crisis and unprecedented climate emergency – we are hurtling towards a future that if we do not change our ways will mean devastation for our world – how can we allow this to happen to our children and grandchildren – Preventing this and protecting our planet and all its inhabitants must be the very first consideration taken into account for every decision we make as a district, a community and as individuals – It is irresponsible beyond belief not to, and hopefully will soon be illegal too.	I just want the timing done correctly. Facilities and infrastructure first, development later. Fordmore is not a community hub. It is a private money making venture and should not be considered a focus at that end of the development.	

Transport	General Development	Infrastructure	Principle/Questions/Other	Wider Garden Village	Flooding	Env/GI/BI/Landscape	Facilities	Affordable Housing
Currently there is a dire lack of public transport to and from Cullompton for the existing villages along the A373. Are there guarantees that there will be a frequent and regular bus service to support the development of East Cullompton with the Town and proposed railway station. Is there a firm commitment from the bus companies?		I continue to have major concerns about the viability of any large-scale development to the East of Cullompton. These are mainly related to the infrastructure required to support it.	I have lived happily in Kentisbeare for 30 years and it is so important to myself and other people in Kentisbeare to keep our village as it is and not have such a large number of houses built so close to Kentisbeare. I have taught at the school, helped at youth club, led a Sunday school for many years and now am a church and choir member. I dearly hope you will consider so many reasons for not building such a large development. The traffic going towards Cullompton and the motorway is already very heavy and frustrating. In addition flooding is already a real problem and with climate change and large scale building causing a quicker run off it can only get worse.	The Kentisbeare Parish boundary should be recognised and kept. The plans to build 5000 houses wipes out acres of prime agricultural land. Why? The Terminology 'Garden Village' is a contradiction in terms. I have looked up the definition of the word 'Garden'. A piece of ground adjoining a house in which flowers, grass and shrubs may be grown. A village definition is ' A group of houses and associated buildings, larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town, situated in a rural area'. What Mid Devon is wanting to do, is creating A TOWN.		During the recent building of the Persimmon Housing development on Willand Road, I witnessed the sad felling of an ancient oak tree (over 250 years old). Can you give an assurance that trees over 30 years old will be preserved and if not how many trees over 30 years old will be felled to make way for the new development?	Building a sense of community..., make it compact and village like.... 2500 houses is a significant town- a Cullompton for 10 years ago, Although Cullompton High St has struggled the town still boasts several Churches, 7+pubs, many cafes, restaurants and social clubs, 2 Doctors surgeries, 2 chemists, butchers and several convenience stores, Library, sports clubs, 2 supermarkets, schools and nurseries and more Hairdressers than I can count. To create a community you need all these things. They need to be accessible and designed to generate an identity. The plan does not does this- 2 small commercial hubs is poor thought. It is a town you are planning not a village so design accordingly.	
Do not allow the proposed amount of development until this junction on M5 is sorted or a new junction built with the finance guaranteed for same.			Every year costs rise and projects go unfunded-eg Relief road- and the project keeps gets bigger. It seems to have its own life, continually growing and getting further and further out of reach as costs rise. Surely it is time for a major rethink, especially as the country is virtually bankrupt.	I have to say that we are extremely disappointed that the plans now potentially involve developing across the Kentisbeare village boundary up to Dead lane. The consultant that was present repeated that they will only go up to dead lane if they need to and at the end of the day it's only an idea at this stage. Given that MDDC previously reassured villagers that they would not develop past the village boundary this reassurance appears not to be worth the paper that it is written on. My wife and I oppose these latest plans and MDDC should return to the original promise of any development to the east of Cullompton would be kept outside of Kentisbeare Parish and that the green buffer zone be placed to ensure that the village remains a village and no developments should encroach on it.			Please consider placing the school & sports facilities at the heart of the east Cullompton development so that car travel is minimised outside of the development. I whole heartedly support the vision of making this new community sustainable with services but the school needs to be placed further towards Cullompton in the heart of the housing development, perhaps where local shops are planned	
Expecting people to walk or cycle is just not going to happen. Public transport is already unreliable with strikes as long as the unions have a say and always will be, so people will still rely on cars. To say otherwise is ideological at best. Cullompton railway station is a waste of money. Where will people leave cars in order to use to train?			There are still aspects that require a major degree of further attention, to name just two – flooding and infrastructure.	My main concern with the consultation is the new blurred zone of 'potential area for consideration' which directly crosses the parish of Kentisbeare boundary. I feel most residents of Kentisbeare would agree that this proposal threatens our rural way of life. MDDC have previously assured us of a green buffer zone in line with your rural areas policy. I feel this new proposal would contradict this previous assurance. 'all-through school' buildings with sports facilities, in my mind, do not constitute a green buffer zone, as substantial buildings, which are not agricultural will need to be erected. A large scale school will bring huge amounts of traffic, again contravening the very fabric of rural living. This also is not a development that will enhance the character, appearance or biodiversity of Kentisbeare village which is a contradiction to your rural areas policy. Also, this was not in the original adopted plan which again threatens trust between Kentisbeare residents and MDDC.				
The planning document should have a section that summaries the key conditions one of which is the need to complete the Relief Road first. The document and the presentation at Kentisbeare indicated that it was planned to slow the traffic on Honiton Road (A373). This A road is presumably to a greater or lesser extent subject to the rules from the Highways Authority not just MDDC so the options are very restricted. Currently it is quite common to see speeding cars along the road and not unusual to see overtaking taking place. With such flagrant breaking of the legislation you wonder if simple road markings (alligator marks, red road surface, repeater discs) will be heeded. One comment made was that the road appearance/width suggested that it was a fast road. Only physical restraints like "sleeping policeman" or chicanes are likely to work. Cullompton High Street has 20mph limit where the road is narrow but clearly this limit is often ignored.			It is not acceptable to plan developments that require millions of pounds spent on the increased use of motor vehicles. For this proposal to go ahead MDDC are spending £800K purely on a feasibility study to look at possibilities for increased traffic! Future M5 junctions are looking at costing over £100 million pounds! The Cullompton relief road is now being costed at £30K plus! This is not an acceptable use of vast sums of public money in these times of climate emergency. Our country and indeed our county are at breaking point financially – this is irresponsible beyond belief.	Why has the East Cullompton Extension been allowed to cross over into the Parish of Kentisbeare. If the unwanted extension is going to happen it should remain within the Cullompton boundary.				

Transport	General Development	Infrastructure	Principle/Questions/Other	Wider Garden Village	Flooding	Env/GI/BI/Landscape	Facilities	Affordable Housing
A relief road starting just east of 29 Honiton Road and went close behind the houses to get to what was described as a south facing half junction with M5 to allow residents to easily go to Exeter. This relief road has been erased from the plan and the only place on this revision of the plans where such as road can be placed is significantly to the south of the original route. Please consider reinstating the original routing. Mention was made at Kentisbeare of the possibility of a similar relief road but to the north. A detailed traffic survey needs to be done to show if the traffic from the Garden Village will go to Exeter or Taunton.			It is not acceptable to build on flood plains – this becomes even more important as the climate crisis hits. It is not acceptable to build acres of housing estates on agricultural land that is and will be desperately needed to grow crops and graze animals. It is not acceptable to build houses in areas where residents need to use cars to travel to work. It is not acceptable to allow development to be decided and influenced by the profit aspirations of landowners and developers. It has never been acceptable to ignore the needs of existing residents (of all species) and their communities when planning future development. Yet this plan proposed by Mid Devon District Council is based on doing all of the above. Surely Mid Devon District Council have a duty of care to their residents – surely they have a basic and unavoidable responsibility to 'do no harm'.					
Favouring walking and cycling, how do you propose to do that? There is nothing in the plan to stimulate that. It is a human choice how to travel and regrettably the majority will choose vehicles over effort every time unless you make the development traffic free - which you are clearly not			From the very first suggestion of development East of Cullompton the needs and views of the rural residents in the area have been ignored –Policy S14 in the local plan – under the heading Development – promised to 'preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and the biodiversity of the countryside'.. Polices will 'permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses'. – Kentisbeare is particularly named as one of the areas given this protection and assurance. However at the very first point in the process this was ignored – with permission given to Cullompton Cricket Club to be relocated within the parish of Kentisbeare and continues to be ignored with 'potential areas of consideration' reaching well into the heart of the parish – None of this is in the adopted plan and all of it goes against the overriding view of the residents that a Green Buffer area would exist on the Cullompton side of the Parish boundary and that development should be kept outside of the parish.					
The Railway Station would be good, but if the plan (as I was told at the Kentisbeare pop-up) is for a Metro linking Tiverton, Wellington, Cullompton and Exeter every 2 hours it is not going to contribute much to the carbon footprint of Old Cullompton, evolving Cullompton and East Cullompton.			IF – we cannot stop the initial development East of Cullompton – then we can and should demand that you STOP! Stop at the parish boundary between Cullompton and Kentisbeare – respect our community and leave a buffer zone on the Cullompton side of the boundary. Stop breaking your commitment to preserve our community and environment. START respecting our communities, our environment and our children.					
The thought of 5000 houses being built off the A373 is quite frightening. The A373 as we all know, is a very poor 'A' road which should in fact be a 'B'. So why would anybody want to consider building this amount of houses off it. As and when any form of building might take place on the A373, it is in evitable, there will be traffic lights involved. The A373, especially at peak hours gets very clogged up particularly near the M5 junction. With traffic lights on this road, this traffic problem would get very much worse. To avoid the traffic lights, motorists are going to take to the narrow lanes nearby to get to their destinations. It is highly likely that they will drive faster than they should and accidents are inevitable. The whole concept has not been thought through properly by Mid Devon Planning Dept and members of the Council.			I wish to object in the strongest possible terms to the above application relating to the development land for the Culm Garden Village - In particular, on the land that is within Kentisbeare Parish Boundary. You are already utilising over 700 acres of rural land to build the new Culm Garden Village, so the idea of allowing you to allocate a further 170 acres of "all through school" is both against what was promised and undemocratic. Any proposed schools, for the new Culm Village, should be sited within your originally proposed landbank and not merely "sneaking" it into Kentisbeare Parish.					

Transport	General Development	Infrastructure	Principle/Questions/Other	Wider Garden Village	Flooding	Env/GI/BI/Landscape	Facilities	Affordable Housing
Will you (can you) please give assurance to occupants of Greenhouse Gardens, that the road passing through Greenhouse Gardens will NOT be used for access to the building site? Also, that this road should be barred to the contractors. The road is already insufficient for current needs, let alone perhaps 100 additional cars using the road for parking during the day, and perhaps overnight. Access to the building site should be via the road leading directly to the site from the A373, and building work should not even be started until improvement of the A373/J27 of M5 access is improved. If this request is ignored, not only will the brick road leading into Greenhouse Gardens be destroyed through overuse by heavy delivery vehicles, but the safety of children playing outside their homes will become an unsafe area.								

Appendix 1 Summary of landowner/promoter representations

General	Section 1 Introduction	Section 2 Vision	Section 3 Influences	Section 4 Understanding the Place	Section 5 Masterplan Framework	Section 6 Growing East Cullompton	Appendix 1 Design Code
					Mixed use community hub at Fordmore Farm supported. SPD not clear whether residential can be included in community hubs - green box on page 87 refers to retirement services but not clear if this means retirement living. Requirement to either add residential to community hubs or remove private housing area of Fordmore Farm from the community hub (preferred approach).		
					Landowner intends to develop area of community hub north of Honiton Road for commercial/employment use. SPD does not reflect the consented development at Fordmore Farm (21/00349/FULL) (Class E development, agricultural style warehouse type buildings) or align completely with landowner aspirations. Some of the green space might need to be used for community/retail uses in order to provide sufficient community uses to meet the needs of the allocation. Further discussion on what can be provided requested.		
Good document overall. More optioneering could have been included, especially as masterplan deviates from the first consultation draft. However, SPD sufficiently flexible.	Page 7 – clearer if 'profound change' bullet points retitled as 'profound change, evolving public policy and guidance'.	'Village scale' must cognisant of scale and function and be clear that this is a larger village – functional offering must support growing population.		Section 4.4 Natural capital. Findings from flood modelling can be used when planning the wider concept area – boundaries of built zones have scope to change.	Section 5.1 Page 84 – land outside allocation to east of Fordmore shown on map (and all section 5 plans) – error?	Section 6.1 Useful context but is rightly heavily caveated as being part of a separate statutory process. The text caveats the plans as one way of growing East Cullompton, but the text appears to identify some emerging preferred outcomes.	A core part of the proposed strategic design code is a "site wide framework plan to provide the 'regulating plan' to structure the design code". A site-wide 'regulating' status would be valid if the site had already been subject to a suite of outline applications, and where suites of parameter plans were approved.
	SPD should list background reports that it relies on.	20mph requirement goes beyond a principle and should refer to the aim/objective of safer streets. Key roads may need to be higher speeds – to be proven at application stage that principle is met.		Section 4.6 Heritage Grade I listed Wood Barton should be shown as a significant listed building.	Note that accompanies the identification of 72ha for housing in the SPD cross refers to the assumption that 7ha of this is assumed to be released by the grounding of the 132KV transmission lines. 16ha affected by the 440kv powerlines does not have a note to accompany this figure - could usefully explain that this area enables another 16ha of green infrastructure. Reasonable to advise that some commercial could come forward in this space. Constrained land to the south of the powerlines is not as much as has been assumed, and that there are developable areas beyond the 30m buffer and the hedge line. Calculations show that only 160 homes might be released. Flexibility should be retained (viability).	The future of the Horn Road and Dead Lane area should still be an open consideration. There remain 4 fields south of the consented cricket club that could be developed for housing whilst maintaining a more than adequate visual and perceptual buffer for Kentisbeare. It may be the case, as indicated on the plans, that the fields immediately east of Horn Road have secondary school or sports hub potential. However, it is unreasonable to suggest that the only other future of this land is as 'yet more' country park land, if it is not needed/selected for a secondary school or sports hub.	It appears that there are two objectives; 1. To ensure that the big picture framework masterplanning exercise for the allocation is suitability shaped and that there will be several outline applications presented over a number of years. 2. To ensure that detailed design (post outline application design) for reserved matters approval achieves a minimum consistent quality standard, with the 'bar' at a high level. We think the SPD already achieves the first objective. SPDs can go further and that introduce a strategic level of coding with the SPD (better described as strong/firm guidance).
				Section 4.7 Utilities Moving power lines is at the landowners' expense. Suggest wording: "The land over which the lines pass within the site benefits from 'lift and shift' clause over the route easement. This enables the landowner (at their cost) to alter the path of the power lines if an alternative route is available". Aspiration of the SPD to ground the 132KV lines - these may remain in situ. The SPD might consider an easement for this eventuality (a Plan B), based on examples elsewhere.	Page 82 (not 84) 8ha shown for community hubs – should exclude green space which should be greyed out on land budget plan. GI might increase as a consequence. Fordmore north and south would decrease to 2ha in tune with local plan requirement for local centre. Page 82 shows existing residential land excluded from community hubs, page 84 includes. Unless land explicitly identified as being available it should not be included.	Land promoter supports the achievement of country park land. It is a fundamental objective of an expanded Cullompton, but the spatial coverage of park land seems to keep growing. The Council must consider what quantum is actually justifiable in planning policy. The masterplan may benefit from the need to achieve biodiversity net gain credits as a driver to justify greater levels of country park land.	Land promoter is willing to scope out a potential approach with the Council that can be shown to genuinely add meaningful benefit to the preparation and determination of outline applications (beyond what is already in the SPD). If strategic coding is 'adopted/approved' before applications are approved, we suggest that the word 'regulatory or regulating' is not used for any of the structuring plans within that material. The SPD already moves to drive forward a common approach, but there 'may' be room for some further targeted material to guide outline applications.
				Sections 4.9 & 4.10 Listed buildings – should refer to 'indicative risk of moderate or high harm' – evidence refers only to a risk.	Section 5.2 Outer hubs not needed to meet local plan target for local centre but could help meet other local plan commercial use targets.	An emerging educational strategy is referenced that refers to an all-through school and two other primary school locations, one of which will be paired with a secondary school. At this stage all reasonable options need to be kept on the table.	Placemaking Framework Plan on page 115 of the SPD. This identifies blueways, blueway crossing points, blueway edges, primary streets, the eastern loop, powerline edges and Honiton Road. Perhaps these present the most useful focus for pre-application strategic coding (or further guidance). The mixed-use hubs need no more than what is already in the SPD is needed to shape the approach in these areas before outline approval. Most of Fordmore Farm is already permitted/ built/under construction.

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				Additional zoomed in plans should be presented to show only the allocation area.	Justification for school site not strong – between road and farmyard. Other options could be included – local plan allows for 2 sites.	Elsewhere in the SPD a northern active travel link across the M5 is caveated as being something that can be considered should there be a northern vehicular junction. The same caveat might usefully appear in this section.	SPD provides flexibility for alternative activity zones. SPD could acknowledge any options presented through consultation phase. Given that the SPD is not a fixed plan, scope for strategic 'coding' and outline application work to run in parallel. Pre-application non regulatory coding 'type' guidance could present options so as not to pre-empt final development management decisions.
					Commercial area in right place, strong east-west cycle route good. Less understood is primary road through commercial area (not attractive gateway). Better to skirt western edge of residential land. Not clear how amount of land to meet 32ksqm employment floorspace has been calculated. Light industrial would yield 22,750-26,000 sqm. 'E' uses may increase the density. Useful for background evidence of the SPD to document the assumptions used to justify the size of the commercial area. Local Plan - 1ha of employment land per 500 occupations (just over 5ha). How is this reconciled with the 6.5ha figure in the SPD?	The character areas plan identifies a water meadows character area. The SFRA Q1000 model results identify that EA flood maps are coarse and challengeable. It may be the case that when new flood risk data is applied to masterplanning the garden village, the build zones in the character areas are capable of expansion, drawing them closer together and generating a tighter character area and more housing. There may be other drivers (ecological) but that is another layer of consideration based on choices of where to create BNG credits and where and how much country park land is delivered.	Would like more detail on the overall process that involves any stepped approach to coding. See a role for any such coding to become formalised once land has achieved outline approval. Some adjustment may be needed to reflect approved parameter plans. We see this taking place as part of further, more detailed coding for those areas that have achieved outline approval.
					Section 5.3 Eastern loop better referred to as outer loop (not all east). Text should reference country park is not a local plan requirement. Green box oversteps in referring to BNG being delivered adjacent to boundary and must achieve landscape enhancement. Section 5.4 Welcome apparent recognition, in the green box, that a northern active travel route across the M5 is likely to only be something that is considered where it could be delivered with a new northern junction. Green box on page 109 references junction '30' rather than '28'.		There are some strategic design issues where coding (strategic or otherwise) will not be the tool that delivers a coherent masterplanning approach. The IDP processes have a role to play and will involve strategic engineering strategies that go beyond what coding can achieve. Specific drainage strategies for application areas have to demonstrate that these can operate within a wider system. The location and capacity of early phase junctions are only likely to be deemed suitable if they are capable of enabling the overall superstructure and later phases of the allocation to come forward. Likewise, the garden village will at least be a material consideration when decisions are made.
					The street hierarchy plan on page 108 is indicative but introduces yellow dashed lines to indicate potential secondary streets. Lack of any reference to the use of Saunders Way as part of the vehicular mobility strategy. The road should connect into the main street of East Cullompton and that this should be referenced as an option in the SPD. Active Travel can be provided as part of a strategy that enables vehicular connectivity.		
					SPD is to rely on a modified Honiton Road as the long term primary east-west route. Relying on Honiton Road and a rural community hub as the main centre for 2,500 and up to 5,000 homes is a fundamental big picture urban design strategy. A more northerly diversion of the Honiton Road for east-west movement linked to a more 'street based', urban local centre typology has received little visible exploration. Need to be assured that the junction solutions that are proposed on the key east-west route sufficient to serve more than just the first phases of development.		
					Section 5.5 The requirement for front gardens and bike storage within the green box on page 11 overly prescriptive. Storage can be provided in back gardens and not all houses need a front garden. Reference in the parking section of the green box to street design out of place. Is 'unmistakable' over the top? This should be left to the detailed design stage.		

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					Section 5.6 (page 122) advises that "a strategic design code for the whole allocation site [or strategically important parts of the site] be prepared prior to detailed planning applications. The Planning and Design Process Flow Diagram identifies that detailed design follows the approval of outline applications (OPAs) and that it requires compliance with the SPD, OPA principles design coding. On this basis, the SPD identifies that the 'detailed design' stage is a process that follows the approval of parameter plans at outline stage.		
					A single strategic site could generate several outline applications. An outline approval could generate several reserved matters applications from different applicants. Regulating codes can bridge a gap between approved EIA parameter plans and the detailed design of each sub-area that has achieved outline approval. It is this detailed design which the strategic design code seeks to shape. Such coding would be secured through the use of a planning condition. However, the process diagram places a site-specific strategic coding stage before the approval of outline applications, and their parameter plans. The SPD as a whole is therefore suggestive of a multi-stage coding process. Does the reader rely on the words or the diagram?		
					The Planning and Design Process Diagram presents the achievement of an agreed phasing and delivery plan before planning applications are submitted. Whilst we do not have an issue with such a document, the only valid sign-off process for 'agreement' is determination of the planning application. In circumstances where there is to be a single application, or a suite of applications at the same time, covering the whole allocation, the phasing and delivery strategy would need to be presented in full. However, a phased planning application strategy, across several years, is likely and this will lead to various levels of detail being available/presentable for various parts of the site at different times. It would not be reasonable to refuse an early phase application on the basis that a full IDP has not been presented for later phases. The test should be whether the phase applied for is policy compliant in delivering the infrastructure and place-making that is required, and that it does not prevent or inhibit later phases from doing the same.		
					We envisage an initial strategy that is site-wide but perhaps to various degrees of resolution. Later phases may not be able to completely pin down the approach, and indeed there may be options or implications from the selected solution to Junction 28 of the M5. It may also be the case that agreement on 'who goes first' is not reached between the prospective early phase developers prior to applications being submitted. The commercial reality is that there is limited immediate term junction capacity and there may be a commercial inability for one developer to simply yield that capacity to another.		
					Page 133 refers to a strategic SUDS system. The schedule refers to a high-level drainage strategy having already been developed. It is not known whether spatial aspects of SUDS strategy within the masterplan has any justification behind it, regarding the locations of the basins that are shown, nor to what extent the strategy is based on land control and phasing. The Culm Garden Village website identifies that a strategic flood risk assessment is forthcoming. It will be important to understand the degree of work that has already been undertaken. The schedule refers to the strategic design coding process to explore these matters. This not the right place to consider these matters, and a discrete engineering assessment is needed based on the land use budget of the SPD and emerging planning application processes.		

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	Section 1.1 Table 6 of the Local Plan sets out a housing trajectory for the district. The Local Plan relies upon housing completions starting in 2023/2024 (50 homes). It is late 2022, and this SPD has yet to be finalised/adopted, and no planning permissions have been granted, it is evident that first housing completions will not realistically take place in 2023/24. None of the provisions of the SPD should unnecessarily delay development, are proportionate, and have appropriate regard to land ownerships.	Section 2.1 No reference Policy CU11 (East Cullompton Carbon Reduction and Air Quality). It gives the appearance that it is creating new policy by way of an SPD. Should be reference to Policy CU11 in this section.	Section 3.2 Seems to suggest that a 'Carbon Reduction and Low Emission Strategy' for the whole allocation area is required. Not identified in the 'Planning and Design Process Diagram' . Unclear as to the intention / expectations in this regard. Is a site-wide strategy produced by the Council proposed or are individual strategies to be produced by developers to demonstrate compliance with Policy CU11? The former will unnecessarily delay development whereby the latter will ensure compliance with Policy CU11 whilst allowing development to come forward (consistent with the broad phasing identified later in the SPD). The SPD would benefit from clarity in this regard.	Section 4.9 The 'Combined Constraints Plan' on page 76 combines the constraints identified in the SPD. It shows lack of constraints in the south-western part of the allocation. This supports the indication in the SPD that this area should form part of a first phase of development. It also shows that this area can be delivered as a more discrete part of the wider allocation, without impacting upon or being complicated by some of the issues that affect some other parts of the wider allocation.	Section 5.1 Given the numerous land ownerships within the masterplan area, and the fact that development will come forward in phases through separate planning applications, support the requirement for a 'Compliance Statement'. It is important to have regard to the type of application being submitted (outline or detailed), and the scale of development proposed.		
	Section 1.2 Support the approach, which seeks to ensure that the masterplan concept is designed to work with the variety of potential solutions currently being considered. Support the clarity provided to the effect that any references within the SPD to the wider potential 'Culm Garden Village' are commentary only.		Section 3.5 Whilst there is a key role for the Local Plan and this SPD in shaping the development, the need for developers to rely upon one another should be reduced as far as is possible, consistent with delivering high quality development. Such an approach will avoid unnecessary commercial complications that could delay / prevent delivery.	Section 4.10 The 'Opportunities Plan' on page 78 includes a variety of numbered elements which are explained in the text of page 79. However, it also includes various graphical symbols which do not seem to be explained. Suggest a key is added such that the opportunities it identifies can be properly understood.	Section 5.2 We support the 'East Cullompton Activity Framework' plan on page 84. The key for this plan does not identify what is meant specifically by the thicker and thinner black lines. They seem to represent main and potential secondary roads but this is not clear – amending the key would be helpful.		
	Section 1.3 In the 'Planning and Design Process Flow Diagram', both the 'Delivery and Phasing Plan' and the 'Strategic Design Code' are shown as being produced prior to any outline planning applications. We question the extent to which a site-wide Strategic Design Code needs to be in place prior to any outline permissions within the area being granted – given that the majority of any 'coding' will presumably relate to matters more appropriately addressed at reserved matters stage (materials etc…). There are also likely to be parts of the masterplan concept that are more strategic and more sensitive (and therefore more in need of design-coding) whilst other parts will be less so. The delivery of housing in these less sensitive / less strategic parts of the allocation area should not be delayed unnecessarily by the need for a design code for the whole of the allocation area.				School site page 89 Support the provision of a new school consistent with Policy CU10 of the adopted Local Plan. We note the reference (from Policy CU12 of the Local Plan) to seeking to ensure that serviced land for this school is provided prior to the first occupation. A literal application of Policy CU12 would serve only to unnecessarily complicate and delay development. Whilst the land for the school forms part of the identified Phases 1 and 2 of development on the plan at page 124 of the SPD, it is in a different ownership to other elements of Phases 1 and 2. It would not be appropriate, necessary or desirable to delay residential development elsewhere within Phases 1 and 2 pending a transfer of land for a school from another landowner to the Council, and could also create the potential for commercial issues between landowners which may serve only to undermine the early delivery of development. Accordingly, whilst this SPD cannot change adopted Local Plan policy, we consider that the SPD should not repeat this requirement from the Local Plan, and that the application of Policy CU12 in due course should be done carefully as development proposals emerge within the wider allocation area.		

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	An outline application for a limited number of new homes within the area identified as Phase 1 of the East Cullompton development may not require the full 'Phasing and Delivery Plan' to be in place prior to an outline permission being granted. The SPD should clarify that the flow chart identifies the general theoretical / strategic approach, but that the way in which development is delivered will also need to have regard to practical issues and ensure that any strategic matters such as a design code / delivery plan) are proportionate.				Powerlines (p93) We do not object to the reference in the SPD to exploring the potential to underground the overhead pylons. However, such works would also be extremely costly. A final decision in this regard should be made at a later stage when there is greater clarity on the costs and benefits.		
					Community Greens (p102) There is no key for the plan. We assume that the potential Greens are denoted by the dark green shading on the plan but this is not clear (the same applies for the lighter green shading which we assume is showing general green infrastructure). The size of these greens should be considered as part of future planning applications to ensure that they fulfil their identified functions but do not utilise land that may be more efficiently put to other uses.		
					Biodiversity Net Gain (p105) Agree with the requirement for developers to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity. We note that the SPD identifies that the masterplan framework as a whole may raise questions as to its ability to deliver a biodiversity net gain within its boundaries. It should be noted that some areas of the allocation offer significant potential to secure biodiversity net gain. We are unclear why the SPD requires that such offsite solutions should be 'adjacent to the East Cullompton allocation boundary'. We are not aware that this is a requirement of any national or local level policy approach and we do not consider that it is necessary or appropriate to be so prescriptive.		
					Section 5.4 – Mobility Mobility hubs are not defined on this plan or in this part of the SPD (they are addressed later in the document). Beneficial to clarify and cross-reference as appropriate.		
					Street Hierarchy (p110) The plan does not include a key and accordingly, it is not clear what is meant by the various lines and arrows. A new road is proposed to run south (and then west) from Honiton Road, which would provide access to the proposed land parcels south of Honiton Road and south of the Greenhouse Gardens development. We do not object to this in principle but important to recognise that the masterplan is strategic in nature and that the Council does not intend this to define the precise location and extent of elements of the plan, which will instead be defined through planning outline and detailed applications. For example, it may be that more detailed work demonstrates that this access from Honiton Road is or can be taken from a different location.		
					Question the rationale (from both an urban design and cost perspective) of having this proposed access road running adjacent to the southern edge of these development parcels. Advantageous for this to be a development road. As this is effectively a dead end for vehicles, this change would not undermine any other aspect of the wider masterplan concept in terms of street hierarchy. Furthermore, it will allow the creation of a street running through these development parcels, whilst also reduce the relative infrastructure costs.		

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					Section 5.6 Matters of delivery and phasing are the most crucial considerations. The masterplan must have regard not just to design aspirations but also the reality on the ground given the aspirations / requirements of the various landowners / developers within the masterplan area. Failure to do so will mean that the masterplan is ultimately not delivered (or not delivered in a timely way).		
					The introductory paragraph should stress that phasing and delivery considerations will only seek to bind the various landowners together to the extent that it is necessary do so in order to deliver infrastructure in a fair and timely way. The aspiration should be to ensure the delivery of development on a landowner by landowner basis, with communal elements requiring joint working / funding reduced to a minimum. Clearly, some elements need to be considered holistically but an approach to keep this to a minimum will simplify the development process.		
					We agree that the proposed Phasing and Delivery Plan is going to be a crucial document and should have regard to the need to achieve the build out rates needed to deliver the site allocation in the Local Plan.		
					Within the draft Masterplan document the site identified as a Commercial Area includes an allowance for a Care Home, a Retirement Complex, appropriately scaled retail uses, offices, a Hotel and leisure uses. An overlapping of these uses would provide for circa 32,000 sqm of development floorspace. Such flexibility in respect of land uses is welcomed. Support for the details set out within the draft Masterplan document as they relate to this land ownership. Consideration be given to including an element of residential use within this area which could include an element of live / work units together with specific reference to stand alone employment space.		
						Support the aspirations for a Country Park having the potential to provide an 'outstanding asset' for both existing and future residents. However, it will require collaborative working with developers to ensure its delivery. Ensuring that it is delivered at an early stage so that it is available as occupations progress and the population of the town increases, is an imperative.	
						The realities of delivery and the release of the necessary land necessitate a quantum of accompanying development. An allocation of circa 250 units on part of the land area that is identified as a potential Country Park is likely to be a minimum prerequisite for the delivery. Growen Estates object to the Masterplan Framework in its current iteration since it since fails to reflect the prerequisites for delivery of a substantial community asset. They would be pleased to work with the Council to agree an alternative approach incorporating a quantum of housing that will enable the delivery of the Country Park at an early stage.	

General	Section 1 Introduction	Section 2 Vision	Section 3 Influences	Section 4 Understanding the Place	Section 5 Masterplan Framework	Section 6 Growing East Cullompton	Appendix 1 Design Code
The SPD is overall welcomed as a critical component of delivering the allocation, providing clarity for developers and local communities. Landowner wishes to see the SPD advanced and set out a range of suggestions within these representations as to how the role of the SPD can be further clarified and strengthened to deliver the local plan objectives for the allocation, with a focus on facilitating the phased delivery of the allocation.	The work on low/zero carbon is identified as in parallel, and therefore presents uncertainty on application and given the change in standard tying back to the policy requirements of CU5. Clarification has been sought from the Council on interpretation of this. Request for all background evidence and inputs to be fully listed and published to aid in interpretation of the SPD.	While supported in principle the SPD would benefit from tempering this with an acknowledgment of the site's location adjacent to the M5 and proposals for a new railway station that would inherently be reliant on out-commuting to be viable. It is noted that the fundamentals of junction capacity have been a consideration from inception. The framing of the motorway, railway and river as 'perceived' as an alternative interpretation to clear 'real' barriers is unhelpful.	The balance of priorities within the SPD should reflect that bus provision is a policy requirement.	Within the earlier phases of development this will inherently be linked with the need to address the motorway junction capacity at J28 of the M5 arising from the allocation, with this currently forming the most direct route to Cullompton from the allocation for active travel users. It is therefore likely unfeasible to segregate active travel connectivity from motorway capacity discussions. Requiring delivery of active travel as a 'priority' with respect to phasing release of development across the allocation will imperil early release of phases of the allocation.	The clarity on the flexibility of the masterplan as an image is welcomed. It is agreed that the nature of such allocations/developments require evolution in response to detailed matters that only arise through the course of applications. It is noted that this approach has very limited reproduction elsewhere, which in the context of the wider ambitions being set may lead to competing interpretations/expectations from those involved with the allocation process. The text however goes on to then use this flexibility to seemingly justify the more regulatory role of the 'green box' text as 'requirements'. As set out above these would benefit from either greater flexibility or a two tier structure for broader 'objectives/aims' and more tightly defined 'requirements'.	While this does not have allocated status within the Local Plan, it does have endorsement through the made Neighbourhood Plan. The natural evolution of the SPD to the wider Culm Garden Village extent is therefore a critical component of future proofing the SPD. We would re-emphasise the stated position earlier with regard to sports provision, with the Culm Garden Village expanded masterplan furthering the distribution of such facilities. The extension of this and transition into wider green infrastructure, while logical amongst the established woodland to the south east of the Danescroft parcel, at the extent shown leads to not well resolved development parcels, which will be at risk of isolation with limited ability to connect into the wider development.	It is considered that the approach to the SWDC is not well realised, lacking in clarity and purpose, likely duplicating other actions necessary in realising the delivery of the allocation. There is no policy obligation under the adopted policies for such a document. The request would on its surface not be defensible as part of any planning application process. It is not clear when such a document would be required, with the suggestion that this be before an outline application is made but with no means to refuse to validate and assess an application without such a document, and the flow diagram allowing multiple interpretations. There is no clarity on how such a collaborative document should be prepared. There is no clarity on how such a document would be engaged with by key contributors.
Highlights the need for the SPD to focus on facilitating delivery to ensure one of the core objectives of the local plan to deliver on future housing ambitions is met.	Details for railway station and motorway junction solutions to be resolved, with modelling work to be completed that will clarify road capacity. This presents uncertainty in delivery of the SPD, resulting in a need for flexibility in approaches.	It is considered that the flow from vision through to requirements is not fully realised. The structure would also benefit from either a softening of the framing of the green boxes as 'requirements' to 'objectives/aims' or a two-tier format, setting out broader 'objectives/aims' from the more detailed 'requirements'. It is apparent that much of these 'requirements' will be subject to detailed design work taking account of competing inputs, including from statutory consultees, and it remains unclear how much input these consultees have had at this stage. This is evidenced for example in the commentary above on the desire for fords. The SPD also makes clear in section 3.7 that much work is being run in parallel making some of the 'requirements' lacking in certainty at this stage and emphasising the need for flexibility. The SPD would benefit from a clear mechanism/format to reflect the uncertainties and flexibility needed to respond to such areas.	No objection is held to the principle of encouraging accessibility and the benefits of 20-minutes places are well recognised. The 20-Minute Place is supported as an objective. The SPD would benefit from clearly framing the interpretation of the 20-Minute Place. The provision of services within the East Cullompton allocation is to be defined by the infrastructure requirements set by policy and statutory consultees. This will likely limit the ability for true self-containment within the 20-Minute Place approach.		Interaction between Commercial Areas and Mixed use Community hub is not clear with reference that these have overlapping uses. It is unclear whether these built forms include curtilage areas, such as parking. The total land budget from these inputs does not meet 160ha.	It is considered that the distribution of development would benefit from further housing close by the principle mixed-use community hub of the allocation that will serve to reinforce the demand and use of these facilities encouraging self-containment through the 20-Minute Place principles.	The interchanging of the framing as a SWDC or Strategic Design Code, with a specific direction to either the whole site or strategically important parts is confused. With regards to the suggested content it is considered that much of this will be addressed in other areas of work associated with applications or the allocation. For example, the SPD presents key principles and a site wide masterplan framework, which the Appendix 1 content effectively reproduces. This inherently infers that the SWDC acts as either an opportunity to evolve the masterplan SPD, in which case this should be made clear, or runs the risk of competing with it. While the SWDC motive may be to encourage settlement of some of these cross-cutting elements to speed application processing, the previous commentary on procedural risks associated with this delaying initial phased release of the allocation and in so doing delaying progression of the allocation as a whole are real and likely risks. Overall, it is felt that the envisaged content should be directed either to that within the SPD, as part of outline application submissions, or to Area Design Codes linked to individual parcels that could evolve from outline permissions that could be secured prior to reserved matters as is common on strategic allocations.
It is considered that the SPD should not set out defined phasing areas given the relative uncertainties surrounding the parallel work and this should be informed by the SPD text and advanced through the PDP process. The PDP should not be predicated on a comprehensive approach before a single outline application to enable phased delivery. The representations set out an alternative approach that addresses the PDP as a process with multiple stages that will evolve to reflect the phased released of the allocation under the parallel work.	The text should acknowledge the close proximity of job opportunities, highway improvements and railway station proposals along with the proposed growth as a response to the existing degree of out-commuting and lack of selfcontainment, as set out in discussion of the 20-Minute Place principles.		The Carbon Neutral 2030 ambitions are recognised. This principle is expanded upon in section 3.2 of the SPD. The policy obligation within the adopted plan Policy CU11 is to "minimise the overall carbon footprint of the development". A carbon neutral scheme is therefore not required by policy and it recognised that the framing is of a requirement to 'minimise carbon' with the processes set out supporting application of this policy requirement.		It is noted that the indicative sketch of community uses omits the consented employment units at Newland Farm. The open space/community hub uses are unclear with play, orchard and woodland/ecology/blue infrastructure areas south east of Newland Farm all within the defined mixed use community hub and arguably duplicating the role of the 'community green' further south-east within the masterplan. While the flexible nature of the masterplan is acknowledged and welcomed the deviation between such imagery and that proposed raises confusion on expectations/ambitions for this space. The image also indicates the segregation of the defined Community Green from the mixed use hub than its integration. Refer to previous commentary on this matter about existing nature of the Newlands Farm complex/consented expansion. Inclusive mobility needs require disabled parking close to facilities. Presume this is allowed for within framing as 'main parking'.		

General	Section 1 Introduction	Section 2 Vision	Section 3 Influences	Section 4 Understanding the Place	Section 5 Masterplan Framework	Section 6 Growing East Cullompton	Appendix 1 Design Code
Beyond the phasing/delivery implications, the policy rationale and duplication with other considerations/ processes are such that the approach to the Site Wide Design Code is challenged. Landowner encourages that the SPD and outline applications can facilitate much of the deliverable ambitions set out for this document, with design codes secured under outline planning permissions.					Further opportunities for incorporating mixed use will be explored. Framing as 'opportunities' reinforces proposal for two tier structure to green box text. These 'opportunities' will be framed by competing interests, such as vegetation retention of hedgerow and woodland adjacent to Honiton Road. Preference for "co-located or close by" to provide flexibility on delivery for retirement, healthcare and aged services cluster.		
					Feedback from the County Education Authority presents no objection to a location north of, but close to, Honiton Road. A preferable alternative for the school location is suggested based on fulfilling the SPD objectives.		
					Flexibility should be afforded to the suggestion of residential densities towards the edges of the community relating to the future Culm Garden Village expansion of the allocation.		
					Inclusion of Blueways within amenity green space would benefit from clarifying if any constraints on this (e.g. flood risk zone) and where overlap with other areas of strategic green infrastructure apply. The sketch of the community hub shows orchards rather than allotments. This infers that allotments could extent to other edible landscapes and clarity is sought in this regard. The scope and format of 'teenage facilities' is not defined. Does this include MUGA, skate park, etc.		
					The role of the Eastern Loop route to the masterplan vision appears poorly realised. This would act principally as a leisure route providing indirect routes in place of active travel desire lines. The interaction with the countryside would be inherently limited by the predominant definition of the allocation edged by hedgerow boundaries. The Danescroft interest extends just short of the eastern extent of the allocation north of Honition Road, and excludes the land immediately south of Honiton Road. This will likely imperil delivery with early phases connecting across the northern and southern Danescroft parcel. Future connectivity can be catered for in this circumstance.		
					Biodiversity Net Gain compliance is prescribed by the Environment Act 2021 and subsequent regulations. Compliance with this cannot be prescribed to adjacent land only as a result.		
					Para 3.102 of the Local Plan states "The Council recognises that the high infrastructure costs of this site will not solely be funded by the development. As has been the case on other strategic sized sites, the Council will work with its partners and the development industry to secure external funding to ensure the delivery of the necessary infrastructure." This text should be reflected in the SPD to prevent false expectations of full funding.		
					The approach to the assessment of traffic impact as described in the SPD is subject to agreement from National Highways and the Highway Authority. Unclear whether this text has been agreed to by these key consultees to ensure a safe and functional highway network.		
					Reference to central, southern and northern active travel crossing of the M5, but with only 2 shown and 'potential' future crossing to north part of CGV. Scope of provision of typical active travel sections will be subject to detailed considerations of LTN1/20 and capacity for delivery within adopted highway width and balancing vegetation retention to areas such as Honiton Road. Design of primary street network for first phase as shown in the SPD to M5 improvements is not applicable, given this presumes retained use of Honiton Road.		

General	Section 1 Introduction	Section 2 Vision	Section 3 Influences	Section 4 Understanding the Place	Section 5 Masterplan Framework	Section 6 Growing East Cullompton	Appendix 1 Design Code
					Annotation shows 'mobility hub' within a building. This does not appear to correlate with wider description of facilities.		
					The approach to build on the Newland Farm complex is endorsed. From project inception this was identified as a logical approach given its range of uses, future consented expansion plans that would further diversify the complex's offer and its location centrally within what would be the logical early phase(s) of the allocation. Comments set out an alternative approach to the community green location as well as concerns about the response to distribute sports provision across the allocation and the focus on fords as part of the emphasis on water.		
					It is highly likely that the combination of the Town Centre Relief Road, Junction 28 improvements, active travel connections and new railway station will require external funding sources in addition to development contributions to ensure a viable development across the allocation, be this with regard to forward funding for phased release or in totality. These are fundamental components to delivery of the scheme and it is not apparent that considerations has been given to how these may come forward with development to ensure a deliverable allocation.		
					Linked to this, and as has been set out earlier, is considered that flexibility in timing of delivery of active travel connections across the M5 corridor is crucial given the opportunity for limited release before M5 junction improvements (with the capacity yet to be defined) combined with the need for these junction improvements to facilitate active travel connection across the M5. While clearly the current arrangement is not ideal for pedestrian and cyclists, given the distances involved opportunities for further emphasis on public transport connectivity, particularly for earlier phases, should be facilitated to enable phased release.		
					There are a number of relevant considerations related to setting out a co-ordinated design scheme is sought for Honiton Road to secure this as a 'street'/'place' and acknowledgement of the variety of inputs is encouraged and proactive working with developers to secure an optimal outcome to these various interests. The focus on a range of car parking solutions is welcomed, but the emphasis should place less emphasis on 'strategic provision' for parking as a preferred strategy to enable flexibility in approach to be informed by the Highway Authority as applications progress and the delivery of electric vehicle charging.		
					While Landowner is broadly supportive of the need for such a document, it is considered that a fully realised Site Wide PDP before any outline applications be advanced is unrealistic and would serve to counter one of its ambitions to "Achieve the build-out rates needed to deliver the site allocation in the Local Plan". Danescroft therefore envisage the PDP as a focused process that will set out a multi-stage approach. This reflects the intention for the PDP to be annually reviewed and have stewardship. This would be based on identifying all infrastructure requirements across the allocation as a whole, before elaborating on these for the initial phases limited by the M5 junction capacity.		
					The M5 junction capacity and associated works to overcome this constraint are likely to prove a key milestone in the delivery of the allocation. So much so that a PDP that determines detailed wider infrastructure delivery before any outline application can be advanced would inherently delay all development within the allocation until this core and complex consideration is essentially fully resolved. It is considered that a detailed phasing proposition at this stage is pre-determinative of key inputs and considerations and is best directed through the surrounding text and the PDP process.		

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Appendix 1 Table of interactive map consultation responses

Transport	General Development	Questions/Other	Flooding	GI/BI/Landscape	Facilities	Affordable Housing
We have all the houses being built but no mention of a relief road for Cullompton town , it only takes one vehicle to stop in the town and within minutes you have a standstill, this still needs to be addressed asap	What about allowing these houses. That's more than 2000 houses in Cullompton. No justification for allowing another green field site to be bricked over	Having selected the tag to read the comment I am unable to select the "like button". No wonder there are no "likes" for any of the comments - smacks of a stacked deck!!! Side note: I can select the other buttons in the bottom row (for example Facebook)	Isn't this area subject to flooding?	Would be great to allocate some land for allotments that people could use to grow their own fruit and veg locally to reduce the amount of miles our food travels and to become more self sustainable. There are limited existing allotments with lengthy waiting lists and not all of lush have the garden space needed to have a veg patch	Cullompton secondary school has struggled for years with the space it has left to expand. We barely had room for all our years when I was there over 15 years ago. Could the secondary school be relocated to this site with new facilities that can accommodate the growing student population?	I saw in the FAQs that there is a requirement that at least 28% of the new homes built must be affordable, 28% is a pathetically small proportion of the new homes to be allocated to affordable housing, I hope that this can be increased in the final plan. Also will this affordable housing be shared ownership only? What will the fees be? A lot of the time shared ownership is just as unaffordable due to the extra monthly costs of rent, ground and service charges. Will this affordable housing be ring-fenced for local buyers, with a connection to the area?
5 LIKES	5 LIKES	1 LIKE	2 LIKES	0 LIKES	0 LIKES	1 LIKE
Not just one vehicle to stop but one to be parked there all day. Because traffic can pass in the other carriageway there is no obstruction according to the Police	Developments as big as this will only be successful long term if the infrastructure is properly designed and executed. Main areas where cost is not happily accepted by the developers are drainage, sewage and flood prevention. It is important that these aspects are properly sized, even oversized, based on the prediction of further expansion. Do not see and real assurance that this will be the case.	What is this? Is the plan to demolish the existing industrial estate to make a new road?	Are these reservoirs or admitting you know the area will flood? Have you reached out to southwest water to discuss future water supply for these vast developments? Considering most our local reservoirs are still at 20% shouldn't we be focusing on reducing the strain on our water resources until a planned action has been implemented?	At first glance there seems to be a few broad green spaces / corridors reserved within the Masterplan map. However, I am curious about why broad corridors are missing / weak in other areas e.g. southern end. Please seek to improve. I wonder how the layout was informed by ecological evidence and recommendations - plus, on the other hand the (emerging) Nature Recovery Strategy would help inform opportunities for habitat enhancement. Stakeholders need to understand this aspect. Also there is an argument to optimise NOW because the nature gains can't be put back in at a later stage. Bear in mind the baseline landscape was perhaps not ideal - so there are potentially opportunities not identified (some species/groups and habitats would not be found in the surveys).	East Cullompton needs some food shops. Suggest a large supermarket goes in this location, Asda or Morrisons, also East Cullompton needs a new food pub for the very large community. Pub should be built in early stages of construction, so should supermarket. East Cullompton also needs other retail, eg, Halfords, Screwfix, Homebase, Shoe Fare, Currys, Superdrug, The Works or WH Smith stationers. If there is no retail in East Cullompton it will just turn into a commuter village and everyone will get in their cars and drive to Taunton or Exeter. So the point of the GV being a cycle friendly zone will be lost. Cullompton High street is very small and all the shop units are very small, so big new retail will not detract from High Street but make East Cullompton a destination point.	Will any of this new housing actually be affordable for local people like myself? All of the recent new developments created in and around Cullompton have focused on "luxury" 3,4 and 5 bed homes that are vastly more expensive than the average budget of local people. These new homes seem to be intended to house people from outside the local area, putting more pressure on our already over stretched local services and infrastructure. Please focus on providing the housing that is actually needed by local people who have grown up in this area first.
0 LIKES	1 LIKE	0 LIKES		2 LIKES	0 LIKES	1 LIKE
Reopening of Cullompton train station is vital as part of this development. This should be completed before the houses are finished and should also include a cycle network so that people can get safely to the train station on bike. A cheap car park should also be included in the train station to encourage people to use the train rather than driving in to Exeter or Taunton.	We've already had 2k odd in houses going in right now into north Cullompton. The works at Mill Gardens already cut our Internet off for a month and the college practice is on a generator again because their cables been cut...again. The houses going in at the Bloor site made that road a nightmare to navigate with them developing entrances on to the main road at the same time as Mill Gardens. It's too much disruption to local residents and wildlife at once. These developments need to be staged over years not months. It's too much and the towns existing community are going to suffer as well as the wildlife. Its awful, kind of regretting moving back here to be honest	Is this temporarily closed meaning it will reopen again? With so much money being made from development a little extra on getting the right information on the map may help.		Green landscaping places - Will this site be subject to maintenance fees on top of council tax? Personally these kind of schemes but me off buying new builds, its like paying rent for the land your house is built on which for people who already struggle to get on the housing ladder is off putting. Especially when there is no regulation on these charges and they can just be upped whenever the developers like with no cap. We've recently moved back here and it was so hard to find a house free of this entrapment. If the council wants to grant permission for large housing developments they need to pay for their maintenance. Its like buying a pet then expecting the breeder to pay for its lifelong care when you're their registered owner. They need to take some accountability and foot the bill.	A problem. Even when fully expanded Fordmore farm shop will never be able to provide the range of goods such as a supermarket like Asda or Morrisons. Therefore there should be plans in East Cullompton to bring in a new large supermarket store.	
3 LIKES	0 LIKES	0 LIKES		0 LIKES	0 LIKES	
The lack of hard commitment to constrain development until adequate infrastructure is in place is depressing. No hard commitment that I can see about the Link Road, and the reference to what Network Rail may or may not do re the Station is pitiful. With events to date, its difficult to have confidence that adequate constraints/conditions will be exercised on the developers. I have worked across the UK on significant infrastructure projects over the last 40 years and have seen what effective planning controls can leverage from Developers so why so lack-lustre here?	How can you build a housing estate right up to a large working dairy farm? Not only will it be rife with people wandering into the farm creating a theft risk but there's also issues from a health and safety perspective. It's completely brainless.	What is this? Not detailed in the key for the illustration (blue arrow)				
1 LIKE	5 LIKES	2 LIKES				
I read in the local media yesterday that the new railway station's gone from 2023 to 2025 for being developed. This is far too late. With over 2k in houses in north cully being built and the 5k in the east you'll need the railway ASAP. Cullompton always been a commuter town - people are going to be attracted to the M5 corridor not the sense of community. It's vital to have more sustainable transport options for all these people	A large part of the perimeter of this masterplan is a perimeter road with housing behind. There is no feathering of the masterplan out into green lungs, or softening down into parks or recreational areas needed by this scale of housing. What this does point to is further and further expansion in the future, bolting on more housing and desecrating farmland and existing habitats. Put a softer, greener edge to this masterplan so that the abruptness of the buildings is contained, don't use perimeter roads and provide evidence of the curtailment to the future expansion further outwards; or be truthful about the intention for this masterplan to be part of an even greater, even worse addition to an already disjointed, problematic unsuccessful small town. Fix the existing town problems/connection, use brownfield land first and provide a measured masterplan solution. This is none of those things.	Maybe someone could show the original outline of the Culm Garden Village on the same map so that we can see how it fits into what is now being called East Cullompton. I think the whole area for East Cullompton is much bigger than the Culm Village and people will be confused and think it only refers to the same area as it is not being shown as different.				
0 LIKES	7 LIKES	0 LIKES				
There is no way this motorway junction is going to cope with the amount of traffic these housing developments are going to generate. The motorway closed today and as usual the town bottle necked within minutes. The relief roads must be built before any more developments. Traffic congestion is not going to contribute to your eco plan. Also the bridge as a pedestrian is a nightmare to cross due to the volume of traffic and lack of crossings. That needs to be taken into consideration if you are expecting people to walk and use green corridors	Not entirely sure this will be the boundary and the pledge not to encroach onto Kentisbeare Parish will be broken intentionally.					
0 LIKES	2 LIKES					
What will be done to improve this junction? With all the added traffic, from the new houses that will be created, this junction will be unable to cope with rush hour traffic and commuters. Traffic already backs up at peak times everyday at this junction and through the town. Will the road improvements be prioritised and put in place before the bulk of the construction work takes place?						
1 LIKE						
All the people that live in East Cullompton or are part of the Garden Village will not be able to easily park when they drive to Cullompton About 10 spaces are being removed from the Higher Bullring to "improve" the area for bigger events for more people to attend. Not sure where any of them will park						
1 LIKE						
I feel that the Cullompton inner relief road needs to be completed and the Cullompton railway station re opened (should never have closed in 1960s) before any houses are built in the Cullompton Garden Village. Please please look first at the infrastructure.						
3 LIKES						

Transport	General Development	Questions/Other	Flooding	GI/BI/Landscape	Facilities	Affordable Housing
No obvious comment linking this long overdue development to the SPD. At Kentisbeare presentation it was stated that the Inner Relief Road (via CCA Fields) had to be completed BEFORE the Garden Village was STARTED. Recommend that it be clearly stated in the SPD that the Inner Relief Road be completed BEFORE the Garden Village is started. Indeed a section for such preconditions be added to the SPD document.						
7 LIKES						
No obvious provision for the possibility of linking the southern end of the Inner Relief Road (through CCA fields) to the relief road shown by Jenny Clifford when presenting the Garden Village running to the south of Honiton Road starting just east of the last house in Honiton Road and running close behind the existing houses to S Cullompton. Clearly if both roads are implemented then it would be COST EFFECTIVE to arrange for the intersection to be implemented at the same time. This should be a condition not an afterthought.						
3 LIKES						
There should be plans for this route to Exeter to be accessible without going through Cullompton town centre. There is already too much traffic in the town centre as it is.						
0 LIKES						
Is access via Greenhouse Gardens to be permitted for delivery of building materials and general building work? Access direct to building site from Honiton road (A373) would be preferred option by majority of residents.						
0 LIKES						
Clearly the existing plans show that unless the southern relief road discussed when the Garden Village was first mooted (or a northern relief road as suggested at the Kentisbeare presentation) is implemented the traffic on Honiton Road will substantially increase. All of the houses at the eastern end of Honiton Road have individual direct vehicular access onto Honiton Road. For these houses it is already difficult to get onto the road, especially if turning right. Given the failure of other traffic schemes to limit traffic speed in Cullompton (for example High Street, Silver Street in Willand, Tiverton Road) it is questionable that any traffic calming scheme will work. This is especially true if it is remembered that Highways may impose other restrictions on this road which is classed as an A road.						
2 LIKES						
Buried in the planning is a bit on the need for changes to Honiton Road. No detailed plans are evident but it proposes the use of 20mph speed restrictions. Just wondering how this will be enforced. The road currently has a 30mph limit but many motorists blatantly flout this limit. On the rare occasion we have speed cameras the traffic flows very slow compared to the norm. Are we still having the Garden Village relief road that was planned to run from A373 (between last house and farm entrance) that runs south of the existing houses to south Cullompton? This will reduce load on the road.						
0 LIKES						
When the Garden Village was first presented there was a relief road linking the A373 starting just east of the last house in Honiton Road and running to the north of the road shown in this presentation. It just clipped the corner of the field behind 25 - 27 Honiton Road. There is no reserved area for this item that was voted on in the previous presentation. If I understand the plan correctly the area is designated for housing. For some not a significant change but quite relevant for those living in Honiton Road. If this significant modification from the original plan what other "adjustments" have been sneaked into the plan?						
0 LIKES						
Where's the new relief road? This council should get its priorities right before making big plans						
4 LIKES						
Some time ago it was determined that there would be a relief road that linked Honiton Road (about where the 40mph sign is) around the southern side of the houses and linking up to existing roads in the southern end of town. This would then allow the Garden Village traffic that wanted to go to S Cullompton (for example Aldi or Bradnich) to avoid the M5 bridge. Has this relief road been cancelled thus forcing all traffic along the existing road (A373/Honiton Road) to add to the chaos at the M5 Junction?						
0 LIKES						
It looks like a Blundells Road problem in the making!						
3 LIKES						
I hope there are bridges to accommodate safe access across the busy A road as the plan is to make every where accessible within 20 walking or cycling minutes.						
1 LIKE						
Will these new homes have adequate parking? I understand that the plan is that every part of the development will be accessible via walking/cycling, however, people living here will still most likely need a car/vehicle to commute to and from work or to get to Exeter and Taunton etc.						
I LIKE						
This route is still an outline plan. There is plenty of scope for making this route a bespoke alternative to Honiton Road rather than trying to modify Honiton Road. For example ensure that all vehicular access is via service roads and not directly onto the road						
1 LIKE						
Honiton Road is a very busy A road. Making it a 20mph zone is crazy if there is not an alternative route for large HGVs and other routes. So build a new road from Kingsmill Lane up behind the back of East Cullompton connecting to Honiton Road by a roundabout in the area of Aller Barton. This would take all the heavy traffic off the existing Honiton Road. When there is a new road to take heavy traffic and only when that is built and open could the existing Honiton Road become a 20mph road.						
0 LIKES						

Consultee responses

1. Cullompton Town Council (page 1)
2. Kentisbeare Parish Council (page 2)
3. Bradninch Town Council (page 3)
4. Devon County Council (page 3)
5. National Highways (page 10)
6. Environment Agency (page 13)
7. Natural England (page 15)
8. Sport England (page 16)
9. Blackdown Hills AONB (page 19)
10. Network Rail (page 20)
11. National Grid (page 22)

1. Cullompton Town Council

Here is the formal response from Cullompton Town Council regarding the consultation on the East Cullompton SPD Masterplan:

Resolved that the council's formal response to the East Cullompton Urban Extension Supplementary Planning Document consultation is as follows:

- The proposal allocated in the latest revision of the Local Plan, although less than half the aspiration, is broadly supported.
- Detailed observations include:
    - The need, whilst encouraging the use of low carbon transport, not to alienate car users. In addition, bus stops without buses to stop at them are largely useless particularly in light of the recent reduction of services by Stagecoach. Subsidising these services in the short term is acceptable whilst the number of occupied dwellings increases but there needs to be a strategic plan in place to make services in and around this proposal sustainable in the long term.
    - That, whilst there are many thousands of new dwellings in progress or proposed, not just in Mid Devon but across the County and South West region, there is little or no provision made to supply water to these new dwellings in the form of new reservoir capacity.
    - That the lessons of Swallow Way (though Kingfisher Reach) must be learned and not repeated.
    - That, whilst the Garden Village Initiative will create a very significant mixed-use development, it should be seen as part of Cullompton with a Parish Boundary review if necessary.
    - That schools, surgeries and community facilities (including road infrastructure) should be delivered in the early phases.
    - Consideration should be given to providing the provision of convalescent care beds in the vicinity of the proposed care home/GP surgery in order to go some way to alleviating "bed blocking" in the NHS.
    - That modifications to Honiton Road may be necessary to increase capacity along the extent of the East Cullompton Urban Extension/Garden Village Initiative.

- That significant improvements and additions to the M5 J27/J28/J29 corridor infrastructure will be required as the current J28 is at capacity now without several thousands of additional vehicles attempting to access it.
- That it makes the reopening of the railway stations a more urgent requirement.
- The size of industrial units and the type of industry, whilst understanding that there will be some market forces, needs to be carefully considered as there is a shortfall of micro and small units in the district making start-up business difficult. Retail also needs to be considered both in the commercial allocation and within the development as a whole.
- The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan should be fully complied with in the design of any development proposals.
- The Town Council will actively oppose any proposal for dwellings at East Cullompton before the Eastern Relief Road is delivered and that the issues surrounding the capacity of Junction 28 of the M5 are resolved.
- The absence of waste water treatment facilities is a concern as the existing is at capacity.
- There is concern that there is little or no retail; at the start of the East Cullompton vision process, there was a proposal for a retail park at the south west of the allocated site that appears to be absent from the Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document.
- Small retail units (convenience store type) will be required to provide necessities and to avoid unnecessary car journeys to purchase, for example, milk or bread.

2. Kentisbeare Parish Council

Please see below the response from Kentisbeare Parish Council in respect of the East Cullompton Masterplan SPD consultation.

Kentisbeare Parish Council welcomes the explicit recognition of our village remaining “clearly separate from Cullompton in terms of identity and village setting” (p.51).

We do have a number of concerns that we would like to highlight -

- We believe that the process we were promised was a fully coordinated masterplan for the broader Garden Village. The two-stage nature of the process that is now in train involves detailed approval of the East Cullompton allocation that is part of the existing Local Plan and an outline of thoughts about the longer term possibilities for the wider Garden Village. One consequence of this is that facilities that are only required once a certain number of houses have been built may well be located at the furthest extreme of the Garden Village, whereas a larger scale masterplan would be likely to site them more centrally. Obvious examples are the proposed secondary school and the sports clubs. We would suggest that more detailed planning is undertaken before the East Cullompton Masterplan is signed off.
- Public consultation to date and dialogue between Kentisbeare Parish Council and MDDC have consistently opposed any development to the east of Horn Road. The Cricket Club has been granted planning permission and so that must now be excepted. The references to "relocated sports clubs to the east of Horn Road" (4.10) and the "potential to co-locate the all-through school with proposed sports clubs to the east of Horn Road should be explored" (6.2) seem to ignore this consultation. We would hope that MDDC remains true to its stated desire to develop the Garden Village in conjunction with local communities and their wishes.

- The document refers to the area around Horn Road as potentially being "a new neighbourhood framed around new broadleaf planting, avenues and terraces... to create a strong landscape to the eastern edge of the Garden Village." (6.1). We would hope that only planting would be to the east of Horn Road with any new neighbourhood to the west to be consistent with the above. Topographically the east of Horn Road is high and visible ground on either side of the A373.
- In addition, we are concerned about a number of the impacts of the growth in traffic resulting from East Cullompton and the broader Garden Village. The volume of traffic on the A373 has increased noticeably in the last few years. This seems to have been driven by the considerable development elsewhere in Cullompton and the resultant issues at the motorway junction. We believe that the limit of 500 houses to be built in East Cullompton prior to a strategic motorway intervention now looks too high given the approval of recent development applications elsewhere around Cullompton and that it should be revised downwards.
- We are also concerned about the A373 to the east of the Garden Village. It is extremely narrow at various points before Honiton and significant blockages are occurring on a much more regular basis. Getting out on to the road from the lanes that lead off it has also become significantly more difficult. Post Cross is a prime example. One of the concerns we have is that that any significant increase in issues on the A373 is likely to manifest itself as an increase in rat-running through the area to the east of the M5, this will result in more traffic on inappropriate routes through our Parish. We therefore urge a more coordinated approach to address the present and future issues on the A373 to Honiton before development starts.

3. Bradninch Town Council

Resolved to submit the following comments with regards: any further development in Cullompton would require a relief road to be built, along with improvements to the existing motorway junction. Also, consideration should be given to the impact on the river Culm, due to the increased sewerage from new developments, to ensure that further pollution could be avoided.

4. Devon County Council

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the East Cullompton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document Consultation. The County Council welcomes this as an insightful consultation and a positive step towards delivering sustainable development at East Cullompton in line with garden village principles. The County Council welcomes the inclusion of the 20-minute place principle and emphasis on net zero.

Appendix A attached provides the County Council's detailed comments. The County Council would be pleased to discuss the comments raised and actions arising in more detail. We look forward to continuing our work with you as the Masterplan progresses.

East Cullompton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document Consultation

Appendix A:

Item	Issue and reference point	Comments
1 Introduction		
1.1	Background	DCC welcomes the priority that the plan has placed on responding to the climate emergency and nature recovery.
2 Vision		
2.2	Overarching principles	The inclusion of 'Use innovative and modern methods of construction to minimise waste and reduce pollution' under 'Planet' is welcomed. However, this could be expanded to ensure waste is minimised and considered during the design and layout of a development, for example, to reduce inert material exported off site. Further emphasis should be put on the phrase 'reduce carbon emissions'. The NPPF uses the phrase 'contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions'.
3 Influences		
3.1	Policy context	The Devon Waste Plan also forms part of the Development Plan for the area. This should be included to ensure the principles of sustainable waste management are considered throughout the planning process. The following is recommended: ***Devon Waste Plan*** *The Devon Waste Plan for the period 2011-2031 was adopted in December 2014 and forms part of the Development Plan for the area. The key policy from this plan is Policy W4: Waste Prevention. This policy looks for sustainable construction, procurement and waste management in Devon to achieve a reduction in the waste generated through all forms of development.* *Major development is required to include a Waste Audit Statement demonstrating how the demolition, construction and operational phases of the development will minimise the generation of waste and provide management of waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy (from preventing waste, re-use, recycling through to the final option of disposal of waste).* Reference could also be made to the Waste Management and Infrastructure SPD adopted in July 2015 which provides guidance to applicants on how to implement Policy W4: Waste Prevention of the Devon Waste Plan. DCC would welcome reference to Devon's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025 within the masterplan.

3.2	Context & Carbon Emission Assessment Framework	The Devon Carbon Plan is now live. The Carbon Emissions Assessment Framework is ambitious, and it's particularly good to see the inclusion of embodied carbon in the tool.
3.2	Broad Carbon Reduction Approach by Source (Table)	DCC welcomes the carbon reduction principles set out within the Masterplan and the emphasis on achieving net zero. The table is clear on how low-carbon aspects will be incorporated into the Plan. The need for renewable and green energy sources will be key to the long-term sustainability of the new town. District heating could be a major contribution to reducing carbon. Strong digital connectivity should be included in the table as a Substitute Approach to achieve reduced carbon emissions. DCC recommends that mention is made to preventing inert material being exported from site through design. This would avoid emissions.
4 Understanding The Place		
4.4	Natural Flood Management	Natural Flood Management might not entirely prevent flooding, but can reduce flooding.
4.4	Air Quality	Air quality is the largest environmental health risk in the UK. It shortens lives and contributes to chronic illness. Increased traffic is likely to increase vehicular emissions, which may impact on Air Quality. Although air quality assessments have been carried out, they will need to be monitored at regular intervals through the construction phases and afterwards.
4.6	Heritage	Existing Policy CU7 requires further archaeological investigation to inform mitigation, as development progresses. This will need to be used to identify opportunities to positively influence the detail of design/layout as planning applications come forward, as well as to inform mitigation for the loss of any undesignated archaeological assets. The attention given to the importance of water/water management in shaping Cullompton and the new community is welcome.
4.8	Access and Mobility	It should be noted that Honiton Road is an A road so downgrading this and reducing the speed limit are unlikely to be achievable. Crossings of this road are going to be important given this road passes through the middle of the development but the strategic nature of the road cannot be lost. A choice of travel methods integrating with public transport will be required. The station should be equipped with secure safe cycle storage, and provision for charging facilities for electric bikes to encourage active travel. If the aim is to reduce car journeys, this needs to be supported by adequate and reliable bus services.

4.10	Opportunities Plan	DCC endorses the need for travel crossings over the trainline and motorway and would want them to be implemented as early in the phasing as possible. Suicide Prevention should be a priority for a bridge crossing in a location of this nature.
5 Masterplan Framework		
5.2	Mixed Use Community Hubs	Allocation of parking spaces within the new development will need to be carefully managed and prioritised. Consideration will be needed for inclusive parking for those with disabilities and visiting care workers, who should have priority spaces to prevent delays in support being offered to the most vulnerable people. DCC supports the restriction of hot food takeaways, particularly within 400 meters of a school and limiting the number of takeaways in any given location.
5.2	School site	In its role as Local Education Authority, Devon supports the proposals as set out in the consultation. The preference will be for a single primary school site to support a 630 place primary school with early years provision as this will be a more efficient model to manage the growth of the development. The proposed location of the school, adjacent to an existing road network and utilities, will ensure the school can be delivered early in the development as there is insufficient primary capacity to meet the needs of the development. Therefore, delivery of a serviced site and capital funding will be critical prior to commencement of development.
5.2	Integrating employment	Further information is required to understand the evidence in place which underpin the assumptions made for the scale, mix and phasing of commercial industrial and workspace development and what the planned mix of uses will be. Business space demand cannot rely on 2018/19 projections (e.g. office space demand is now a lot lower, often leading to consolidation of office spaces). However, demand for some manufacturing and especially distribution and storage space is higher than for offices. Further information is also required in relation to the economic growth (GVA/GDP increase) assumptions. The Bank of England has recently updated its economic growth forecasts and the OBR will be publishing its findings later in November 2022 that we expect to better reflect a new economic situation. The ability to intelligently phase commercial business and workspace development is key, to reflect both real-world demand and balance this with aspirations for the community. There needs to be the ability to regularly review any mix of employment uses, maintaining the aspirational tenet of the plan, but adapting the mix of uses to reflect changes to demand patterns in what since 2019 has become a very rapidly changing economic situation, globally, regionally and locally. **Retail** Further information is required to set out the assumptions around retail space in the new community, how this reflects demand and how this will interact with the retail offer in both Cullompton and other nearby communities, including any new planned retail offers within Mid Devon.

		There has in very recent years been a trend towards a need for less retail space overall, however, there has also been a shift whereby smaller towns that have a characterful and distinctive mix of an attractive environment, a variety of things to do, a good mix and number of essential services and homes located close to retail and a good mix smaller units and independent retailers alongside a handful of chain stores have tended to perform much better (e.g. Totnes, Sidmouth, and to some extent Crediton and Okehampton). Cullompton's existing retail core tends to perform less well than might be expected of a town of its size, function and historic character. Regeneration of the existing Cullompton town centre should form a key objective of an urban extension, or new community in East Cullompton. **Work locations and commuter patterns** Further information is required in relation to the assumptions made about where people who live in the new community might work and where people who work in the new community might live taking into account a new and emerging reality about people's travel to work patterns in the Cullompton and Mid Devon areas. This will vary by sector of employment. There have been shifts, especially in those working in office-based employment, towards more flexible working, but with some days in a central workplace, especially since 2020. This has also meant that for some higher paid employment the area of search for employment has widened from outside of existing Travel to Work Areas (e.g. what are the assumptions around people in Mid Devon now having a nominal workplace location in Bristol, Plymouth, or London as well as Exeter, or Taunton as previously). The location of the existing Tiverton Parkway station and M5 within the District, plus A303 being nearby will likely have some additional impact on the attractiveness of this as an option in Mid Devon. In addition, what assumptions are made about temporary impacts on working patterns from Hinkley Point C, which draws a lot of people from a very wide area? It is likely that Travel to Work patterns vary significantly by sector and rate of pay.
5.2	Residential	The provision of affordable homes within the development is welcome, there should be a mixture of rents and purchase options. DCC would like to see other housing options to be considered such as provision of co-living accommodation blocks for the use of professional single people these are self-contained one-bedroom units with kitchenettes and other shared facilities. Thought should also be given for adaptable homes. We have an ageing population and to reduce burden on expensive care homes having the potential for annexes on private properties or internal ability to reconfigure space needs to be factored in. Wheelchair accessible homes should be included within the housing designs to be fully inclusive and giving options for a range of clients.
5.2	Powerlines	DCC agrees that the powerlines should be moved underground, but if this is not possible the space below them should be used for parkland rather than residential housing.
5.3	Landscape	DCC welcomes the amount of green infrastructure and open space to be provided by this development, which will provide for natural play, active recreation, healthy living, and help to combat climate change. The biodiversity of the area (including hedges and trees) needs to be protected and retained where possible.

5.3	The Blueways	Blueways will be a key feature, time spent outdoors in the natural environment is positive for mental health and wellbeing. Improving the existing river crossings is a way of working with the natural beauty of the area, giving a defined sense of "place".
5.3	Crossing points and fords	Fords should not be prioritised. If fords are proposed, then they will need to be carefully considered (e.g. consideration of design, location, road type, etc.). These features can cause obstructions to flows. Fords will need to be drained effectively so that pollutants are not washed into the watercourse.
5.3	Community Greens	The sports pitches should be open access for use for the whole community and not just the schools/private clubs. Consideration should be given to lighting the pathways and sports areas to make them a safe place at night. Allotments are important for the supply of healthy local food and working on an allotment has been proven to be beneficial for health and wellbeing. It would be welcomed to see the completion of some of the allotments in-line with the phased completion of the first homes. The community orchards will be a resource for the village, but these need to be managed and maintained.
5.4	Junction 28	DCC is aware that any walking / cycling routes over the M5 are linked to the J28 improvement options so a specific route cannot be defined at present. However, this needs to be included in the phasing approach so it is delivered early within the development. This will be especially important before the local centre and facilities on the eastern side are established as initial dwellings will be heavily reliant on the existing town facilities and connections across the M5 to them.
5.4	Active travel & Street Hierarchy	It is good to see that SuDS are referenced within active travel and the street hierarchy. Permeable paving could be used as well as rain gardens, swale, filter trenches. It is great to see SuDS being encouraged along streets. DCC welcomes the promotion of sustainable travel, particularly active travel including walking, cycling and public transport. Walking and cycling routes need to be delivered early in the phasing of the new community. This will help support the aims of increasing sustainable travel modes and reducing the reliance on the private car. Taking this approach as part of the planning applications is supported but assumptions need to be realistic and achievable to satisfy all parties involved. The cycle routes proposed around the town are welcome but these need to be linked to a wider cycling infrastructure for residents to be able to safely move to destinations further afield. The surface of the pedestrian/cycle paths should be fully accessible and suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

5.4	Honiton Road	DCC fully supports the 20-minute neighbourhoods idea but is not sure how this will be achieved without the early delivery of high quality walking and cycling routes between the CGV and existing Cullompton, before there are the resources built at the new community. The footway connection along Honiton Road is not complete and some areas are on private land outside the control of the CGV landowners. The whole length would need upgrading to a pedestrian/cycle footway and it is questionable whether this should be next to the busy A373 or whether a completely segregated route elsewhere should be provided instead (note comments on Honiton Road below). The other routes show the footway/cycle way to be through Honiton Road Industrial Estate which is also 3rd party land and only has a PROW connection to Honiton Road which may not be able to be upgraded.
5.4	Mobility Hubs	DCC welcomes the proposal for mobility hubs and for co-bikes and car share schemes. Further information is required in relation to what these will look like (e.g. cycle parking, direct links to the sustainable travel routes from mobility hubs is essential).
5.5	Placemaking	Access to greenspace is a good way to support good physical and mental health. The design of homes needs to consider the pavement space and access to homes for people with mobility vehicles.
5.5	Parking	The amount of parking provided will have a heavy influence on the reliance on private car for travel. However, sufficient parking should be provided to prevent parking on-street. Consideration of cycle parking and electric vehicle charging needs to be made and included in the Masterplan. Rear parking courts should be avoided unless well-lit and good access is provided and they are overlooked.
5.6	Planning and Design Process Flow Diagram	Does surface water management form part of infrastructure delivery?
5.6	Strategic Design Code	The proposed Strategic Design Code should help to promote good housing design. Poor housing conditions are associated with poorer health outcomes, increased risk of circulatory and respiratory diseases, and mental ill health. Indoor air quality needs consideration with improvements in construction materials used. Good home design, for example adequate storage which include storage for household waste bins is essential to prevent odours from the waste or the potential of rat or vermin infestations.

5. National Highways

Thank you for consulting us on the above document. It is a positive step in providing guidance on the design, development and delivery of site allocation CU7 (East Cullompton) of the Mid Devon Local Plan Review (adopted July 2020). Policy CU7 proposes the allocation of a site of 160 hectares to the east of Junction 28 of the M5 for the development of the initial new settlement (1,750 houses to 2033, with at least a further 850 dwellings to follow). It is also recognised that the site was awarded Garden Village status in 2017, with the potential to deliver up to 5,000 new homes. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is rightly cognisant of this planned future growth of the East Cullompton allocation/Garden Village, which must follow the same principles and policies to ensure sustainable development.

National Highways are responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the Strategic Road Network (SRN), which at Cullompton includes Junction 28 of the M5. The junction can experience congestion during the morning and evening periods and remains a constraint despite previous improvements in 2015. The combination of North West Cullompton strategic allocation (1,350 dwellings and 10,000sqm of commercial floorspace), the East Cullompton allocation and other smaller allocations have been identified to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the SRN. As recognised in the Masterplan, delivery of a transport solution at Junction 28 to enable future growth at Cullompton is necessary, as set out in the most recently adopted Mid Devon Local Plan (July 2020). It is noted that the Masterplan SPD indicates that capacity improvements at Junction 28 are likely to be required after the first 500 homes are completed, to be clear, this is subject to prior delivery of the Town Centre Relief Road[1]. We understand that Devon County Council are currently undertaking traffic modelling work to demonstrate the suitability of this development threshold, and National Highways will need to be satisfied that early development ahead of infrastructure provision does not give rise to an unacceptable safety impact for the SRN.

We support the carbon reduction principles of the draft Masterplan, particularly noting the 'in-use transport' measures that are expected to be considered by developers. We would expect Mid Devon District Council to enforce any commitment to deliver carbon reduction generated by private car travel. National Highways, like Mid Devon District Council, has made commitments to reduce our carbon impacts. Wherever possible, we support plans to replace vehicular journeys with active travel modes, both reducing carbon and managing down demand on the SRN. It is important to stress that our license with DfT requires us to focus on the safe and effective operation of the SRN and this cannot be compromised for sustainable travel initiatives.

The ambition of the Masterplan regarding improved sustainable travel modes and appropriate site phasing, to reduce the need to travel by private car, are endorsed. This has the desired potential to reduce the need for network peak hour private car trips on the SRN. Delivery of sustainable transport options early in a development are key in nurturing habits of residents to use sustainable transport modes. However, this may have implications for the existing Junction 28 layout and facilities, particularly through increased demand for active travel to the proposed reopened Cullompton train station, with the motorway overbridge currently forming the principal access route between East Cullompton and the proposed rail station site. We are keen to stress that Cullompton currently generates significant out-commuting with a reliance on the private car. Therefore, a step change in travel behaviour and facilities is required in this development to achieve the sustainability

[1] Agreed by MDDC, DCC and NH within the Mid Devon Local Plan Review 2013-2033 Statement of Common Ground for 'Cullompton Infrastructure Improvement – Highways' on 12/02/2019 - https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/346857/scg10-highways-cullompton-policies-s11-cu1-cu21-secure.pdf

principles aspired to as a Garden Village, and highway capacity improvements will still be required to accommodate residual car-borne travel demands. We anticipate further work/evidence in how the sustainability aspirations of the Masterplan are ensured in site delivery and would welcome a meeting to ensure that this vision is deliverable in terms of transport impacts. We would expect Mid Devon District Council to ensure that they enforce any commitment to reduce private car travel for the life of the development.

One of the core principles in the SPD to achieve sustainability of the development is delivery of a 'twenty-minute place'. It is presumed this means seeking to achieve an 800-metre walkable catchment, or a 10-minute walk to your destination, and 10 minutes back home. The SPD could be clearer in defining the 'twenty-minute place' approach to ensure meaningful achievement of this principle.

We agree with the statement within Section 4.8 that options to improve Junction 28 are under discussion with Mid Devon District Council, Devon County Council and National Highways at the time of writing. Depending on the timetable for the adoption of this document, we anticipate this SPD will be updated to include updates/outcomes of this work. The need for a strategic junction intervention was established as part of the Local Plan Review evidence base (considering 1,750dw at East Cullompton) which demonstrated that transport impacts on the M5 would be severe in the absence of significant improvements to the transport network. Through this work National Highways will require confidence that a proposed scheme adequately mitigates the SRN impacts of development at Cullompton and provides safe and suitable facilities to accommodate increased active travel demands across the motorway. Given proposals for a wider Garden Village of up to 5,000 houses, we anticipate and recommend that this work will consider travel demands associated with the wider development.

Within Section 4.9 we are pleased to see that potential noise and visual intrusion impacts from the M5 are being considered as a constraint within the Masterplan. We have recent examples of residential development experiencing noise issues because of having been located too close to the SRN. We endorse planning policy being proactive in considering and addressing this issue.

The 'East Cullompton Mobility Framework' plan on Page 106 includes three indicative active travel crossing points and two 'potential for future connection to JCT'. It is not clear what the latter entails, however it is presumed that the assumptions in this plan will be updated to align with the work currently being undertaken regarding Junction 28 improvement options. Two active travel crossing points appear facilitated by the existing structures over the M5 (at Old Hill and Junction 28), with one route appearing to require new infrastructure to the north. We would welcome further discussion regarding the establishment of specific active travel routes to serve the East Cullompton site where they interact with the SRN. It is identified on Page 127 that the active travel improvements are funded by "developer contributions/linked to public funding projects" – further thought is required regarding costs and likelihood of funding mechanism achieving delivery.

On Page 109, we assume Junction 28 is being referred to, rather than Junction 30.

As recognised in Section 5.4, "Honiton Road plays a key movement role in the wider highway network". This local road network has an important function for vehicles both exiting and arriving at Junction 28. Outcomes from the Junction 28 mitigation option work need to inform the policy approach for the role and function of Honiton Road. This includes decisions regarding priority and speed limits.

We agree that East Cullompton will benefit from a 'Site Wide Phasing and Delivery Plan document', as identified in Section 5.6 'Infrastructure, Delivery and Phasing'. We recommend this document should benefit from sufficient weight in the planning process, clearly outlining requirements and delivery mechanisms, to ensure that the development achieves appropriate phasing in terms of housing, education and employment. The establishment and agreement of such a phasing and delivery document would provide greater confidence regarding achievement of the site vision and Garden Community principles.

It is noted on Page 122 that there is a suggestion for a 'comprehensive approach' which includes "a consistent approach to the assessment of transport that starts with the vision for the site and then assesses impacts on that basis, offsetting any impact with a range of agreed initiatives". National Highways would welcome a comprehensive approach to site assessment, supporting the identification and delivery of necessary transport improvements. Nevertheless, as highlighted above, further certainty is required regarding the adoption and delivery of sustainability principles at East Cullompton to support any assessments that offset impacts against agreed initiatives.

Phases 1 and 2 of the Masterplan identifies delivery of the Honiton Road improvement, including an active travel route, across Junction 28 and into the proposed railway station. This route interacts with numerous access and egress points on the SRN and requires detailed thought regarding feasibility and implication. As per comments on Section 5.4, we await the current work looking at potential Junction 28 improvement options, which should inform understanding regarding this matter and the necessary characteristics of Honiton Road itself for vehicles. In terms of the table of 'Infrastructure Delivery Requirements' on Page 126 onwards, we have the following comments:

- Capacity improvements at M5 Junction 28:
  In terms of 'Timing' – it should be clarified that the 'required after first 500 homes completed' is subject to the prior delivery of the Town Centre Relief Road

- Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road:
  Query whether the 'Delivered by 2023' timetable is realistic

- Local highway enhancements to ensure any traffic impacts are mitigated:
  National Highways agree with the statement that these should be determined through transport assessment work but recommend that this should be led as part of the proposed 'comprehensive approach' and not left to component development sites

It is noted that the final section of the Masterplan considers the potential future extent of East Cullompton – up to approximately 5,000 dwellings. As previously noted, we recommend that this extent should inform the infrastructure choices made for the East Cullompton allocation to ensure that any provision is future proofed and able to accommodate the wider vision for Cullompton. This approach should be kept under review to accord with emerging contents of the next Local Plan, of which we expect a consultation next summer.

It would be much appreciated if reference to 'Highways England' in the document is updated to 'National Highways', noting our named changed in August 2021.

I hope these comments are useful and look forward to continuing to work with you on this project as it progresses.

6. Environment Agency

Thank you for your consultation in respect of this supplementary planning document (SPD).

Environment Agency position

We are supportive of the proposals set out in the Masterplan SPD, which addresses the key environmental risks and opportunities within the East Cullompton allocation and wider Culm Garden Village area beyond. Full implementation of the masterplan's proposals for blue ways, green ways, ecological networks, habitat enhancement and creation, and natural flood management will help contribute to the delivery of a sustainable development which will be resilient to a changing climate.

It will be essential that the masterplan SPD along with the relevant local plan policies are robustly applied to ensure development of the Culm Garden Village (CGV) successfully delivers this vision.

Our comments and recommendations on the parts of the SPD relevant to our remit are set out below.

Section 1 Introduction

The diagram 'Planning for the outcomes we need' in 1.3 (Scope and purpose) clearly sets out climate change, net zero and nature recovery as central cross-cutting themes driving change and influencing the masterplan's proposed outcomes. This is important and we strongly support this approach.

Section 2 Vision

We welcome the vision set out under the heading of Planet, People and Place (2.1). The new vision simplifies the nine original principles from the stage 1 consultation, focussing more holistically on the key challenges and desired outcomes. We support the focus on ensuring East Cullompton/CGV will be sustainable and resilient in the face of climate change, and the commitment to nature recovery and harnessing the Culm for the benefit of nature and flood management.

The overarching principles (2.2) which underpin the vision are intended to deliver some important outcomes. We are pleased to see climate change mitigation and adaptation, flood risk and water management, increasing biodiversity, protecting natural resources, and minimising pollution central to master-planning for East Cullompton. That these principles are shown clearly to cut across each of the broader headings of People, Planet and Place is also welcome.

Section 3 Influences

We are supportive of the Carbon Reduction Principles set out in 3.2. However, the SPD should also identify the principles and influences related to climate change adaptation and resilience. Whilst it is essential that all areas play their part in helping the World move towards achieving net zero carbon emissions, a degree of climate change is now unavoidable. Successfully achieving net zero carbon will require a global response, however, ensuring new settlements are designed and built to adapt to and be resilient to the inevitable impacts of climate change will make a big difference to long-term sustainability locally. Climate change adaptation and resilience is therefore a matter which is much more within the gift of local authorities.

Climate change adaptation could be addressed more explicitly by the SPD in the sub-section on Natural Capital (3.4), which already references the tangible and intangible benefits provided by natural capital such as climate regulation and flood management.

We welcome reference in 3.7 (Parallel work) to the Connecting the Culm project and the work being undertaken on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the CGV.

Section 4 Understand the place

We are pleased to see that the 'constraints and the opportunities map' in 4.3 (Ecology) identifies diverse riparian planting and floodplain habitat opportunities. The supporting text (Habitats) also acknowledges the importance of wet woodland habitats. The map appears to omit some of the smaller watercourses around the site (e.g. the watercourse flowing south towards the A373 from Moorhayes Farm) but this may simply be because they are hidden by other habitat layers such as hedgerows.

We fully support the natural capital approach taken in the SPD. An array of ecosystem services are identified in 4.4 (Natural Capital), many of which overlap and complement each other (e.g. wetlands, natural flood management, water quality).

In respect of natural habitats, it is good that the SPD recognises the important role that fully functioning ecosystems play in providing resilience to climate change. Maintaining and enhancing corridors across the allocation and wider CGV area, particularly along the numerous watercourses will help knit existing habitat areas together as a bigger, better, more joined up ecological network. This is noted in the sub-section on habitat networks which follows.

We welcome the work that has been undertaken in respect of wetland habitat features, and opportunities to enhance and create more of these features. We look forward to seeing further work by your authority or landowners/developers in this area and the multifunctional benefits that could be delivered. This work ties in closely with work on natural flood management, which we are also pleased to see set out in the SPD.

We welcome the acknowledgement of phosphorus run-off from land into watercourses in the discussion under water quality. However, it should also be noted that whilst agricultural land is the source of most nutrients (like phosphorus) entering the waterbodies a significant contribution also originates from treated sewage effluent. Nutrients are an ongoing problem within the Culm Catchment and a key reason why waterbodies in the catchment are failing to achieve good ecological status under the Water Environment Regulations. Improvements in this area to reduce nutrient-laden run-off could help to offset the additional nutrients that will be introduced by the increase in foul flows to South West Water wastewater treatment works.

It is also good that this section on natural capital has identified the cooling potential of trees in the area and the associated benefits for climate mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity.

We fully support the work undertaken so far in relation to flooding (4.5). Our review of the draft SFRA is ongoing and we will provide detailed comments in due course. We look forward to working with partners to ensure the opportunities offered by development of the East Cullompton allocation and CGV to deliver flood risk management improvements are realised.

The combined constraints plan (4.9) brings the key features together so as to present the foundations for the CGV's green-blue infrastructure network effectively. This is nicely complemented by the opportunities plan (4.10).

Section 5 Masterplan framework

In respect of landscape (5.3) we welcome the landscape framework, including the formalisation of 'The Blueways' and commitment to the use of sustainable urban drainage.

We note the passage regarding crossing points and fords. We would not encourage reliance on fords in light of the associated risks in times of high flow and flood. Any proposals for fords will need to be carefully considered and not result in increases in flood risk.

Section 6 Growing East Cullompton

The masterplan framework for the wider CGV project under 6.1 (Developing a framework for the wider opportunity area) identifies how the green and blue networks could be extended and enhanced beyond those shown in the masterplan for East Cullompton. We would strongly support establishing and enhancing these future corridors as early as possible.

With this in mind we welcome the intention under 6.3 (landscape) that the Blueways could continue to provide a central organising feature of the CGV. The Blueways established with the allocation area could be extended into the expansion area with the creation/formalisation of new ones. The suggestions in respect of flooding and drainage, and natural capital are also welcomed.

7. Natural England

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 20 September 2022.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Local Plan Policy deliverables

Mid Devon Local Plan Policy CU9 set out a requirement for the site to provide 'an area of 40 hectares for strategic green infrastructure' to include 'an appropriate mix of public parkland, open space, landscaping and local nature reserve'.

Natural England notes that the table on page 95 of the SPD sets out the size of the land areas for the specific types of public open space, in accordance with the Local Plan policy, and most of which are provided within the three community greens as shown on the map on page 102 of the SPD.

However, it is difficult to tell from the maps and descriptions where the amenity greenspace, public parkland and local nature reserve will be located. Additionally, and understandably, much of the strategic green infrastructure, as described in the SPD, is functional (e.g., water courses/SuDS, retained vegetation, and powerlines) and likely to be inaccessible to the public, and so it is unclear which areas will have the space to function as parkland and nature reserve rather than just as functional travel corridors. It would be useful if the SPD could include a map to show the preferred locations for the 6ha of amenity green space; the public parkland; and the nature reserve.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Natural England notes, and welcomes, that the SPD sets out the authority's expectations (page 105) for the East Cullompton site to provide measurable net gains in biodiversity. The SPD outlines that there is potential for the site to achieve a 10.77% net gain by enhancing and converting offsite modified grassland and cropland to neutral grassland. Whilst it is welcomed that the initial calculations provided for the SPD confirm that at least 10% net gain is achievable, the detailed planning permission will need to secure an agreed biodiversity gain plan, based on detailed metric calculations.

It is disappointing to note that the SPD is seeking offsite delivery of BNG, as onsite delivery is Natural England's preferred approach. The biodiversity gain plan should set out the reasons for selecting this approach. It will also be necessary to demonstrate that any potential conflict with the recreational (and other) uses of the Country Park can be avoided, i.e., that the recreational use of the park will not affect the success of establishing the net gain site, and vice versa that the presence of the net gain habitats will not restrict the recreational (or other) use of the country park.

The SPD also provides an opportunity for the LPA to outline their priorities and expectations for the wide range of benefits for people and nature that can be delivered through biodiversity net gain, and how this site can contribute towards achieving the opportunities and actions identified in the emerging Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and the Nature Recovery Network.

8. Sport England

Many thanks for consulting Sport England on the above document.

The provision of sport is a material consideration of the Local Planning Authority. This may be on-site within the development or a financial contribution to off-site locations. See Sports Facilities Calculator.

The provision of playing pitches should be guided by the adopted Mid Devon Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) although we raise concern no stage E implementation/delivery group meeting has been held since adoption. A stage E meeting to discuss needs for East Cullompton would be a worthwhile exercise. We know from experience that what we ask for from developers is challenged as they only want to provide minimal facilities, that don't meet the needs of sport in the local area.

This consultation gives us opportunity to raise the need for a 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP) in the Cullompton area as we do not have a current site identified in the town.

Sports Facilities Calculator

This additional population will generate additional demand for sports facilities. If this demand is not adequately met then it may place additional pressure on existing sports facilities, thereby creating deficiencies in facility provision. You may be aware that Sport England's Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC) can help to provide an indication of the likely demand that will be generated by a development for certain facility types.

Active Design

Sport England has considerable synergy with the NPPF and paragraphs 92 and 93 promoting healthy and safe communities. And achieving well designed places paragraph 130. Active Design complements the latest thinking around 20 minute neighbourhoods.

Sport England, in conjunction with Public Health England, has produced 'Active Design' (October 2015), a guide to planning new developments that create the right environment to help people get more active, more often in the interests of health and wellbeing. The guidance sets out ten key principles for ensuring new developments incorporate opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity. The Active Design principles are aimed at contributing towards the Government's desire for the planning system to promote healthy communities through good urban design. Sport England would commend the use of the guidance in the master planning process for new residential developments. The document can be downloaded via this link .

Appendix 1 contains a checklist that can demonstrate that the proposal has been / will be designed in line with the Active Design principles.

Cycle and walking networks should be extended to linking the existing urban area with the new development, and access to the surrounding natural environment. To encourage active travel there should be clear signage for cyclists into and out of the development site and to other destinations.

To bridge the gap between the high-level principles of Active Design and delivery in practice, we have worked with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to link the overarching Active Design Principles with the individual scheme criterion in each of the BRE Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) family of schemes, including HQM, Communities and CEEQUAL.

We are currently researching and writing Active Design version 3 to be launched in 2023.

Physical Activity Opportunities

The applicant will need to ensure that other physical activity opportunities that should be considered:

* Need for an indoor meeting/activity space for winter activity and when it rains. Huge potential for a 'meet and greet' place for a wide range of informal activity groups, including:

Beginner running
Ride social
Boot camp
Pop-up family games

*An indoor multi-purpose space within the pavilion can cater for a range of activities, including:

Dance
Yoga/Pilates
Circuits
Mums & babies/toddlers activity sessions
Short Mat Bowls
Table Tennis

* Outdoor open access activity trail equipment. Ideally with a walk/jog/cycle trail around the perimeter of the space. This gives scope to a wide range of activity including 'story trails', green gym trail, junior/adult parkrun, circuits & boot camps. All activities that suit the demographic of families, busy working adults.

* Keep element of flat multi-use informal space outside pitch layouts to encourage 'free-play' for children & families, this may include:

'Jumpers for posts'
Frisbee
Rounders
Fitness/Exercise sessions

* Potential for one of the designated 'play areas' to be focussed at teenagers and explore whether there is demand for skate park, free-running/parkour equipment.

Community Use of Education Sites

Making better use of existing resources contributes to sustainable development objectives by reducing the need for additional facilities and the potential loss of scarce resources such as open space. The practice of making school sports facilities available to wider community use is already well established and has been government policy for many years, but there are further opportunities to extend this principle within the education sector through programmes such as Academies and to other privately owned sports facilities, to help meet the growing demand for more and better places for sport in convenient locations.

Sport England promotes the wider use of existing and new sports facilities to serve more than one group of users. Sport England will encourage potential providers to consider opportunities for joint provision and dual use of facilities in appropriate locations.

Sports facilities provided at school sites are an important resource, not just for the school through the delivery of the national curriculum and extra-curricular sport, but potentially for the wider community. There are also direct benefits to young people, particularly in strengthening the links between their involvement in sport during school time and continued participation in their own time. Many children will be more willing to continue in sport if opportunities to participate are offered on the school site in familiar surroundings. Many schools are already well located in terms of access on foot or by public transport to the local community and so greater use of the sports facilities outside normal school hours should not add significantly to the number of trips generated by private car.

Use Our School is a resource to support schools in opening their facilities to the community and keeping them open. It provides tried and tested solutions, real life practice, tips from people making it happen, and a range of downloadable resources link here

National Governing Bodies for sport (NGBs)

The RFU advise that page 102 of the draft masterplan shows the indicative locations and headline purposes of the Community Greens. The RFU notes the draft masterplan states 'sports pitches are to be provided within the Community Greens in accordance with the MDDC Playing Pitch Strategy unless offsite provision in a favourable location is agreed with MDDC'.

Cullompton RFC is located 1.3miles from the East Cullompton development and the adopted MDDC Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) states the rugby clubs adult pitch is currently overplayed by 2.8 Match Equivalent sessions per week, with development of the women's and girls game adding additional demand on the current pitches. In addition, five rugby teams (one adult, two youth and two minis teams), requiring a minimum of one rugby pitch, are predicted to be generated through planned housing at East Cullompton to 2033.

With significant constraints at their existing site, the rugby club are proactively seeking viable sites to relocate with the PPS indicating a 4 adult pitch site with appropriate ancillary facilities is the minimum requirement aligned to the predicted team growth. The rugby club strong preference is to relocate to a site within the Culm Garden Village development, with space adjoining the new cricket club site initially identified by the rugby club to explore further.

The Football Foundation (FF) wishes to highlight the need for a single multi-functional and sustainable sporting hub site for East Cullompton. This is as is set out in the Mid Devon Playing Pitch Strategy (September 2021) recommendations.

The FF notes the following extracts from the strategy which support this need:

- The population from the East Cullompton housing growth area to 2033 is expected to generate demand for three adult, two youth and two mini pitches as a minimum, which should be accommodated within a community hub pitch site
- In order to provide a flexible, sustainable site which could accommodate a variety of pitch sizes and sports, a site of four hectares is recommended, which includes provision of a clubhouse/changing facilities.

Furthermore, the FF also wishes to draw attention to the fact that East Cullompton has been highlighted as a possible location for a full size 3G subject to it being delivered either a) in association with identified football pitches as a hub site and/or b) in association with the school.

Conclusion

Whilst supportive of the principle of development we would welcome further information and discussions to ensure the proposal meets the sport and physical activity needs of its proposed community on site and off site in line with the NPPF.

9. Blackdown Hills AONB

This response is made on behalf of the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.

We are pleased that the Connecting the Culm project (which is led by the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership) is referenced in the consultation documentation. To date, the Connecting the Culm project and team members have played an important role in the Culm Garden Village stakeholder forum, shared information and data including via the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment process and have added value to the Masterplan, through embedding resilience principles on a whole catchment scale into the process, to create an holistic approach to flood and drought management, alongside improvements to water quality, restoring biodiversity and storing carbon. We believe that there are significant opportunities to improve resilience both within and outside of the current allocation boundary, through targeted nature based solutions that could also provide 'blue routes' through the new development as well as create a 'resilience exemplar' country park(s).

We look forward to continued joint working with MDDC and others through the Connecting the Culm project, that is morphing and diversifying as it closes one funding chapter (Interreg 2 Seas) and opens others (Devon Resilience Innovation Project- DRIP and Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund- NEIRF, plus emerging partnerships with asset managers including Network Rail and National Highways). Through the Connecting the Culm 25 year Blueprint, we have a route-map to a resilience catchment and have set targets up to 2050, with milestones at 2030 and 2040. It is clear that to restore the function of the whole catchment and build resilience is not a quick fix (£12.7 million investment over 25 years) but it will ultimately create 'headroom' and resilience to the East Cullompton/Culm Garden Village development itself, via upstream nature based solution interventions.

We are pleased to see that the Local Plan allocation policies have remained to the fore, noting the element of Policy CU9 regarding protecting the setting of the AONB. We support the guiding principle that the development should very much be seen as an integral part of Cullompton and yet

the eastern extent of the allocation site, and in time a larger development, should present a more natural rural fringe that 'fits' the landscape. We agree that the purpose of planting to the east should not be to screen the new development, but to enhance the natural setting and filter views from the AONB for example. As a key principle, we see the inclusion of green infrastructure as a fundamental element of this development and consequently would wish to ensure that this aspect of the infrastructure delivery plan is not weakened or overlooked.

The proximity to the AONB offers the potential for enhanced opportunities for non-car access, utilising new and enhanced off-road routes and quiet lanes. However it will be important to ensure that there are no unintended consequences for the AONB from such a large development close-by, including visitor pressures at certain sites, increased use of narrow, winding and steep lanes, and car and commercial traffic from the development taking shortcuts across the AONB.

These comments are made on behalf of the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership in respect of its role to safeguard the distinctive landscape, wildlife, historical and architectural character of the Blackdown Hills whilst fostering the social and economic wellbeing of communities, and recognising the special cultural and geographical relationship between the AONB and the market towns surrounding it, including Cullompton. It is recognised that the AONB Partnership comprises a wide range of interests and organisations and that the comments made will not necessarily always be consistent with the views of individual partnership organisations, or responses made by organisations as statutory consultees.

Trusting that these comments are helpful in progressing the SPD.

10. Network Rail

Thank you for consulting Network Rail on East Cullompton Masterplan SPD. This email forms the basis of our response.

As Network Rail is a publicly funded organisation with a regulated remit it would not be reasonable to require Network Rail to fund rail improvements necessitated by commercial development. It is therefore appropriate to require developer contributions to fund such improvements. With this in mind I would strongly urge that when the council undertakes its viability testing for any proposed allocated sites it considers the impact the proposal may have on the railway infrastructure. The cost of mitigating any impact may have a bearing on the viability and deliverability of any such proposed site allocations and future masterplans.

Network Rail is a statutory undertaker responsible for maintaining and operating the country's railway infrastructure and associated estate. Network Rail owns, operates, maintains and develops the main rail network. This includes the railway tracks, stations, signalling systems, bridges, tunnels, level crossings and viaducts. The preparation of development plan policy is important in relation to the protection and enhancement of Network Rail's infrastructure.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

Policy CU8 acknowledges the reopening of Cullompton Station. The requirement is to support transport needs by working with Network Rail to promote new stations at both Cullompton and Wellington (albeit Wellington is not within your plan area but the development of both stations is coming forward together). As the proposals are developed, Network Rail would request detailed consideration to the quantification of demand for rail travel and should include identification of any

contributions to further improvements that would be merited at Cullompton. It could be that the predicted growth may increase future demands which may, in turn, necessitate the need for enhancements to facilities such as waiting rooms, improved passenger information, toilets and parking.

Transport Assessments and Level Crossings

Where there is an adverse impact on the operation of the railway, Network Rail will require appropriate mitigation measures to be delivered as part of the planning application process. This might be an increase in the use of an existing level crossing.

Network Rail has a strong policy to guide and improve its management of level crossings, which aims to; reduce risk at level crossings, reduce the number and types of level crossings, ensure level crossings are fit for purpose, ensure Network Rail works with users / stakeholders and supports enforcement initiatives. Without significant consultation with Network Rail and if proved as required, approved mitigation measures, Network Rail would be extremely concerned if any future development impacts on the safety and operation of any of the level crossings within Mid- Devon. The safety of the operational railway and of those crossing it is of the highest importance to Network Rail.

Level crossings can be impacted in a variety of ways by planning proposals:

- By a proposal being directly next to a level crossing
- By the cumulative effect of development added over time
- By the type of crossing involved
- By the construction of large developments (commercial and residential) where road access to and from site includes a level crossing
- By developments that might impede pedestrians ability to hear approaching trains
- By proposals that may interfere with pedestrian and vehicle users' ability to see level crossing warning signs
- By any developments for schools, colleges or nurseries where minors in numbers may be using a level crossing
- By any development or enhancement of the public rights of way

It is Network Rail's and indeed the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR) policy to reduce risk at level crossings not to increase risk as could be the case with an increase in usage. The Office of Rail Regulators, in their policy, hold Network Rail accountable under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and that risk control should, where practicable, be achieved through the elimination of level crossings in favour of bridges or diversions.

The Council have a statutory responsibility under planning legislation to consult the statutory rail undertaker where a proposal for development is likely to result in a material increase in the rail volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway:-

- (Schedule 4 (j) of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order, 2015) requires that "…development which is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway" (public footpath, public or private road) the Planning Authority's Highway Engineer must submit details to both the Secretary of State for Transport and Network Rail for separate approval.

The developer is required to fund any required qualitative improvements to the level crossing as a direct result of the development proposed.

Consultation on pre-application and planning applications

Network Rail is a statutory consultee for any planning applications within 10 metres of relevant railway land and for any development likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway. With this in mind any planned future development (both residential and employment) should take into account any adverse impact on railway and therefore, Network Rail will require appropriate mitigation measures to be delivered as part of the planning application process.

We would therefore appreciate the Council providing Network Rail with an opportunity to comment on any future pre-application or planning applications should they be submitted for sites adjoining the railway or within close proximity to the railway as we may have more specific comments to make (further to those above).

We trust these comments will be considered in your preparation of the forthcoming policy documents.

11. National Grid

These representations are prepared on behalf of National Grid Electricity Distribution (South West) Plc (NGED), formerly Western Power Distribution (South West) Plc, in response to the East Cullompton Masterplan SPD (July 2022) which is subject to public consultation.

Introduction

NGED owns and is responsible for electrical distribution apparatus within the area subject to this Local Plan and is the licensed network operator with statutory duties and powers including compulsory purchase powers to enable the retention of its infrastructure.

In preparing development plans, local planning authorities (LPA) have a duty to safeguard the operation of National Grid's infrastructure to enable NGED to supply electricity in the most efficient and cost effective manner. In the majority of cases this will involve retention of the existing infrastructure in situ, including overhead power lines and pylons.

Where diversion and/or undergrounding of overhead lines is deemed necessary to enable the development of a proposed allocation, lower voltage lines (up to 33kV) can normally be undergrounded or diverted without significant concern. However, where land allocations affect 132kV lines, the LPA are advised to engage with NGED at the earliest opportunity in the plan-making process to confirm:

a) whether the lines could be accommodated within the development site; or

b) the viability and feasibility of diverting and/or undergrounding overhead lines.

This includes, where relevant, ensuring the agreement of third party landowners to the provision of new infrastructure on their land and subsequent agreement between the LPA and NGED to appropriate wording within policy or guidance.

In allocating land affected by high voltage power lines, the LPA should take into account the additional costs involved in their diversion and/or undergrounding and the potential impact on timescales for delivery of the development.

NGED cannot be held accountable for the absence of a planned solution for a proposed diversion route or undergrounding of an overhead power line or any subsequent reduction in the allocation

site's development capacity, where the LPA and/or developer/landowner has not agreed proposals with NGED prior to the adoption of the Local Plan.

In light of the above, NGED does not object to the allocation of land upon which its infrastructure is present, subject to the following steps being taken by the LPA in preparing the Local Plan:

1. Priority should be given to retention of overhead lines wherever possible, with design principles included within the allocation policy or accompanying guidance to safeguard the retained lines and incorporate sensitively into the development, whilst achieving high standards of design and an efficient use of land;

2. Early engagement with NGED to establish whether NGED's infrastructure can be accommodated within the development or whether diversion/undergrounding is feasible;

3. Where diversion/undergrounding is required, ongoing dialogue with NGED to agree a potential route prior to adoption of the Local Plan, as outlined above;

4. For strategic allocations and sites significantly affected by overhead lines (e.g. with 5 or more pylons on site), NGED recommends early masterplanning and the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents to demonstrate site capacity and establish principles for the retention/diversion or undergrounding of overhead lines, with the agreement of NGED.

In the context of point 4, NGED welcomes the preparation of a supplementary planning document for the masterplanning of East Cullompton. However, concerns are raised regarding the potential implications of the draft masterplan for National Grid's strategically important 132kV line.

Section 4.7 of the draft SPD deals with utilities and specifically the existing National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) 400kV line and NGED's 132kV lines which traverse the site. Although the SPD recognises that the 400kV lines are a fixed constraint to be incorporated into the masterplan, in respect of the 132kV it states:

"There are options available to reduce the effect of the Western Power Distribution (132kV) power lines. The land over which the lines pass within the site benefits from 'lift and shift' clause over the route easement. This enables the landowner to alter the path of the power lines if an alternative route is available. Land north of the allocation is also in the ownership of the landowner over which the WPD cables currently pass."

The East Cullompton Activity Framework on page 84 illustrates an area through the masterplan where it considers that a "*development area [is] enabled by undergrounding powerlines*".

On page 93, the SPD explains the Council's preference to underground the 132kV line:

"The potential to underground overhead powerlines should be explored, particularly where leaving them in-situ would place a significant obstruction and detraction from the quality and quantity of residential areas. Mid Devon District Council's preference is for the powerlines to be moved underground but a final decision will be subject to further masterplanning, feasibility and viability work.

The SPD Masterplan shows the eastern 132kv line undergrounded as this would cut through and segregate residential areas hindering the creation of a coherent development form. The area of land made available for development by undergrounding the 132kv lines (as shown) equates to around 7ha. or approximately 250 homes within the allocation area."

It goes onto set out how land beneath the powerlines could be used if retained overhead:

"The land beneath the powerlines is not considered suitable for the primary useable areas of public open space, where the presence of the lines would undermine the quality of the spaces beneath. The land beneath may be used for ancillary open space, wildlife corridors, streets and active travel corridors and potentially renewable energy generation."

NGED does not object to the Council's expression of a preference to underground the overhead lines as part of this masterplan and it welcomes the acknowledgement within the SPD that a final decision on the treatment of the overhead lines will be taken following further masterplanning, feasibility and viability work. However, NGED would like to take this opportunity to comment upon the Council's assumptions regarding the diversion and/or undergrounding of the 132kV and the perceived benefits to the masterplan.

The pylon towers on this route were constructed in 1989 and are in excellent condition. They would normally have a further lifespan well in excess of fifty years and there is no practical reason why development could not be built to either side of the lines with clearances maintained. Diversion of the overhead line circuits with underground cables would come at significant cost and operational disruption/risk with no obvious engineering benefit. Extensive additional work would need to be undertaken between National Grid, the local planning authority, landowners and developers to establish the feasibility, cost and viability of diverting or undergrounding the line before such proposals could be relied upon for the purposes of a future planning application.

National Grid has a duty to maintain its infrastructure in an efficient and cost effective manner. Diversion of the route onto land to the north, within the landowner's control, would increase the length of the overhead line and take a route which is considerably less efficient and direct than the current alignment, incurring additional cost and infrastructure into the National Grid Network for it to maintain.

Contrary to the claims within the SPD, proposals to underground the 132kV line would sterilise a corridor of land along the alignment of the line. Where high voltage electricity lines are undergrounded, National Grid is unable to support any development which could affect the operation of or obstruct the line, including buildings, tree planting, public highway or attenuation features over the cables; a 10m wide corridor of open ground would be required above the undergrounded cables. Conversely, where lines are retained overhead, the land beneath the lines can normally be used for green infrastructure, tree planting, drainage features and attenuation and public highway. Accordingly, the retention of the overhead lines offers greater opportunities to deliver an efficient and effective masterplan than proposals to underground. In addition, it would be necessary to install terminal towers at both ends of the overgrounded line. Land would need to be identified, and secured with willing landowners, to host the terminal towers and such towers are more visually imposing features than the normal pylons which they replace.

Proposals to underground or divert the electricity lines should also be considered in the context of the SPD's principle for carbon reductions, which is embedded in all disciplines of the planning process. The SPD should explore all opportunities to incorporate the overhead lines into the masterplan to avoid the considerable cost and carbon footprint associated with diverting or underground the lines and the additional infrastructure and construction processes this would involve.

Western Power Distribution issued a letter to Mid Devon District Council on 14 January 2022 requesting that the masterplanners engage with WPD (now National Grid) as soon as possible to agree the design principles associated with the 132kV line. To date, WPD/NGED has received no

response from Mid Devon District Council. The LPA is urged to engage NGED in the refinement of the East Cullompton SPD prior to its adoption, to ensure the implications of moving the overhead lines and the potential to retain the lines within the masterplan are both fully understood and reflected through an updated masterplan.

The SPD acknowledges the potential longer term growth of East Cullompton through further development to the north and east of the allocation. Such proposals, as illustrated within the SPD would have further implications for the 132kV line, with residential development proposed beneath the existing line to the east (as drawn it appears that MDDC assumes this would also be undergrounded). Whilst proposals for further expansion are yet to be confirmed through the emerging Local Plan, a long-term view of the proposals for the 132kV line is needed, taking into account the treatment of the 132kV line through the allocated site and the implications for the development of the wider site.

At the construction stage, any proposals to move the overhead line could have significant implications for the overall project cost, phasing and delivery.

These comments are intended to offer constructive comments on the draft SPD and masterplan. National Grid welcomes the positive steps being taken by Mid Devon District Council to establish a masterplan to inform the future planning of East Cullompton. However, it is concerned that the Council's preference to underground the 132kV line is misinformed and fails to take into account the implications for developable land, phasing and project cost. Officers are also reminded that NGED has statutory powers which it may exercise to retain the overhead line in situ.

National Grid would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its willingness to engage with Officers, prior to adoption of the SPD, to inform the masterplanning process.

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Appendix 2 Summary of changes

Topic	Comment	Changes made
Infrastructure	Substantial infrastructure needed first. East Cullompton will benefit from a 'Site Wide Phasing and Delivery Plan document'. The document should benefit from sufficient weight in the planning process, clearly outlining requirements and delivery mechanisms, to ensure that the development achieves appropriate phasing in terms of housing, education and employment. SPD text should reflect Local Plan that development will require some external funding.	Infrastructure requirements and delivery trigggers set out within policy. The SPD requires a site wide infrastructure delivery plan to be agreed, mechanisms for delivery to be set out within this process. The infrastructure delivery section includes references to the need for external funding and some additional text added for clarity.
Honiton Road	A373 is a major concern; major improvements needed. Outcomes from the Junction 28 mitigation option work need to inform the policy approach for the role and function of Honiton Road. This includes decisions regarding priority and speed limits. Honiton Road is an A road so downgrading this and reducing the speed limit are unlikely to be achievable. Crossings of this road are going to be important given this road passes through the middle of the development but the strategic nature of the road cannot be lost. 20mph requirement goes beyond a principle and should refer to the aim/objective of safer streets. Key roads (Honiton Road) may need to be higher speeds – to be proven at application stage that principle is met.	The SPD requires careful consideration of the treatment of Honiton Road to provide a safe environment for people and to continue to function as an A road. Detailed design of Honiton Road to be included in the infrastructure delivery plan requirements. The SPD references the need for further technical design and assessment of the approach to Honiton Road. Reference to a 20mph speed restriction removed but left emphasis on the need for design solutions to slow speeds retained.
J28	Improvements to the motorway junction should be carried out first; the allowance of 500 houses before delivery of junction improvements now seems too high. It should be clarified that the 'required after first 500 homes completed' is subject to the prior delivery of the Town Centre Relief Road. National Highways require confidence that a proposed scheme adequately mitigates the SRN impacts of development at Cullompton and provides safe and suitable facilities to accommodate increased active	The SPD reflects existing policy requirements for improvements to J28. Text added to reflect requirement for TCRR. Further work on J28 improvements and modelling of the capacity of the junction is being carried out through separate workstreams.
Town Centre Relief Road	SPD should make it clear that the TCRR needs to be delivered first. Query whether the 'Delivered by 2023' timetable is realistic	SPD to be updated to reflect delivery timescale.
Street hierarchy	Lack of any reference to the use of Saunders Way as part of the vehicular mobility strategy. The road should connect into the main street of East Cullompton and that this should be referenced as an option in the SPD. A new road is proposed to run south (and then west) from Honiton Road. important to recognise that the masterplan is strategic in nature and does not intend this to define the precise location which will instead be defined through planning outline and detailed applications.	Masterplan amended to show link into Kingsmill. Text added to clarify that streets could take a different alignment subject to preferred junction location.
Sustainable transport	Sustainable transport options should be delivered early to promote step change in behaviour. J28 capacity improvements still required for car borne movements.	Infrastructure requirements and delivery trigggers set out within policy. The SPD requires a site wide infrastructure delivery plan to be agreed.
Active travel	Pedestrian and cycle routes should have signage. Active travel improvements are funded by developer contributions/ linked to public funding projects – further thought is required regarding costs and likelihood of funding mechanism achieving delivery. Reference to central, southern and northern active travel crossing of the M5, but with only 2 shown and 'potential' future crossing to north part of CGV. Flexibility in timing of delivery of active travel connections across the M5 corridor is crucial given the opportunity for limited release before M5 junction improvements combined with the need for these junction improvements to facilitate active travel connection across the M5. The footway connection along Honiton Road is not complete and some areas are on private land. The whole length would need upgrading to a pedestrian/cycle footway and it is questionable whether this should be next to the busy A373 or whether a completely segregated route elsewhere should be provided instead.	SPD to refer to the need for signage. Further work being carried out on sustainable travel through separate workstream. The SPD requires a site wide infrastruture delivery plan to be agreed. No change to SPD - mobility plan shows 3 crossings. Approach to delivery of active travel crossings clarified. Infrastructure delivery table amended to include delivery of active travel in early phases and in line with capacity improvements to J28.
Mobility hubs	Not clear on what the mobility hub is; not sure it will be successful in a rural community.	Additional text added to expand information on mobility hubs. Further work being carried out on mobility hubs through separate workstream.

Topic	Comment	Changes made
Primary school	Location not safe due to proximity to Honiton Road; school needs to be at the heart of the development. The primary school is next to the main road. This is a dangerous area for young children. It will also cause more congestion at drop off and pick up times along an already over used road. Whilst this SPD cannot change adopted Local Plan policy, we consider that the SPD should not repeat this requirement from the Local Plan for the school to be delivered in phases 1 and 2.	SPD requires traffic calming and safe crossing points. Text amended to include flexibility on location of primary school to north of Honiton Road and addition of requirement for safe school access and appropriate space for drop off away from primary streets. No change to SPD wording for delivery of school - policy requirement.
Healthcare	No allocation for doctor or dentist.	Text added to expand on potential uses within community hub and multi-use community building. MDDC in discussions with NHS.
20 minute neighbourhood	The SPD could be clearer in defining the 'twenty-minute place' approach to ensure meaningful achievement of this principle.	Commentary added about application of 20 min neighbourhood at local scale and context
Community hubs: location	Wrong location for community hub: too far east - assumption of further development to the east. Fordmore should not be the principal community hub. Not central to the allocation; does not deliver a 'heart' to the development. Encourages too much development along the Honiton Road. Should be co-located with school and healthcare.	Text clarified to explain why Fordmore will be principal centre, and that it will expand to provide broader range of uses including further retail and community space, that it will be accessible (via primary street and active travel) and that it would have potential to expand further if proposals for the GV proceed. Honiton Road requires active frontages in order to reduce the speed limit. SPD to include flexibilty on school location, however, current location provides safe walking to community hub.
Community hubs: uses	Small community hubs do not provide required facilities for the number of houses. Need for an indoor meeting/activity space to cater for a range of activities. Potential for one of the designated 'play areas' to be focussed at teenagers and explore whether there is demand for skate park, free-running/parkour equipment. SPD not clear whether residential can be included in community hubs - green box on page 87 refers to retirement services but not clear if this means retirement living. Community hubs should exclude green space. Fordmore north and south would decrease to 2ha in tune with local plan requirement for local centre.	SPD to provide further explanation on what community hubs should contain. Reference to community buildings to include catering for a range of indoor sports and activities and potential for a health hub. Specific reference to teenage play to be included. SPD changed include allowance for some residential where it does not detract from intended character or limit community hub functions. No change proposed to exclude green space. Some public / open space to be delivered as part of bespoke community hub typology. Larger area also required to allow residential uses and some land covered by existing uses. Requirement added for clear governance to be set out in developer proposals.
Commercial uses	Fordmore Farm will not be able to provide larger retail / supermarket that is needed. Suggest a large supermarket, a new food pub, other retail to make East Cullompton a destination. Size of industrial units and type of industry needs to be carefully considered - shortfall of micro and small units making start-up business difficult. SPD does not reflect the consented development at Fordmore Farm (21/00349/FULL) (Class E development, agricultural style warehouse type buildings). Commercial area in right place, strong east-west cycle route good. Less understood is primary road through commercial area (not attractive gateway). Not clear how amount of land to meet 32ksqm employment floorspace has been calculated. Interaction between commercial areas and mixed use community hub is not clear with reference that these have overlapping uses. It is unclear whether these built forms include curtilage areas, such as parking. The total land budget from these inputs does not meet 160ha.	SPD includes retail within the commercial area as well as within the community hubs, and sets out appropriate uses for commercial areas. Text changed from 'integrating employment' to 'integrating commercial' – text already refers to appropriately scaled retail being provided in this area. SPD updated to reflect consented development. No change to primary route through commercial area which should be designed to be attractive – not industrial area. Further explanation on commercial land calculation provided.
Sports facilities	Not clear where sports facilities are going to be within the allocation. 3G sports pitch needed in Cullompton area. In order to provide a flexible, sustainable site which could accommodate a variety of pitch sizes and sports, a site of four hectares is recommended, which includes provision of a clubhouse/changing facilities.	Text amended to confirm size of space at Fordmore Farm is sufficient to provide a multi-pitch hub rather than individual pitches but final location of sports pitches to be confirmed. SPD to make specific reference to sports being provided in accordance with MDDC's Playing Pitch Strategy. 3G pitch is not a specific policy requirement but is required in the Cullompton area by the Playing Pitch Strategy.

Topic	Comment	Changes made
Green space	Not enough and all at the edges - larger green space needed on Cullompton side. Better dog walking parks. Feather into the edges of the development; more trees and hedges included; include allotments. Keep element of flat multi-use informal space outside pitch layouts to encourage 'free-play' for children & families. Unclear which areas will have the space to function as parkland and nature reserve rather than just as functional travel corridors. It would be useful if the SPD could include a map to show the preferred locations for the 6ha of amenity green space; the public parkland; and the nature reserve. Eastern Loop would act principally as a leisure route providing indirect routes in place of active travel desire lines. The interaction with the countryside would be inherently limited by the predominant definition of the allocation edged by hedgerow boundaries.	Text expanded on green space uses, including allotments and what can be included within the community greens and green corridors. Community growing space such as orchards in community greens and traditional allotment sites provided separately within strategic GI. Changes made to make clearer requirement that detailed proposals demonstrate an appropriate building and landscape treatment to rural edge. Eastern Loop is not a formal road but active travel route Community greens allow for free play.
Fords	Fords should not be prioritised. Implications for flows and water quality.	Text amended but aspiration for fords as crossings to remain to provide place making connections with water.
Climate change	Houses should be net zero with renewable energy. Climate change adaptation could be addressed more explicitly in the sub-section on Natural Capital. Further emphasis should be put on the phrase 'reduce carbon emissions'. The NPPF uses the phrase 'contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions'. Strong digital connectivity should be included in the table as a Substitute Approach to achieve reduced carbon emissions.	SPD sets out net zero/renewable energy expectations from developers within existing policy framework. Natural Capital section expanded to add requirements under 'enhancing the landscape structure' for planting to demonstrate climate resilience and biosecurity. Change to carbon emissions and digital connectivity text made.
Air quality	Although air quality assessments are required, they will need to be monitored at regular intervals through the construction phases and afterwards.	Change to text made.
Density	Flexibility should be afforded to residential densities towards the edges of the community.	Density expressed is an average. Text amended to reflect treatment of rural edges.
Drainage	Permeable paving could be used as well as rain gardens, swale, filter trenches.	Permeable paving added to text.
Residential	Affordable homes should be a mixture of rents and purchase options. Other housing options should be considered such as co-living accommodation blocks and adaptable homes. Wheelchair accessible homes should be included within the housing designs to be fully inclusive and giving options for a range of clients. The design of homes needs to consider the pavement space and access to homes for people with mobility vehicles. The requirement for front gardens and bike storage overly prescriptive. Storage can be provided in back gardens and not all houses need a front garden.	No change required. Policy sets housing requirements which will be dealt with at planning application stage. Reference to access added. Change made to separate out requirement for front gardens and storage of bikes.
Self build	Space should be allocated to self build.	This is a policy requirement and is set out in the SPD. Additional text added on custom and self-build added.
Parking	Less emphasis on 'strategic provision' for parking as a preferred strategy to enable flexibility in approach as applications progress and the delivery of electric vehicle charging.	No change. The SPD provides for flexiblity.
Waste	Could be expanded to ensure waste is minimised and considered during the design and layout of a development. Include reference to Devon Waste Plan.	Changes made.
Power lines	Concerns raised regarding the potential implications of the draft masterplan for National Grid's strategically important 132kV line. National Grid do not support undergrounding. A 10m wide corridor of open ground would be required above the undergrounded cables. Moving power lines is at the landowners' expense. Suggest wording: "The land over which the lines pass within the site benefits from 'lift and shift' clause over the route easement. This enables the landowner (at their cost) to alter the path of the power lines if an alternative route is available". 16ha affected by the 440kv powerlines does not have a note to accompany this figure - could usefully explain that this area enables another 16ha of green infrastructure. Reasonable to advise that some commercial could come forward in the 440kv powerline corridor.	SPD refers to aspiration for undergrounding but further work needed. SPD to be updated to reflect 10m corridor. Wording added that where powerlines are undergrounded, they do not have to follow the existing overhead line which could allow better accommodation of easements. Wording on lift and shift clause amended. Note regarding the 16ha area and that commercial could be appropriate as mix of uses if included sensitively.

Topic	Comment	Changes made
Heritage	Settings of heritage assets on maps indicate risk of harm but further work needed; no robust evidence base and justification for, or mitigation of, any harm to the heritage assets, or their settings. Archaeological investigation will need to be used to identify opportunities to positively influence the detail of design/layout as planning applications come forward, as well as to inform mitigation for the loss of any undesignated archaeological assets. Grade I listed Wood Barton should be shown as a significant listed building.	Maps to be changed to refer to indicative settings of heritage assets with further assessment required for planning applications. SPD to specify further work required by developers prior to their layouts being set. Text changes made to archaeological assessment. Wood Barton already shown but annotation added.
Biodiversity net gain	It is disappointing to note that the SPD is seeking offsite delivery of BNG, as onsite delivery is Natural England's preferred approach. Text should reference country park is not a local plan requirement. SPD oversteps in referring to BNG being delivered adjacent to boundary and must achieve landscape enhancement.	SPD changed to reflect onsite delivery first. Wording changed so that the off-site BNG can be delivered in suitable areas that provide accessible greenspace for the allocation as well as adjacent to the allocation boundary.
Country Park	Not clear what this is or when it is likely to be delivered; need for a water park not established.	Text changed to expand the explanation of the country park. This is outside the area for the East Cullompton SPD but could start to be delivered through off-site biodiversity net gain and sports facilities.
Proximity to Kentisbeare/need for a green buffer	Wider garden village section shows development encroaching within Kentisbeare Parish.	No change to SPD. SPD is clear that the plans in Section 6 are indicative and the wider garden village is subject to the Local Plan process. Comments on Section 6 to be reported to policy team.
Sports clubs and all-through school	Sports facilities and all-through school shown along Horn Road should be in Cullompton and not in Kentisbeare Parish.	No change to SPD. Cricket club already has planning permission. This area is outside the East Cullompton SPD area and plans in Section 6 are indicative.
Potential wider area for garden village	Area shown for wider garden village includes listed buildings and areas of wildlife importance.	No change to SPD. SPD is clear that the plans in Section 6 are indicative and the wider garden village is subject to the Local Plan process. Comments on Section 6 to be reported to policy team.
Two-stage masterplanning process	The two-stage nature of the process: detailed approval of the allocation and an outline of thoughts about the longer term possibilities. One consequence is that facilities that are only required for a larger garden village may well be located outside the central area. More detailed planning should be undertaken before the East Cullompton Masterplan is signed off.	No change to SPD. The SPD can only focus on allocated land and unless/until further land is allocated, boundaries are not known and the whole area cannot be masterplanned.
Green boxes within SPD	These would benefit from either greater flexibility or a two tier structure for broader 'objectives/aims' and more tightly defined 'requirements'.	Text added to allow appropriate flexibility.
Process	Process diagram not clear on where Design Code and Phasing and Infrastructure Delivery Plan fit within the planning process. Approach to these documents needs further consideration and clarification.	Diagram updated and approach clarified. Both documents will need to be agreed with landowners / developers.
Design code	Further consideration needed on what a strategic design code should contain and how it works through the planning process. Appendix 1 needs further consideration. Design code not the right place to consider site-wide SUDS. Needs further technical work through planning application process.	Further work needed with landowners/developers to scope out strategic design code. Reference in SPD text changed and Appendix 1 removed. Site wide SUDS strategy removed. Strategic drainage requirements are incorporated into SPD, although treatment of SUDS retained within Design Code requirements. Further work needed for planning applications.
Corrections	References should be to National Highways not Highways England. On Page 109, Junction 28 rather than Junction 30. Clearer if 'profound change' bullet points retitled as 'profound change, evolving public policy and guidance'. Land outside allocation to east of Fordmore shown on all section 5 plans should be removed. 'East Cullompton Activity Framework' page 84. The key does not identify what is meant specifically by the thicker and thinner black lines. Key to community greens on plans is not clear.	Changes made
Evidence base	SPD should list background reports that it relies on.	No change. Unnecessary as these are published on the website as available.



East Cullompton Masterplan

Supplementary Planning Document

January 2023

Mid Devon DISTRICT COUNCIL

Culm Garden Village

This Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared by LDA Design on behalf of Mid Devon District Council with contributions from:

Vectos: Transport
City Science: Carbon Reduction Strategy
BSG Ecology: Ecology
Environment Systems: Ecosystem Services
WSP: Flooding and Drainage
BE Group: Employment and Skills

Version:	1.4
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Comment	Draft

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2015



East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

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East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

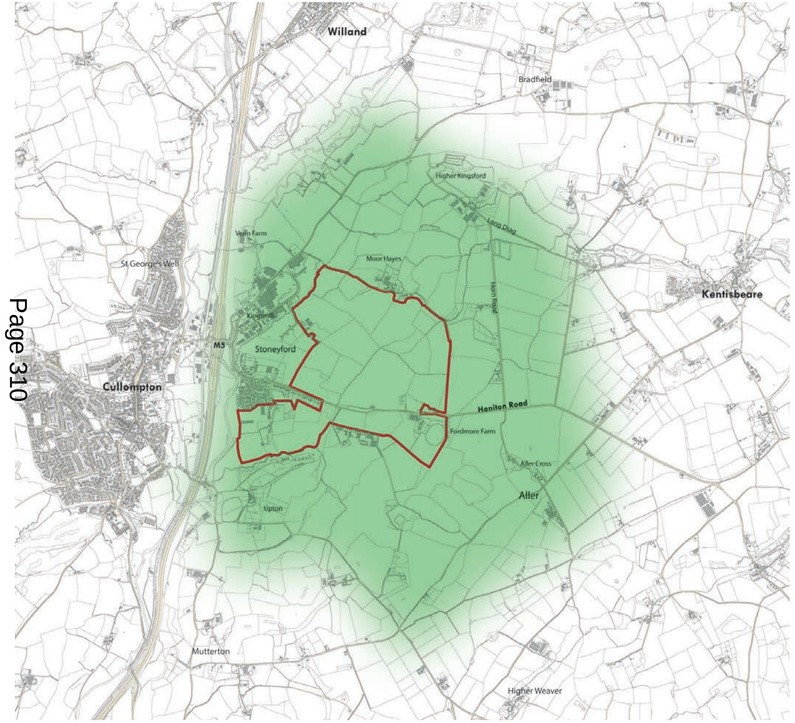
SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

Location

Scope and Purpose of the SPD



East Cullompton allocation area and potential area of consideration for wider Garden Village and Country Park

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

1.1 Background

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared to support the development of the allocated land east of Cullompton and the M5 (East Cullompton) to provide around 1750 homes plus at least another 850 post 2033, community and commercial facilities, public open space and general landscape and biodiversity enhancements. This SPD has been prepared on behalf of Mid Devon District Council.

This document provides guidance about how East Cullompton should be designed, developed and delivered in accordance with the sites allocation under Policy CU7 and in accordance with other relevant policies of the Mid Devon Local Plan.

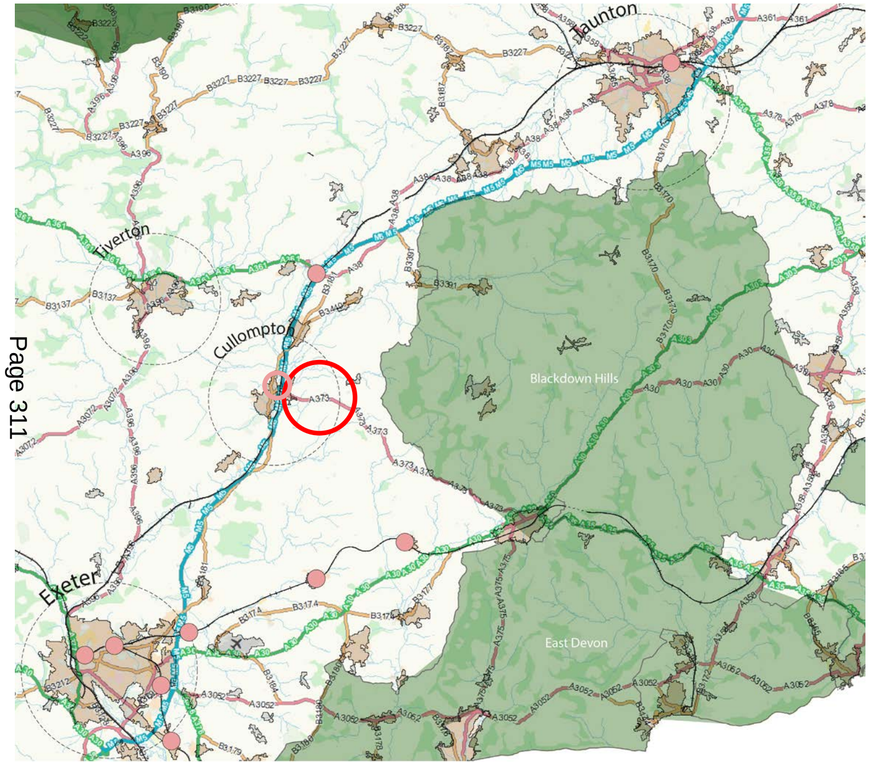
Whilst this document must work within the scope of the existing allocation and build upon the relevant East Cullompton policies within the Mid Devon Local Plan and Stage 1 SPD, it is clear that this document is also prepared during a period of profound change and evolving policy and guidance, namely:

- The urgent need to respond to the climate emergency and Mid Devon District Council's aspiration to become carbon neutral by 2030;
- The changes to the way we live and work as a result of the global pandemic;
- UK Government's future plans for the delivery of Culm Garden Village, one of 14 areas awarded Garden Village status in 2017 with the potential to deliver up to 5,000 new homes through the expansion and growth of East Cullompton;
- The introduction of the Environment Bill 2021 which supports nature recovery and biodiversity net gain;
- To embed principles for designing the built environment to improve health and wellbeing, having regard to best practice guidance such as Building for a Healthy Life.

This SPD will set design and delivery requirements for all future planning applications in East Cullompton to ensure that:

- Development aligns with requirements in Policy CU11 to minimise the carbon footprint of the development and meet Mid Devon District Council's aspirations to deliver Net Zero by 2030;
- It will follow the Garden Community Principles set out by the Town and Country Planning Association;
- It will follow the guidance set out in the National Model Design Code;
- It follows the principle that the future growth of Cullompton is about the creation of one place, where East Cullompton and a future Garden Village will form integral parts of a more self-supporting and self reliant Cullompton in the future;
- It will be fully capable of growing and expanding into and forming part of a future Culm Garden Village;
- Phasing and delivery will be designed from the outset and at every subsequent stage in its development, to create place and support and encourage new ways of living and working;
- Transport, energy or other Infrastructure is designed to serve East Cullompton but also forms part of a bigger connected network to allow for integration and connection with a future Garden Village and the wider town;
- At every stage in its development, the existing and the newly created landscapes into which East Cullompton is embedded will deliver a wide range of benefits from biodiversity net gain to high quality greenspaces to successful water management and flood attenuation.

This document is informed by extensive contextual analysis, technical survey work and local consultation that has been undertaken by the Council and its partners in relation to the East Cullompton allocation.



Approximate site location

Proposed Railway Station

N

Strategic Location of East Cullompton

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

1.2 Location and overview of the opportunity

Located in the Culm Valley of Mid Devon, Cullompton is centred on level ground on the western valley side of the River Culm. The Town has grown from this centre but is largely still contained within the valley sides. The name Cullompton is likely to be derived from the Celtic river name cwlwn ('looped' or 'winding' river) and –ton, suggesting an important early estate centre. The town has a varied character reflecting almost 2000 years of historical development. Cullompton will continue to develop as a fast growing market town and will be the principal focus of development for the district in the medium to long term in accordance with the development strategy set out in the Local Plan.

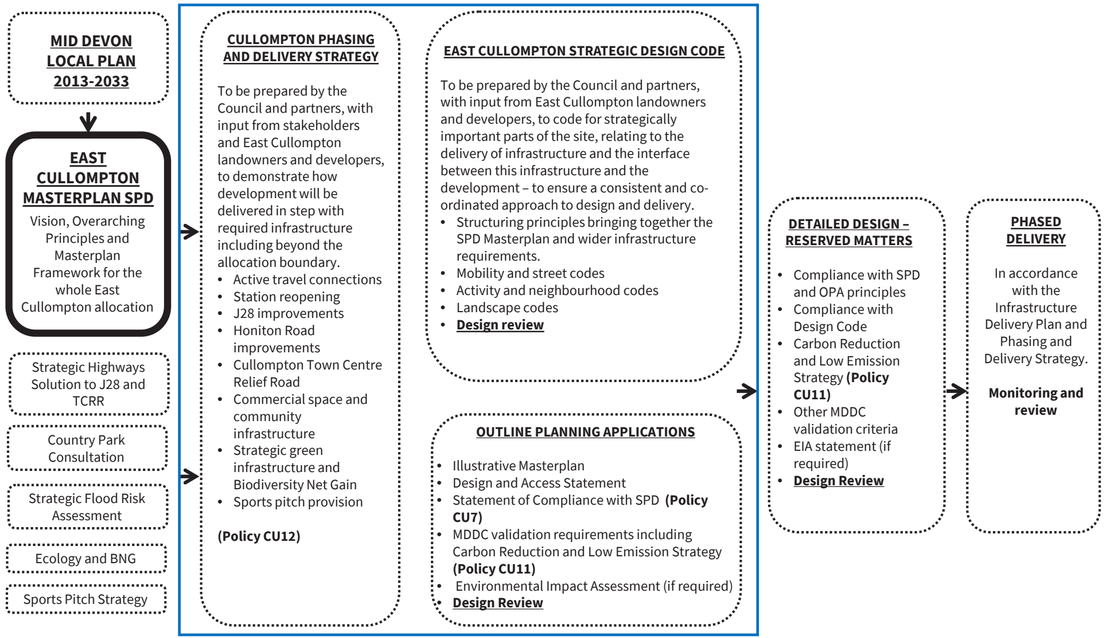
Cullompton is well located strategically within the south west. It is situated 11 miles north of Exeter and about 20 miles south west of Taunton. The M5 motorway runs close to the east side of the Town Centre. The B3181 runs through the centre of the town and links Exeter and Willand. The mainline railway runs alongside the motorway to the east. There is an existing station at Tiverton Parkway and there is a commitment from the Council in the Mid Devon Local Plan to re-open the train station at Cullompton. Highways improvements including Town Centre relief road and junction improvements are also planned in addition to the reopening of the railway station to improve the area's accessibility credentials. With work still underway on the preferred solution to address capacity issues at Junction 28 of the M5, this SPD has been designed to work with a number of solutions currently being considered.

New and existing residents will be in close proximity to job opportunities within Cullompton and also at Willand, Tiverton and Exeter. Future employment provision is expected to be centred around the Kingsmill industrial estate and within East Cullompton. The combination of highways improvements and a new railway station and the strategic growth of the town provides an opportunity to significantly raise the profile of Cullompton within the wider area. The major growth of the town will provide the opportunity to revitalise the town centre through additional investment, traffic and transport improvements. The growth of the town and proposed improvements will provide a significant boost to its vitality and viability, providing a more attractive environment.

The Wider Culm Garden Village Opportunity

This document provides comprehensive guidance in relation to the East Cullompton site allocation, as defined in the adopted Mid Devon Local Plan. However, reference is made to the wider Culm Garden Village opportunity. Culm Garden Village is one of only 14 areas initially awarded Garden Village Status by the Government in January 2017, with the potential to deliver up to 5,000 sustainable new homes in a country park landscape, with jobs, community facilities and transport, all integrated as part of the growth of Cullompton.

This SPD for the East Cullompton Allocation has been developed alongside the preparation of a Masterplan Framework which considers the wider Culm Garden Village opportunity. This has been done to ensure plans for East Cullompton could be successfully expanded into the wider Garden Village should that project come forward. The opportunities set out for the wider Garden Village are intended to provide a commentary only, further work will be required to define any proposals definitively and will be explored through the new Local Plan for Mid Devon 2023-2043 including opportunity for further community engagement.



NB: Work within the blue box can be progressed in parallel but the Phasing and Delivery Strategy and Strategic Design Code are to be complete before determination of planning applications.

Planning and Design Process Flow Diagram: The role of the SPD in relation to the Local Plan and the planning application process

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

1.3 Scope and purpose of the SPD

The Mid Devon District Council Local Plan allocates land to east of Cullompton and the M5 for the development of 2,600 new homes (1750 plus at least another 850 post 2033) alongside other commercial and community uses over the period to 2033 and beyond. The East Cullompton SPD supplements the adopted Local Plan policy for the area and has also been prepared in accordance with national planning policies and following a statutory consultation process. The SPD will form an important material consideration in the determination of subsequent planning applications for development of the site.

A Framework Masterplan for the wider Culm Garden Village opportunity has also been prepared and enclosed with this SPD. The East Cullompton Masterplan SPD reflects the principles and concepts of the wider Garden Village opportunity to ensure that East Cullompton could grow successfully and holistically in the future should the Garden Village project progress.

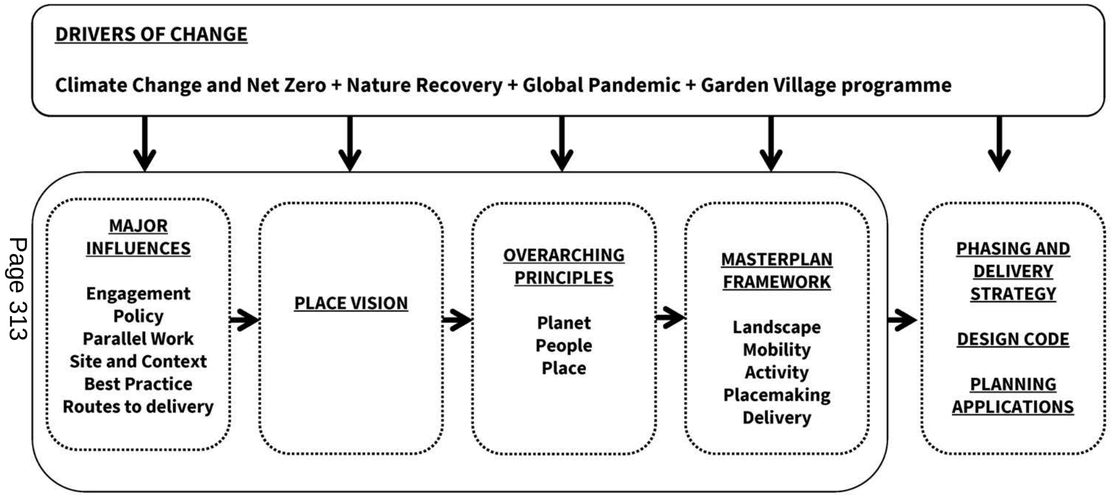
However the East Cullompton Masterplan has been planned as a cohesive place in its own right within the emerging allocation area and statutory policy context. The SPD sets the requirements for the East Cullompton Allocation only. Any proposals for the wider Garden Village will be subject to separate Local Plan and planning application processes and have been included in this SPD as indicative context for future growth only.

The Masterplan SPD sets a vision and overarching principles for the new development of East Cullompton. It also provides detail to supplement the strategic development plan policies for the site by setting specific design requirements. The Masterplan Framework identifies the major land uses and infrastructure to be accommodated and broad principles relating to phasing and delivery to ensure a comprehensive approach.

The masterplan SPD is strategic in nature and does not intend to define the precise location and extent of elements of the plan, this will be defined through planning applications and work to agree the detailed phasing and delivery strategy. The requirements set by the SPD for East Cullompton are highlighted in a green text box. Developers are expected to demonstrate in future applications through a Statement of Compliance how these requirements have been met as well as how plans will support the Vision and Overarching Principles in Section 2.

More detailed work will need to be undertaken following the SPD. The Planning and Design Process Flow Diagram illustrates where the SPD sits in the planning process and the further phases of work that will be required for the design and delivery of comprehensive development. These include a more detailed Phasing and Delivery Strategy and a Strategic Design Code. Section 5 of the SPD sets these processes out further.

Planning for the outcomes we need



SPD PROCESS

Flow diagram illustrating the design process taken to the preparation of the SPD where major drivers of change such as climate change and nature recovery are seen as cross cutting themes which must guide every stage of the process. The SPD stages shown on the left indicate how the Masterplan Framework has been driven by a clear Place Vision and Overarching Principles which have in turn been defined by an appreciation of the major influences such as policy context, local engagement, routes to delivery and site characteristics.

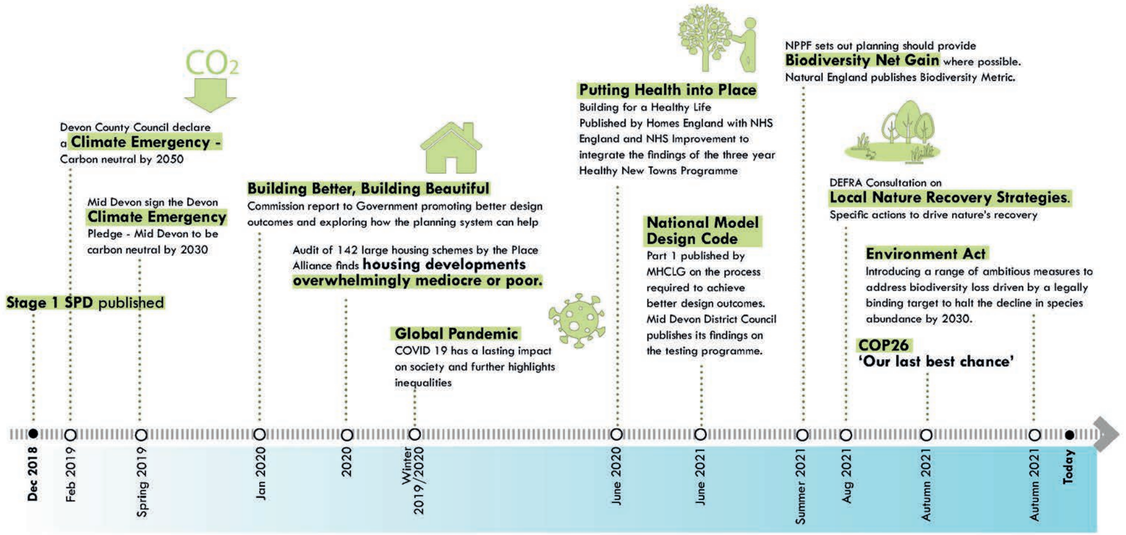
East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

SECTION TWO

VISION

Planet People and Place – A vision for East Cullompton, a future Garden Village and the whole town

Overarching Principles



Timeline of major influences that have emerged since the consultation on the Stage 1 SPD.

2.1 Planet People and Place – A vision for East Cullompton, a future Garden Village and the whole town

Much has changed since 2018 and the subsequent work undertaken on Stage 1 of the East Cullompton SPD. The pandemic in 2020 changed the way we live and work and in this period, Mid Devon District Council has declared a climate emergency, setting out the aspiration to become Carbon Neutral by 2030. In November 2021 at COP26 151 countries submitted new climate plans to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees C and to cut global emissions in half by the end of this decade.

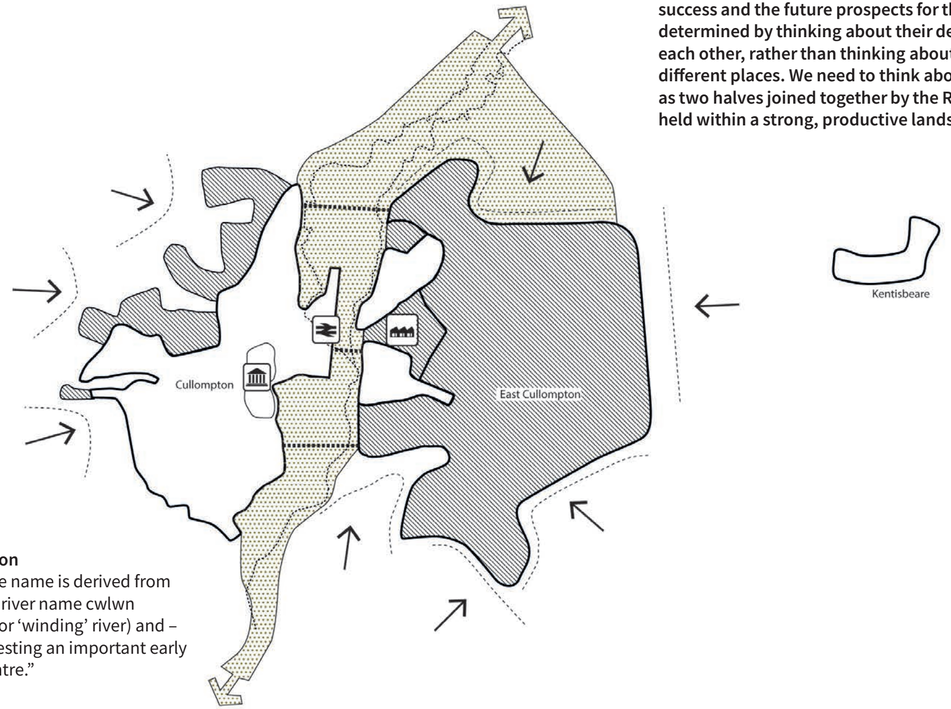
If we are to meet these targets then we need to make radical changes to the way we plan for development and growth. This SPD for East Cullompton and the wider Culm Garden Village masterplan framework that accompanies it marks the beginning of a new era. The typical patterns of development and "business as usual" solutions that we have all become accustomed to will fail to cut carbon and prevent us from adapting to new ways of living and working. From now on, we have to plan differently for a Net Zero future with the right balance of prescription and flexibility, with the express aim of delivering a Net Zero outcome, while creating a great place to live and work, all set within a healthy and bountiful Devon landscape and place that belongs to Cullompton.

This SPD is specifically about East Cullompton but the wider message is about the growth and development of Cullompton itself. The town has over 2000 years of history and its cycles of success and decline, growth and retreat, have reflected the massive shifts in social and economic change whether that was the wool trade or the arrival of the railway. In the first part of the 21st century growth on the scale envisaged here has been driven by the success of the Exeter City Region and although this is still largely the case, we need to shift our focus away from growth that perpetuates behaviours like out-commuting by private car or the continued physical separation of the home from the workplace or place of study and plan for a more circular economy. The growth of Cullompton to the east must be more resilient into the future, more self-supporting and interdependent with existing parts of the town.

The world is changing fast. East Cullompton can play a huge part in helping Cullompton become more self-supporting and resilient in the face of the climate emergency by offering greater choice and opportunity for its future residents in terms of how and where they work, choice of homes, place to learn and train, healthy living, greater access to the rich Devon landscape surrounding Cullompton and nature recovery and thriving. It can look to address some of the bigger challenges we face too like energy self-sufficiency, providing opportunities for local food growing and supply and harnessing the waters of the Culm and its tributaries for the benefit of nature and flood management.

East Cullompton is at the centre of what could become, in time, Culm Garden Village and must embrace Garden Village principles, including new approaches to how places like this are managed

East Cullompton can embrace Garden Village principles to feel different from Cullompton, but its success and the future prospects for the town will be determined by thinking about their dependence on each other, rather than thinking about them as two different places. We need to think about Cullompton as two halves joined together by the River Culm and held within a strong, productive landscape.



Cullompton
"The place name is derived from the Celtic river name cwlwn ('looped' or 'winding' river) and –ton, suggesting an important early estate centre."

Conceptual plan or 'mental map' of Cullompton in the future

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

and governed over time. East Cullompton will feel quite different from Cullompton but its success and the future prospects for the whole town including a future Garden Village will be determined by their interdependence on each other. We must think of them as one place rather than two different places.

The river, the railway and motorway might be regarded barriers for now, either real or perceived, but that must change over time and the development to the east must not only be seen as supporting the town centre and the existing communities and neighbourhoods in Cullompton but that it must also offer new facilities, new choices and new experiences to the east of the town, for the benefit of the whole town.

The mental map of a future Cullompton will change with expansion to the east, forming the shape of a butterfly with the historic form of the town and the River Culm at its centre. The analogy of the chrysalis gradually emerging as a butterfly in the future is quite a good way of thinking about future growth and the identity of Cullompton as a whole as it grows and evolves.

In the Stage 1 SPD there were nine principles set out for East Cullompton and they all remain important and are still highly relevant but there is an urgent need in the face of the climate emergency to strengthen the messages and to set out a vision for East Cullompton that is not only clear about what we must deliver but also be mindful and alive to how it connects to a changing town and how it might evolve and grow into the future Garden Village.

We have simplified and reinforced these principles under the headings of Planet, People and Place. Everything we do in relation to the masterplan framework for East Cullompton must keep these three driving principles in perfect balance and go on to demonstrate how we deliver the step changes required through practical and deliverable planning requirements and through good design at every stage.



Illustration of how East Cullompton could be developed following the overarching principles

2.2 Overarching Principles

By putting Planet, People and Place right at the forefront of the vision for East Cullompton, the development principles can deliver the outcomes we want to see, namely:

Planet

Regard Cullompton and East Cullompton as one place, make them interdependent and mutually supportive. This will strengthen the local economy, making the town more resilient. It will reduce out-commuting, reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and reduce noise and dust.

Transform water management and habitat creation in this part of the Culm Valley to reduce flooding, increase biodiversity and to make water and wildlife central to day-to-day life in East Cullompton.

Combine locally-sourced clean energy with reduced energy demand and energy-efficient, durable and adaptable buildings.

Protect natural resources, including existing vegetation and local soils and local habitats. Reconnect and strengthen local landscapes and increase woodland cover.

Use innovative and modern methods of construction to minimise waste and reduce pollution. To ensure waste from development can be minimised and to reduce inert material exported off site.

People

Improve human health and well-being by favouring walking and cycling over other modes, improving air and water quality and improving contact with nature.

Build a sense of community and sense of belonging around existing activities and uses and around the new community centres. Make them pedestrian-friendly and keep them largely traffic-free.

Offer choice and make better homes and workplaces that are flexible and adaptable for changing lifestyles.

Build sociable streets and rural lanes that encourage neighbourliness, outdoor living and outdoor play.

Make sure everyone is within a few minutes walk of a park or a greenspace or the opportunity to follow or cross a watercourse.

Place

Make it a compact and village-scale, combining well-crafted buildings and spaces that are pedestrian-friendly. Make the neighbourhoods safe by reducing traffic speeds and the dominance of cars.

Bring the scale of infrastructure down with narrower streets and spaces, something more in keeping with a village character.

Bring the rural character of East Cullompton alive by incorporating existing rural tracks, the hedgerows and the mature Oak trees that characterise this area.

Make the active travel and bus routes between East Cullompton and the town into green lanes that are rural in character.

Celebrate the presence of water and the crossing of, or the following of, watercourses part of the experience of daily life, such as the route to school or the workplace, or the journey to and from the new station or to the local shops.



East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

SECTION THREE

INFLUENCES

Policy Context

Carbon Principles

20 Minute Place

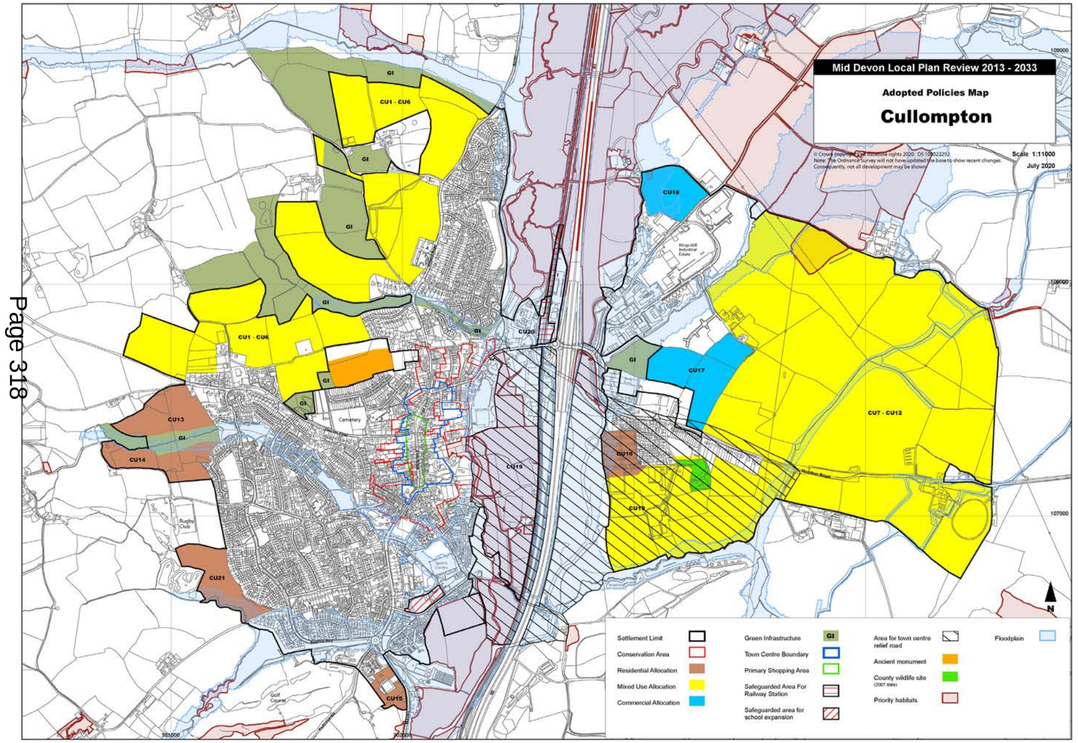
Natural Capital

Delivery and Phasing

Summary of Engagement

Parallel Work

Lessons from Elsewhere



Mid Devon Local Plan Adopted Policies Map: Cullompton

3.1 Policy Context

The Mid Devon District Council Local Plan

The Mid Devon Local Plan for the period 2013-2033 was adopted in July 2020 and forms the Development Plan for the area. The key policies from the adopted Local Plan in respect of the East Cullompton allocation are summarised below:

Policy S2 - Amount and Distribution of Development
This sets out the district's housing requirement for the plan period (2013-2033) of 7,860 dwellings. Central to the spatial strategy is the role of Cullompton in meeting the district's long-term development needs.

Policy S11 - Cullompton
This sets out a long-term vision for Cullompton to develop as a fast-growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon.

The town will become the strategic focus of new development reflecting its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity. This strategy will improve access to housing through urban extensions and expanded employment opportunities. There will be significant improvements to the town's infrastructure and connectivity, including the reopening of the railway station, and improved services for its population and nearby rural areas. Proposals will provide for approximately 3,930 dwellings, of which 1,100 will be affordable, and 73,500 gross square metres of commercial floor space over the plan period.

Key investment priorities include:

- Strategic mitigations to maintain highway capacity, safety, integrity, and sustainability including the M5 and local highway network;
- reopening of Cullompton Railway Station;
- Continue measures to support the implementation of the Cullompton Air Quality Action Plan;
- Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other;
- Provide community infrastructure such as education and enhanced open space to support new development proposals;
- Support measures to reduce flood risk within Cullompton and make provision for green infrastructure.

Policy CU7 - East Cullompton
This allocates a site of 160 hectares at East Cullompton, to the east of Junction 28 of the M5 for the development of an area of new settlement. Policy CU7 sets out a number of development requirements, covering a range of matters:

- 1,750 dwellings within the plan period and further development of at least 850 dwellings post 2033;
- 28% affordable housing to include extra care housing and at least ten pitches for gypsies and travellers, subject to viability;
- 5% of housing to be provided as serviced plots for sale to self-builders;
- 20,000 square metres commercial floorspace within the plan period and a further 12,000 post 2033, to include a care home or retirement complex, appropriately scaled retail development and other suitable uses such as offices and a hotel or leisure development;

- Provision of at least 40 hectares strategic green infrastructure;
- Provision of transport improvements to ensure safe and suitable access for all modes, including necessary capacity improvements to M5 Junction 28 and pedestrian and cycling links across the motorway to the existing town;
- Environmental protection and enhancement and noise mitigation where necessary;
- Assessment of land contamination and remediation if necessary;
- Land and facilities for community use including a new primary school to meet local needs arising;
- Contributions towards expansion of local secondary education facilities to meet needs arising;
- Carbon reduction and air quality improvements;
- Archaeological investigation and appropriate mitigation;
- An agreed phasing strategy to bring forward development and infrastructure in step and retain the overall viability of development; and
- Comprehensive Masterplanning of the development including at least two stages of public consultation and adoption of the Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document, before any planning application is determined.

Policy CU8 – East Cullompton Transport Provision

As part of the development of East Cullompton, contributions towards or delivery of the following transport infrastructure will be provided by all new development within the site:

- Capacity improvements at Junction 28 M5 to deliver a strategic highway improvement as demonstrated by capacity studies completed to assess the impact of the traffic generated from the site;
- Provision of appropriate highway improvements on roads around the development to ensure any unacceptable traffic impacts are mitigated;
- Reopening of Cullompton Railway Station;
- Provision of a network of streets linking to the existing highway network, and appropriate mitigation to reduce impacts on the existing road network such as Honiton Road;
- Provision of bus, pedestrian and cycle routes at appropriate locations throughout the development, creating an attractive, permeable network for non-car modes travelling within, into and out of the area;
- Safe and attractive cycle and pedestrian links to and from the town centre and within the mixed use urban extension;
- Creation of safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links between the development and the Kingsmill Industrial Estate;
- Implementation of travel plans and other non-traditional transport measures to minimise carbon footprint and air quality impacts;
- Bus service enhancements within, into and out of, the mixed-use urban extension, linking to Cullompton town centre;
- Bus service enhancements between Cullompton, Exeter, Tiverton Parkway and Tiverton

Policy CU9 – East Cullompton Environmental Protection

As part of the development of East Cullompton, the following environmental protection and enhancement measures will be implemented at the expense of all new development within the site:

- Measures to protect and enhance trees, hedgerows and other environmental features which contribute to the character and biodiversity, maintaining a wildlife network within the site and linking to the surrounding countryside;
- An area of 40 hectares for strategic green infrastructure, laid out and managed with an appropriate mix of public parkland, open space, landscaping and local nature reserve;
- Areas of equipped and laid out public open space, totalling 0.4 hectares of equipped children's play, 0.12 hectares for teenage

facilities, 6 hectares amenity green space, 9 hectares of parks, sports and recreation grounds, and 1.5 hectares of allotments;

- Protection and enhancement where possible of existing Public Rights of Way;
- Appropriate screening and landscaping for properties adjacent to the M5;
- Appropriate provision of a sewerage system to serve the development and a strategically designed, and phased, Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme to deal with all surface water from the development and arrangements for future maintenance;
- A strategic landscaping and tree planting scheme to mitigate landscape impact, protect the setting of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and enhance biodiversity and the character of development; and
- Design solutions which respect the settings of listed buildings adjoining the site.

Policy CU10 – East Cullompton Community Facilities

As part of the development of East Cullompton, the following community infrastructure will be provided at the expense of all new development within the site:

- A serviced site of 2.5ha for a new 630 place primary school, or alternatively 3ha of serviced land in two parcels of 1.1ha and 1.9ha appropriately located for the delivery of two new primary schools, at no cost to the Local Education Authority;
- A site of 2 hectares for a shopping and community centre, and the provision of a multi-purpose community building for youth, children and other community uses;
- Construction costs for a primary school capacity of at least 630 places plus additional early years provision, including the requisite land to deliver these facilities. The required primary school capacity should be delivered through the provision of either one or two schools;
- Contributions towards the expansion of secondary education facilities in the local area;
- Contributions towards the expansion or improvement of local library services
- Contribution towards sporting and leisure facilities; and
- Contributions towards a new recycling centre to serve Cullompton.

Policy CU11 – East Cullompton Carbon Reduction and Air Quality

The development of East Cullompton will be required to implement a Carbon Reduction and Low Emissions Strategy at the expense of all new development in the site. This will propose measures to minimise the overall carbon footprint of the development, making provision for sources of decentralised onsite renewable or low-carbon energy and ensure that impact of the site on air quality is acceptable, such as:

- Renewable and low carbon energy to provide a proportion of the site's energy use;
- Measures to ensure that residents, employees and businesses are encouraged to travel in the most sustainable fashion, including travel plans, information, car clubs, lift-sharing and infrastructure for low emission vehicles;
- Measures to encourage the sustainable treatment of waste;
- Measures to manage the impacts of construction;
- Offsite tree planting where sufficient cannot be accommodated onsite;
- Energy improvements to existing buildings; and
- Other measures to capture or mitigate carbon emissions and air quality impacts from development.

Policy CU12 – East Cullompton Phasing

A phasing strategy will be required for the development of East Cullompton to ensure that the development and infrastructure come forward in step, minimising the impact of development while ensuring that the development remains viable. The strategy should take account of the following requirements, variation of which will have to be carefully justified. Development shall be subject to the following:

- Provision of affordable housing will be broadly in step with the market housing;
- Provision of all serviced self-build plots after strategic highways infrastructure has been completed;
- Provision of commercial development in step with housing, at a rate of at least 1 hectare per 500 occupied dwellings;
- Provision of strategic green infrastructure broadly in step with development, with public open space provided at a rate of at least 1 hectare per 150 dwellings or phased to deliver a larger area of multi-functional public open space at a suitable stage in the development;
- Implementation of bus service improvements in step with housing development, provided in appropriate instalments;
- Capacity improvements at junction 28 M5 to deliver a strategic highway improvement as demonstrated by capacity studies completed to assess the impact of the traffic generated from the site; and
- Transfer of serviced land together with right of access for primary school(s) at no cost to the Local Education Authority prior to the first occupation of residential development, with necessary funding to construct the facilities being paid to the Local Education Authority in appropriate instalments.

Revised Mid Devon Local Plan

The Council have started work to prepare the new Local Plan. This will have regard to the latest national planning policies, practice guidance and thinking about how best to plan in the context of a national housing crisis, economic and pandemic recovery and the challenges of a climate emergency. It will also ensure Mid Devon will continue to benefit from a plan-led approach for development to meet current and future needs over a longer time period to 2043.

Consultation on the Plan Mid Devon 2023-2043 Regulation 18 Issues Paper took place from 31st January - 28th March 2022. This was the first stage in preparing the new Local Plan in which sought views about what the new Local Plan will include and how Mid Devon should be planned for in the future.

The emerging Local Plan includes the ambition for the Culm Garden Village. The Culm Garden Village proposal is one of only 14 areas initially awarded Garden Village status by the Government in January 2017. Mid Devon's expression of interest for the Garden Village identified the potential to deliver up to 5,000 sustainable new homes in a country park landscape, with jobs, community facilities and transport, all integrated with Cullompton itself. 1,750 of these homes are already planned at East Cullompton through the current adopted Local Plan for the period to 2033 and there is provision for at least another 850 new homes beyond. The development of a garden village in this location would build on the strategy of the current Local Plan, where Cullompton will be the strategic focus of new development in Mid Devon due to its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity.

Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan

The Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in June 2021 and now forms part of the statutory development plan for the Cullompton area, alongside the Mid Devon Local Plan and the Devon Waste and Minerals Plan, and carries full weight for guiding planning applications submitted to the Council for determination and the decisions made on these.

The Neighbourhood Plan reflects on the proposed growth of Cullompton and in respect of the East Cullompton states:

Cullompton Town Council is happy to go along with the 'Garden Village' approach to development in east Cullompton if it helps achieve the strategic policies of the Local Plan, delivers a high-quality living environment and facilitates sustainable growth of Cullompton that will offer benefits to all the parishioners of the area. However, it is the Town Council's position that this can only be achieved if the east Cullompton growth area is conceived from the outset as an integral part of the town of Cullompton and not a separate settlement; and master-planned accordingly.

This principle of seeking to think about the existing town of Cullompton and the proposed development at East Cullompton and the wider Culm Garden Village as one place has been a key influence in developing the proposed Masterplan Framework.

SPD Stage 1

In December 2018, the Council published the East Cullompton Masterplan SPD Stage 1: Issues, Opportunities and Concepts for consultation. This is not an adopted SPD but it presented the emerging local planning policy context and the initial vision and principles for the site, before going on to summarise the masterplanning evidence base to date and the subsequent issues that have been identified. The document then proceeds to outline initial development options and opportunities for delivery of the vision and principles. A Vision & Concept document for the wider Culm Garden Village was also prepared and published for consultation alongside this Stage 1 Masterplan SPD. These documents help set the context for this SPD.

Mid Devon Design Guide

In October 2020 the Council adopted the Mid Devon Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. The Design Guide applies to the whole of Mid Devon and is intended to raise design awareness and standards throughout the planning process.

We have had regard to the overarching design principles in this guide in preparing this SPD and setting out the principles, design guidance and requirements for new development at East Cullompton.

Devon Waste Plan

The Devon Waste Plan for the period 2011-2031 was adopted in December 2014 and forms part of the Development Plan for the area. The key policy from this plan is Policy W4: Waste Prevention. This policy looks for sustainable construction, procurement and waste management in Devon to achieve a reduction in the waste generated through all forms of development. Development at East Cullompton will need to show how sustainable construction, procurement and waste management has been considered.

3.2 Carbon Reduction Principles

Context

There is a legal requirement enshrined in the Climate Change Act (2008) to achieve net zero carbon emissions in the UK by 2050 as part of a global effort to reduce temperature rises to “well below 2°c” compared to pre-industrial levels.

This climate emergency has been acknowledged by Mid Devon District Council in 2019 and is reflected in the Interim Devon Carbon Plan (2020) which provides a roadmap for Devon to achieve net-zero by 2050, with an interim target of a 50% emissions reduction by 2030 (from 2010 levels). Further detail on the roadmap itself will be reflected in the Devon Carbon Plan which remains in preparation and is due to be finalised later in 2022.

Reflecting this context and acknowledging the impact that the built environment has on emissions, the Adopted Mid Devon Local Plan Review (2013 – 2033) embeds a requirement to minimise emissions in the delivery of future allocated development across key policies. This includes Policy S1 (Sustainable Development Priorities) and Policy S9 (Environment) alongside wider policies such as Policy DM2 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy) and Policy DM3 (Transport and Air Quality).

From a site-specific context, Policy CU7 (part k) of the Local Plan Review makes it a requirement for the allocation at East Cullompton and the wider Culm Garden Village site to implement ‘carbon reduction’ improvements. This is further reflected in Policy CU11 which obligates the preparation of a Carbon Reduction and Low Emissions Strategy with a focus on measures to minimise the overall carbon footprint of the site.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

Carbon Emission Assessment Framework and Emission Sources

MDDC are currently developing a Low Carbon Affordable Housing Development Framework Assessment Tool however, there is not yet an agreed assessment framework obligated in national planning policy (e.g. NPPF) by which the relative whole-life carbon (WLC) emissions generated by new development sites can be measured in a consistent way. From a buildings perspective, the most widely accepted methodology currently used within the industry and already applied within a local policy context (e.g. Adopted London Plan) is the WLC Assessment framework. This applies standards contained within BS EN 15978: 2011 through consideration of the following building-related emission sources (typically over a 60-year period):

The WLC framework is not exhaustive and does not consider the emissions from all in-use sources (from human behaviour) such as from surface transport, waste processing or food and service consumption. No framework is currently widely applied within the industry to measure the emissions from these sources. Based on preliminary City Science research for the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), these unmitigated human behavioural based emission sources are estimated to comprise around two thirds of the total life-cycle emissions (60-years assumed) of a development site.

WLC Carbon Assessment Component	Emission Sources		Typical % WLC Emissions Contribution
A1-A3 Product Stage	• A1: Raw Material Supply • A2: Transport of Materials	• A3: Manufacturing	30%
A4-A5 Construction Stage	• A4: Construction Transport	• A5: Construction Process	10%
B1-B7 Use Stage	• B1: Building Use (emissions from building components only) • B2: Maintenance of Building • B3: Repair of Building • B4: Replacement of Building Parts	• B5: Building Refurbishment • B6: Operational Energy Use (Regulated & Unregulated) • B7: Operational Water Use	55%
C1-C4 End of Life Stage	• C1: Demolition Process • C2: Transport from Demolition	• C3: Building Waste Material Processing • C4: Building Waste Materials Disposal	5%

Table: Typical Emission Sources Considered by Whole Life Carbon Assessment

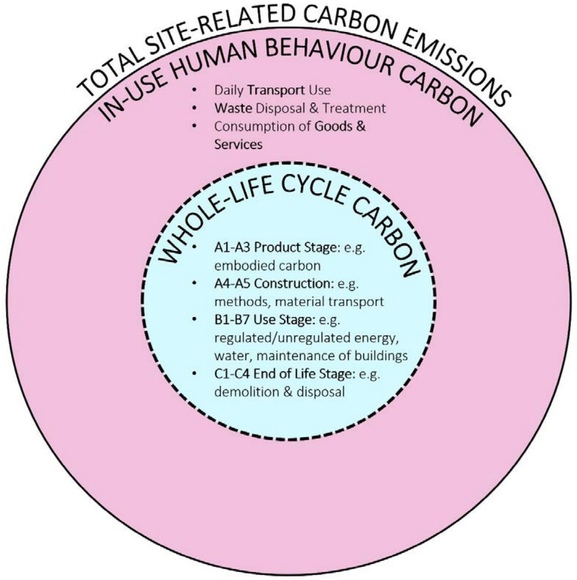
Quantification of Estimated Carbon Emissions

A Carbon Reductions and Low Emission Strategy is to be provided by developers in consultation with the Council. It should apply a comprehensive approach to estimate a 'Do Nothing' baseline for carbon emissions across the lifecycle of the site (60 years assumed). This 'Do Nothing' baseline should then be used as the basis to develop the carbon reduction targets & strategy for the site. Subject to any future national policy revisions or provisions in the Local Plan, this should comprise:

- Whole-Life Cycle Carbon Assessment Framework: consideration of potential approximate emissions across the WLC components identified in BS EN 19578:2011, incorporating both regulated and unregulated energy consumption as part of B6.
- In-Use Human-Behaviour Carbon: consideration of potential approximate emissions from in-use human behaviour considering transport, waste and consumption of goods and services.

Carbon Reduction Key Principles and Target Setting

Setting a target to reduce carbon emissions from the site should be embedded as a clear outcome across all disciplines of the planning process. Embedding this vision at the outset is critical to ensure that delivery of East Cullompton is successful in minimising its impact across all potential emission sources.



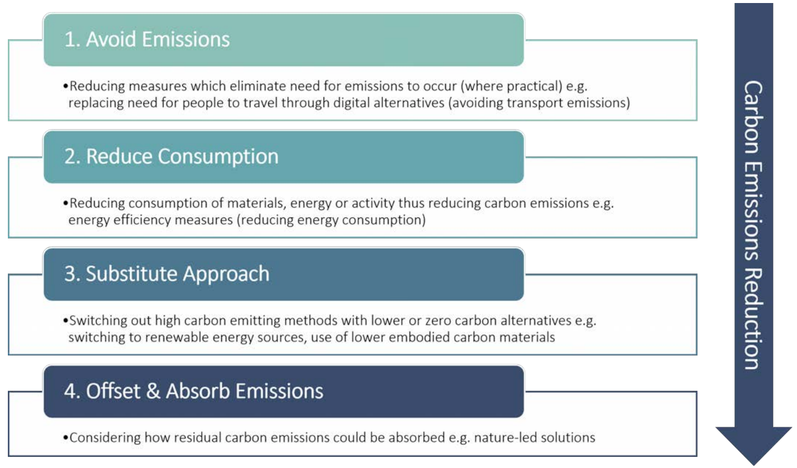
Total Lifetime Site-Related Carbon Emissions

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

Overarching Carbon Reduction Hierarchy

The Carbon Reductions & Low Emission Strategy in conjunction with the Masterplanning process should be underpinned by a hierarchy of core principles focused on the outcome of reducing emissions. This should be comprised of the following:

- Avoid Emissions: through measures which eliminate the need for emissions to occur entirely (where practical) such as through substituting the need for people to travel with digital alternatives (avoiding transport emissions)
- Reduce Consumption: through measures such as energy efficiency (reducing energy consumption), rationalisation of material selection in construction (reducing material use) or through embedding circular economy principles (reducing waste generation)
- Substitution: through switching out high carbon methods with lower or zero carbon alternatives such as renewable energy sources, electric vehicles, or lower carbon building material selection
- Offset & Absorb: through consideration of how residual emissions anticipated could be absorbed e.g. nature-led solutions



Carbon Reduction and Low Emissions Strategy Hierarchy

Broad Carbon Reduction Approach by Source

The following table identifies potential criteria for success for decarbonisation measures across the various carbon emission sources. This considers all sources which includes all those identified in Policy CU11 of the Mid Devon Local Plan Review.

These potential decarbonisation measures are indicative and are not exhaustive and remain subject to further testing through more detailed planning stages by developers. The Carbon Reductions and Low Emission Strategy submitted by developers should set out measures against each source.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

	Source	Broad Low Carbon Emission Outcome		
		Avoid Emissions	**Reduce Consumption**	**Substitute Approach**
Whole-Life Cycle Carbon Emissions (Buildings)	**Buildings (Embodied Carbon, Construction, In-Use & Demolition [A1-A5, B1-B5, C1-C4])**	✓ Ensuring the development content directly matches future needs of site users ✓ Reduce building footprints and site coverage	✓ Lightweight construction method ✓ Building materials locally produced in Devon (where appropriate) to reduce transport emissions ✓ Use of recycled / reclaimed materials	✓ Switching out high embodied carbon products (e.g. steel, aluminium, concrete) with low embodied carbon products (e.g. timber, lime render, slate) ✓ Moderate to high repurposing of building materials rather than use of composite materials ✓ Selection of standard components to reduce emissions from future maintenance of site ✓ Modern Methods of Construction
	Energy (WLC B6)		✓ Dwellings designed in accordance exemplary energy efficiency standard such as the Future Homes Standard (due to be implemented from 2025) ✓ Low energy consumption intensity for both building and user consumption such as through per-room energy control or communal access to white goods	✓ On-site renewable electricity generation including rooftop and surface photovoltaic solar panels *(electricity proportion subject to feasibility assessment)* ✓ On-site heating in buildings from renewable sources such as air-source or ground-source heat pumps *(subject to feasibility assessment)*
	Water (WLC B7)		✓ Widescale water consumption meters ✓ Water-efficient design ✓ Maximise use of rainwater and greywater throughout the site	✓ On-site water heating from renewable sources such as ground-source heat pumps ✓
In-Use Human Behaviour	**In-Use Transport**	✓ Maximise digital connectivity through ensuring full fibre broadband access ✓ Parking policies	✓ Integration of land use content with transport, including opportunities for flexible work space and hubs ✓ To demonstrate how the place it fits within ‘a 20-minute place’ with residents able to access essential local services and employment within 20 minutes via walking, cycling and shared transport	✓ Active travel routes to be fully integrated with public and shared transport networks and aligned with major trip generators ✓ Public and shared transport provision to and within the garden village to demonstrate zero tailpipe emissions ✓ Provision of electric car club for longer-distance trips ✓ Appropriately located mobility hubs including delivery hubs and shared community services
	In-Use Waste		✓ Potential for on-site hubs to support local and circular / sharing economies e.g. swap shops ✓ Potential for site-wide circular economy-based schemes for retail units e.g. reuse schemes	✓ On-site compost facilities integrated as part of community allotments for food waste ✓ Maximise recycling rates through measures such as exceeding minimum requirements for recycling bin storage space
	In-Use Consumption of Goods & Services (e.g. Food)		✓ Community growing space and allotments to in each phase of the garden village to support reduced meat consumption	

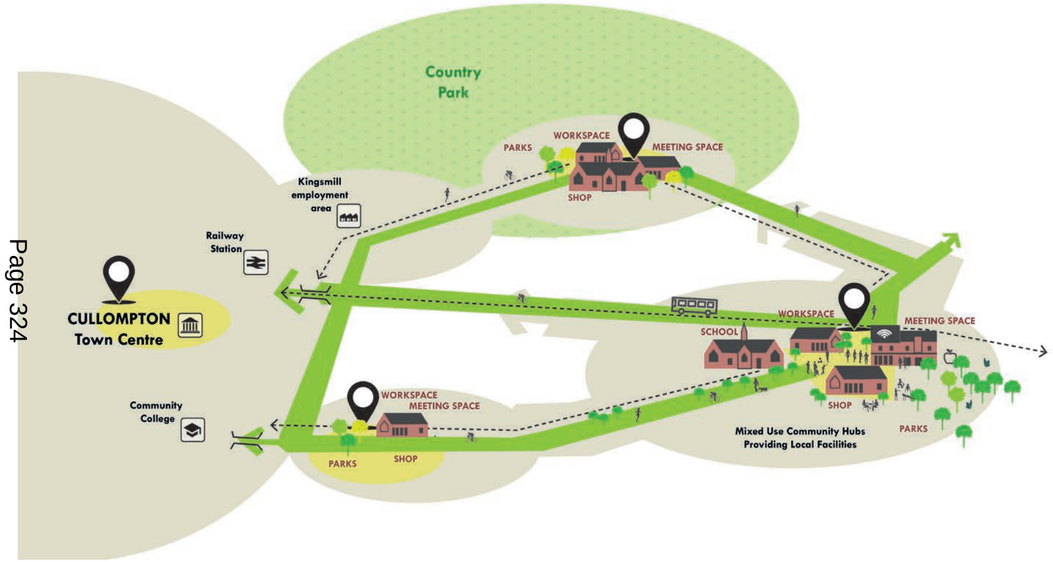


Illustration of the 20 minute place at Cullompton demonstrating the town wide and neighbourhood scale opportunities

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

3.3 The 20 minute place

A fundamental aspect of successful placemaking and addressing critical issues such as decarbonisation is reducing the dependence on private car journeys. The proximity of Cullompton Town Centre, expanding employment areas and East Cullompton, if combined with a comprehensive mobility strategy, maximises the ability to achieve net zero carbon ambitions, address the climate emergency declaration and promote active and healthy mobility practices.

The idea of a 15 or 20 minute place is well recognised and promoted in many cities worldwide and relates to a concept which aims to create neighbourhoods where you can find most of what you need day to day within 15-20 minutes of home. While improved connections in to the rest of the region will clearly remain important, and helped by the reopening of Cullompton railway station, the allocation at East Cullompton and the wider Garden Village opportunity will be of a scale that can bring forward a range of land-uses that not only benefit the site, but also the wider area allowing people to access more services and opportunities for day to day needs. Active and shared travel interconnectivity between East Cullompton and Cullompton is essential to ensure that sustainable travel options are woven in to plans with the aim of reducing reliance on use of the car.

While the concept of the 20 minute place emerged in an urban context and Cullompton has a more rural character, the ideas are still relevant and essential to addressing the issues above. The Masterplan Framework translates the idea and applies it directly to the local context. When we refer to the 20 minute place at Cullompton this refers to both:

- A town wide scale, where Cullompton as a whole offers a broader range of local services, jobs, enhanced Town Centre, railway station and recreational opportunities and where cycling and public transport may need to be used as well as walking.
- A neighbourhood scale where walkable new communities provide local facilities such as workspaces, schools, community space, open spaces and shops as a central part of the new neighbourhoods.



Extract from the TCPA Guide on 20 Minute Neighbourhoods



Illustration of the range of benefits possible through harnessing natural systems

3.4 Natural Capital

Our environment is our life support system sustaining and providing our food, fuel, building materials, fresh air, clean water, carbon storage, and economic worth. Climate change, significant declines in biodiversity, and population growth are putting pressure on our environment.

We can capture the value of nature by harnessing natural systems and processes rather than working against them. This approach is described as nature-based solutions and the benefits of natural processes are commonly referred to as ecosystem goods and services. These comprise tangible and intangible benefits and include the production of food and timber, carbon sequestration, improved air quality, reduced storm-water runoff and the regulation of the climate.

Ecosystem goods and services provide many benefits and their value can be measured using a natural capital approach. Ecosystem goods and services are varied and closely interrelated. A single well considered intervention can result in multiple benefits. Mid Devon District Council commissioned a Natural Capital assessment of the site as part of the preparation of the Masterplan, this work helps to identify where the environment is working well, where is the best place to site new development and how we can intervene to deliver multiple benefits or minimise risk of things such as erosion or flooding. The findings and recommendations of the Assessment are incorporated in the following sections of the SPD.

3.5 Delivery and Phasing Priorities

East Cullompton is a large-scale and complex development with a long duration that will span over more than a decade, particularly so, given its potential in the future to grow into the Culm Garden Village. There is more than one site promoter and there are multiple land ownerships to consider. As development commences there will be others too who will have a strong stake in its successful outcome, including a flourishing local community of residents and businesses.

Policy CU7 is very clear about the need for a comprehensive masterplan to guide development and sets out the land use and infrastructure requirements for East Cullompton and Policy CU12 sets out the phasing requirements. The delivery mechanisms required to ensure that this sequence happens successfully and that it is viable and sustainable at every stage in its development will be the subject of further work involving all interested parties to comprise the Phasing and Delivery Strategy. Initial phasing principles are included within this SPD and planning applications will be required to demonstrate how these principles are being met.

The drivers of change we highlighted in the introduction, whether that is rapidly changing patterns of living and working or, for example, increasing support for local business, all point to the urgent need to deliver the essential ingredients of place and the right kind of infrastructure either at the same time or ideally in advance of building homes. We also need to deliver a good choice of homes with a variety of tenures and types right from the outset. The East Cullompton site offers some unique opportunities of a development of this type and scale. These include links to large employment areas at the edge of the site, the potential to improve links with the existing communities and facilities in Cullompton and the potential to utilise the diversification of existing farm clusters on site as a model and catalyst for establishing a variety of activities on the site from the outset.

Establishing “village life” early on and providing alternatives to entrenched patterns of daily out-commuting and the use of the private car for all daily activities is at the heart of the “20 minute place” concept and this must be a high priority and a key driver in the phasing and delivery strategy.

The multiple landownerships have influenced the masterplan and the way this has been described to provide an overarching structure to East Cullompton. The guiding principles and key features that we want to see in the early phases of development have also shaped the overall approach and plans for East Cullompton described in the Masterplan Framework Section. The resulting phasing principles are also contained in the Masterplan Section.



Extracts from stakeholder workshop

3.6 Summary of Engagement

During the preparation of the Stage 1 SPD extensive engagement and collaborative working took place with a number of technical stakeholders such as landscape architects, ecologists, highways officers, urban designers, flood risk and drainage specialists, education and housing officers, leisure and health professionals; as well as with community organisations and groups forming the Culm Garden Village Community Stakeholder Forum. This Forum is attended by representatives from organisations such as Cullompton Town Council, Kentisbeare Parish Council, Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, sports clubs, local health providers, local schools, arts groups and faith groups.

The key findings from engagement during Stage 1 have been used to inform the preparation of this SPD. These key findings include:

- Ensure the new community is integrated with Cullompton, physically and socially.
- Green buffer with Kentisbeare.
- Sense of community and well-being with sports and leisure to meet the needs of the existing and new communities – being happy where you live, active, inclusive and safe.
- Adequate and natural flood risk management and sustainable urban drainage systems.
- Good quality employment in a high quality environment to attract the right people to the right jobs – reducing out-commuting.
- Business hubs with fast broadband, links with the Exeter Science Park, highly skilled workforce and quality apprenticeships
- Focal points for gathering people together, arts, culture and faith.
- A community hub with provision for healthcare, catering for all ages.
- Central neighbourhood centre with post office, pub, church, shops, cash point, nursery, community centre – focal point of the village.
- Education provision close to Honiton Road, sports and employment.
- Easy to find your way around.
- Timely provision of infrastructure.
- Suitable mix of housing to meet demographic need, high quality, well designed and built housing, including care homes and variety of tenures.
- Innovative design and new technology with low running costs and self-sufficiency designed in.
- Flexible live-work space.
- Community ownership and stewardship of open space and facilities, open space and facilities optimised to build community cohesion; facilities well run; fair for everyone.
- Respect and respond to natural features, incorporate renewable energy, grow your own food; environmentally sensitive.
- Prioritise walking and cycling, green routes, connect north and south of Honiton Road and across M5 motorway.
- Country parks and green corridors; space for wildlife; bringing the countryside into the village; and a green perimeter trail.

Building on the engagement undertaken as part of the Stage 1 SPD for East Cullompton, engagement and collaborative working has continued to inform the preparation of the Masterplan SPD. This has primarily taken place through two workshops with the Culm Garden Village Community Stakeholder Forum, held in November 2021 and April 2022.

The first workshop explored the major contextual changes since the preparation of the Stage 1 SPD in 2018 including declaration of a climate emergency, biodiversity decline and the Environment Act, the emergence of the National Model Design Code, the increasing awareness of the role of spatial planning in addressing health

and wellbeing and the implication of the COVID pandemic.

During the workshop attendees reviewed the aspirations and priorities for East Cullompton and the wider Garden Village using the principles of the 20-minute place as a model for helping to address some of these challenges. Attendees considered what the important components of a 20-minute place at Cullompton were and how the SPD could help ensure they were provided. Key discussion points included:

- Supporting choice and flexibility in working patterns.
- Flexible community spaces that can be used for a variety of events and functions.
- Open spaces that cater for a broad range of society.
- Placing nature and open space close to homes.
- Incorporating leisure and cultural space as well as shops and schools.
- Exploring opportunities for local energy production.
- Importance of a broad range of active and sustainable mobility solutions.
- Importance of place quality that responds to existing local character.
- Incorporating temporary and flexible events space that can change as the community grows.
- Using Fordmore Farm as a useful mixed-use hub and starting point.
- Using the existing landscape as a key placemaking influence.
- Viewing East Cullompton and existing Cullompton as one place.
- One settlement with multiple neighbourhoods and centres.
- Effective connections across the M5.
- The importance of phasing to set sustainable patterns of living and establishing the quality of place.

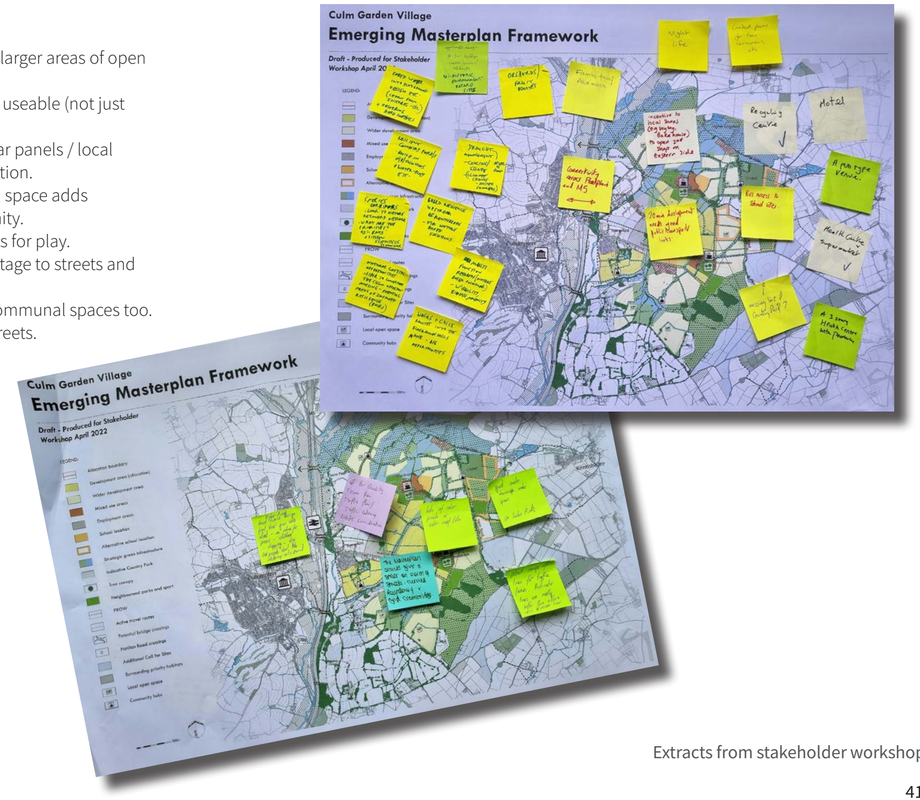
At the second workshop in April attendees were presented with emerging thoughts and a draft framework masterplan for East Cullompton and the Garden Village. Attendees were asked to review the emerging plans against the principles of a 20-minute place. Key discussion points included:

- Ensuring early delivery of successful mixed-use areas.
- The need for effective crossing of the M5.
- Importance of traffic calming and air quality.
- Incorporating water as a placemaking feature.
- Ensuring resilience through use of natural solutions and plant species selection.
- Ensuring strong connections to the Country Parks and surrounding landscape.
- How the plan can encourage sustainable travel through provision for buses, bicycles, scooters, and walking as well as limiting provision for cars and parking.
- Incorporating heritage features into the site.
- Incorporation of areas for local food production and orchards linked to other community uses.
- Incorporating a variety of retail space that can complement what is on offer in the high Street.

During the second part of the April workshop, attendees reviewed examples of other recently built schemes, looking at a range of streets, spaces and community hubs to explore what worked about them and what didn't. The objective of this second part was to help determine the placemaking priorities for East Cullompton and the Garden Village. Key discussion points included:

- Incorporating well defined front gardens to all homes.
- Avoid poorly defined spaces with no clear ownership.
- Consider a split of parking / limiting on plot parking.
- Avoid dominance of parking in community areas.
- Avoid harsh 'hard edge' where development meets open space.
- Include provision for car clubs.

- Consider maintenance of larger areas of open space. E.g. grazing.
- Ensuring open spaces are useable (not just constrained land).
- Including provision of solar panels / local renewable energy production.
- Ensure planting and open space adds biodiversity not just amenity.
- Incorporate car free streets for play.
- Ensure clear building frontage to streets and spaces.
- Incorporate small scale communal spaces too.
- Ensure trees planted in streets.



Extracts from stakeholder workshop

3.7 Parallel work

The masterplanning work for East Cullompton has been undertaken in parallel with several other work streams. These have been used to inform the proposals and to test options.

Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan
The Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan, once adopted by Mid Devon, will form the basis for the regeneration of the town; enhancing the town's economic prospects and providing a clear strategy to ensure the town meets its full potential as an attractive and thriving town post COVID-19 and into the future.

Future Mobility
A Future Mobility Strategy (April 2021) has been prepared for the site, covering a strategic review of the site, policies and best practice, and future trends; in addition to locally-led considerations such as the emerging place vision, human-centred mobility, viability and delivery.

Employment and Skills
An updated Employment and Skills Strategy was developed in parallel with the masterplan. The objective of the strategy is to support self-sufficiency and reduce out-commuting by attracting high quality jobs and setting the right conditions for inward investment. The findings of this report have been factored into the development of the Masterplan SPD.

Town Centre Relief Road
Planning permission (reference 20/00876/MFUL) was granted in January 2021 for a new Cullompton town centre relief road to relieve traffic queues at Junction 28 and in the town centre, and improve the historic environment and air quality in the town.

Feasibility testing of M5 junction improvements
Mid Devon District Council is working with Devon County Council and National Highways to progress this aspect of infrastructure.
The masterplan SPD retains flexibility on the preferred junction improvement configuration.

The Proposed Country Park
A number of workshops covering green and blue infrastructure were held with local stakeholders to capture information and continue the locally-led conversation about the potential for multi-functional green space to the north of the East Cullompton allocation. Proposals for this Country Park are being explored by MDDC but are beyond the scope of this SPD.

Ongoing work on the Connecting the Culm Project
The Connecting the Culm team have been involved in the development of the masterplan through Stakeholder workshops and through the Flooding and Drainage work relating to East Cullompton and the Garden Village.

Reopening of Cullompton Railway Station
Mid Devon District Council is committed to re-open Cullompton Train Station by 2025 as part of a wider project to improve train services in the subregion.

Flooding and Drainage
Mid Devon District Council commissioned the East Cullompton and Culm Garden Village Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy to coincide with work on the Masterplan SPD.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

3.8 Lessons from Elsewhere

Place Alliance Research

In 2021 the Place Alliance launched A Housing Design Audit For England. The research systematically evaluated 142 large-scale housing-led development projects across England. Overwhelmingly the message is that the design of new housing environments in England are 'mediocre' or 'poor'.

Some of the most common failings included:
- Overly engineered highways infrastructure and poor integration of storage and car parking.
- Lack of response to local context and poor 'sense of place'.
- Poor 'walkability' due to dominance of cars and lack of local facilities.
- Failure to deliver a green and biodiverse landscape and sub standard response to the environmental challenges we face.

Enough data was collected to make regional comparisons. The research concluded that the potential exists for good design everywhere, despite this the south west scored significantly lower than the national average. These specific failings have helped to inform the priorities and recommendations of the SPD.

Garden Village review

A review of garden villages and new settlements in the south west and south coast has been undertaken as part of preparing this SPD. These projects are at various stages of delivery. The intention was not to use them as a benchmark of quality but to to identify lessons learned in masterplanning at the scale of East Cullompton.

Summary of lessons learned
- Putting Health into Place includes a useful summary of the significance and role of the built environment in improving the health of residents.
- The importance of walkable places and the challenge of establishing mixed uses to support incoming residents.
- The importance of place quality in establishing successful community and commercial hubs.
- Co-location of commercial, community space, schools and open space.
- A range of energy solutions have been developed from district heating, to anaerobic digestion to efficiency in building fabric alongside heat pumps and solar.
- Incorporation of significant areas of open space close to homes for a broad range of functions.
- The need for a clear co-ordinating plan to guide development.



East Cullompton, Mid Devon



Cranbrook, East Devon



Sherford, Plymouth/ South Hams



Poundbury, Dorset



Langarth, Cornwall



Welborne, Hampshire



East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

SECTION FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE

Overview and Landscape
Site Context
Ecology
Natural Capital
Hydrology
Heritage
Infrastructure and Utilities
Mobility
Combined Constraints
Opportunity Plan



Aerial Photo with East Cullompton Allocation Boundary

4.1 Overview and landscape context

Understanding the context and capturing the special qualities, or 'spirit', of the place is a crucial first step in developing a genuinely landscape-led Masterplan for East Cullompton.

This section of the SPD describes both the conditions within the allocated site boundary and the surrounding area to ensure the Masterplan Framework for East Cullompton is driven by a thorough understanding of the wider context.

The market town of Cullompton lies within the broad landscape context of the Devon Redlands, an extensive swathe of generally low-lying, gently rolling landscape stretching from the fringes of Exmoor in the north to the Exe Estuary and coast in the south, and from the edge of Dartmoor in the west to the Blackdown Hills in the east. The character of the area is distinguished and unified by its underlying red sandstone geology, reflected in distinctively red-tinged cob and sandstone traditional buildings, and its deep, fertile red soils which make it the agricultural heart of Devon. Rivers have created the topography that we see today and they remain as key landscape features within this area, arising within the surrounding hills and meandering through broad, open floodplains across the central part of the Redlands towards the coast.

It is the broad valley of the River Culm, running roughly NW-SE through the Redlands to join the Exe Valley, that provides the local landscape context for Cullompton and adjacent land to the east. Topography, geology and, in particular, the river and its associated watercourses and drainage characteristics have shaped patterns of settlement and land use in this area and continue to have a profound influence on local character and sense of place.

The Culm Valley is strongly defined to the west by the distinctively hummocky rolling hills that frame the town of Cullompton lying at their foot. The town's historic core originated along a N-S strip of relatively level ground just above the valley floor, contained between the physical constraints of rising landform to the west and the braided channels of the R. Culm and floodplain to the east. The western river channel formed the town's Mill Leat and is part of an integrated system of water courses (river, tributaries, channels and culverts) that have been fundamentally important to Cullompton's historic development - influencing its location, supplying water to its inhabitants and powering its mills and industries. Indeed, part of its name is thought to be derived from the Celtic cwlwn ('looped' or 'winding' river). Water continues to be a highly significant feature of Cullompton and a key part of its identity - in addition to the river/valley-side setting, there are streams, leats, culverted water supplies or the river itself, encroaching on or running through most parts of the town.

Eastwards from the town, the valley opens out into a wide low-lying and essentially flat landscape, punctuated only by localised low ridgelines and subtle undulations (e.g. around Upton and north of Stoneyford) before meeting the more distinctively rolling foothills of the Blackdowns on its far eastern side. Water is a fundamental and unifying element of this valley floor landscape, comprising a dense network of watercourses and features that include the channels of the River Culm and its tributary the River Ken; an ancient leat originating from the



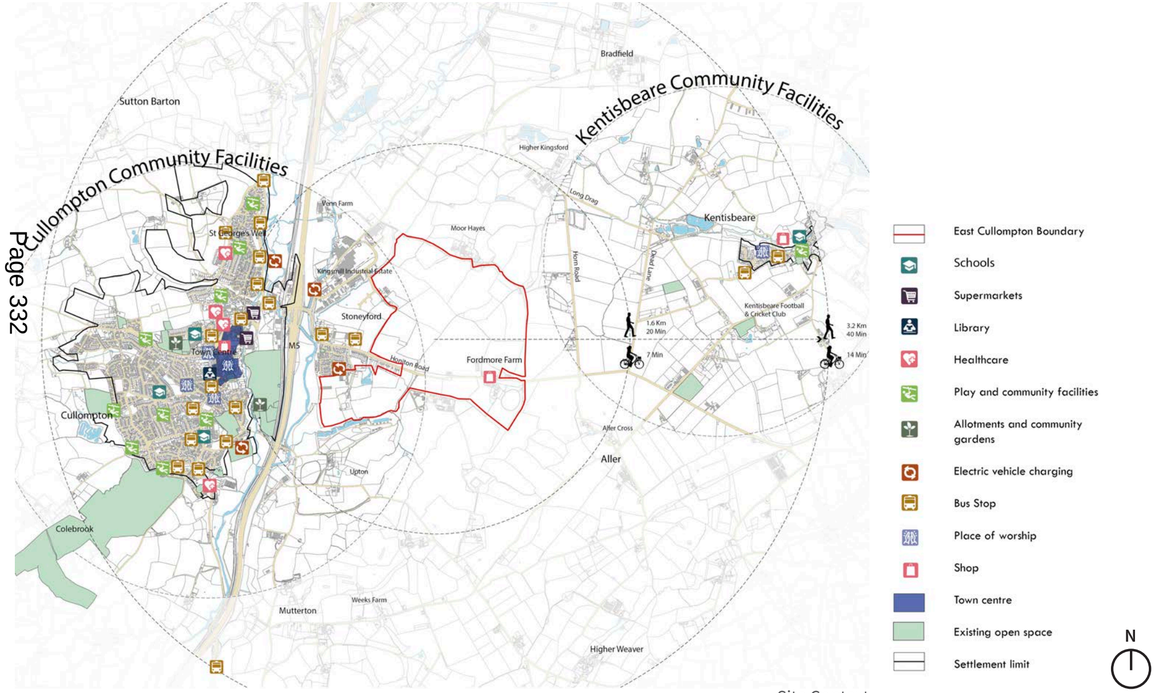
Settlements and Landform

12th century (providing a supply of water to farmsteads between Goodiford and Newland); historic fords and weirs; numerous streams and drains; and scattered farm ponds, fishing lakes and reservoirs, some created by former sand and gravel extraction. Aside from the river, these features are not especially visually prominent but the 'watery' nature of the landscape has nonetheless been responsible for the sparse pattern of farmsteads, clustered hamlets and small linear villages (e.g. Kentisbeare) typically located on slightly better drained ground but still strongly associated with natural and man-made watercourses and features.

Although historically a barrier to the eastern expansion of Cullompton, the drainage network of the River Culm is also a fundamental connecting element that links the town with its eastern landscape setting and has influenced the siting of historic mills, bridges, culverts and other structures and access routes within the landscape. This physical and perceptual connection between the town and land to the east is vital to the spirit of both 'places' but has been progressively obscured by the development of the motorway and rail corridor along this side of the valley floor and needs to be re-established.

The rural road network within the valley floor is sparse and follows local topography: straight, more open roads (droves) characterise the flatter valley floor and ridgelines, while winding, enclosed lanes and sunken 'holloways' are typical of the more strongly undulating land further to the east (e.g. around Kentisbeare). Particularly distinctive are the dead straight early 19th century 'new' roads of Dead Lane and Horn Road and the highly rectilinear pattern of fields that lies between them.

Although not heavily wooded, and despite some hedgerow removal, the farmed landscape retains a well-treed character that contributes positively to its sense of place. Key features include the strong structure of mature hedgerows and trees (particularly mature oaks) that line field boundaries, roads and watercourses right across the area but particularly to the south of Honiton Road, and surviving areas of woodland on elevated slopes (e.g. at Aller Wood and Upton). Orchards were once a frequent feature of this landscape but only a few remnants survive in areas further to the east.



Site Context

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

4.2 Site context

The estimated population of Cullompton in 2020 (ONS) was 11,633, and over the period of the last 20 years the population has increased by 19.5%. Population growth has been far higher than that observed across Mid Devon as a whole. The Local Plan describes how Cullompton will continue to develop as a fast growing market town with a strategic role in the hierarchy of settlements in Mid Devon. The town will become the strategic focus of new development reflecting its accessibility, economic potential and environmental capacity.

The Employment and Skills Strategy commissioned in parallel to this SPD includes a socio-economic description of Mid Devon and Cullompton. The Strategy summarises that it would be expected that the incoming population would see some similar characteristics to the District and Cullompton populations. It would be expected that this would be a working population, with high levels of economic activity and dual-income households. The age profile is likely be younger than the District as a whole, with younger adults and children, including high proportions of pre-school and school age children. However, the ageing population trend is likely to be exhibited throughout the District in coming years and this would be seen within the development. This would have implications for the mix of housing and services that should be provided within East Cullompton, as well as the availability of labour that would be expected.

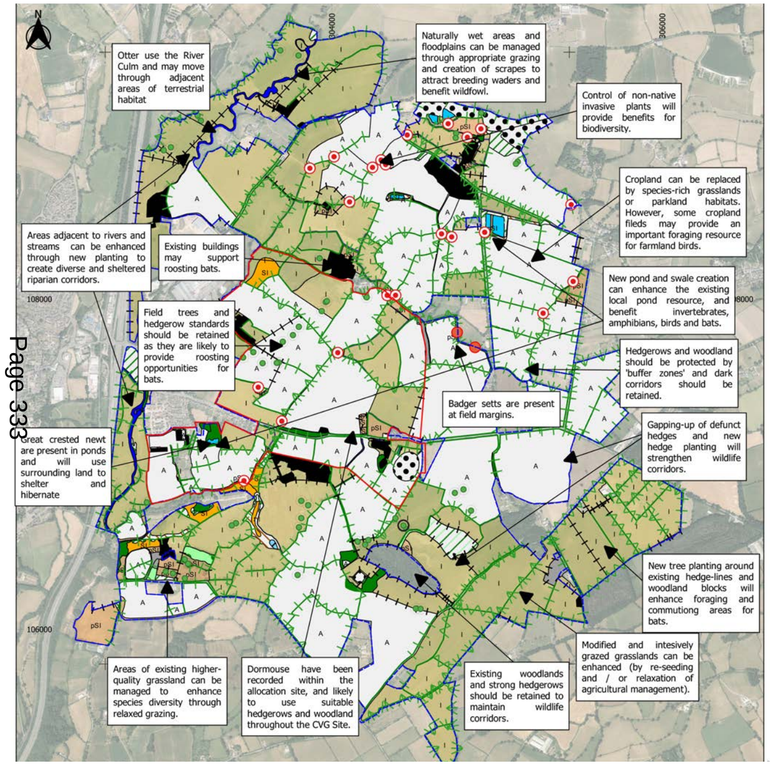
The Strategy also identifies that this community has high levels of working age people and growth in employment, particularly in arts, business administration and transport. While Mid Devon itself is the largest destination of employment for working residents of the District, significant out-commuting locations are Exeter, East Devon and Taunton Deane.

The Local Plan describes how the major growth of the town will provide the opportunity to revitalise the town centre through additional investment and transport improvements. The Local Plan also describes how future employment provision is expected grow and be centred around the Kingsmill industrial estate and within the adjoining urban extension at East Cullompton.

The growth strategy set out in the Local Plan is based on ensuring East cullompton is planned as an integral part of Cullompton. This is a key objective that is supported through other major influences explored through this SPD. The concept of the 20 minute place explored in this SPD is applied to Cullompton as whole. This means that East Cullompton should be planned in a way that supports the wider functions of the town, ensuring that as Cullompton grows it becomes more resilient with a strong local economy to support a growing working age population and to help reduce out-commuting.

This is important context for the SPD Masterplan and means that attractive, sustainable and active travel connections to the Town Centre, employment areas , proposed station, schools and key open spaces and facilities are essential. It also informs decisions on land use planning at East Cullompton, ensuring that new commercial areas can complement the Town Centre offer and that employment areas are planned in a way that is accessible to all parts of Cullompton.

Surrounding villages such as Kentisbeare and Willand can benefit from the successful expansion of Cullompton too through improved connectivity to jobs and services. However, there has been a clear desire expressed through local consultation that these villages remain clearly separate from Cullompton in terms of identity and village setting.



Ecology Constraints and Opportunities Plan

4.3 Ecology

Further ecology work was commissioned by Mid Devon District Council in parallel to the masterplanning work. This work included a desk study to collate existing ecological information for the site, a walkover survey to record the habitats within the site, a summary of opportunities and constraints and an indicative biodiversity net gain assessment using the Defra Metric 3.0. The ecology surveys were also conducted on the surrounding area to understand habitat connectivity, explore potential opportunities for biodiversity net gain and to inform the natural capital opportunity mapping undertaken as part of the preparation of the SPD.

Habitats

The land use within the Site is predominantly agricultural, comprising arable land (crops, stubble, fallow, ploughed fields and grass/grass-clover leys), along with heavily improved, rye-grass Lolium perenne dominated grassland. There are a few fields of poor semi-improved grassland, but more semi-natural habitat is limited in extent and mostly concentrated at the south-west of the Site, where there are patches of habitat and habitat mosaics of semi-improved neutral grassland, swamp, tall ruderal vegetation and bramble scrub.

There are occasional patches of woodland across the Site comprising broadleaved semi-natural and plantation, mixed semi-natural and plantation woodlands, and a single small patch of conifer woodland. The woodlands include the Section 41 (NERC) habitats of principal importance (HPI) of lowland mixed deciduous woodland and wet woodland. There are occasional scattered mature trees across the Site, nearly all pedunculate oak Quercus robur species.

Hedgerows are a strong feature of the Site, with the majority located on an earth bank, and many also having an adjacent ditch. A large number are classified as 'Hedgerow with trees', containing tree standards, at varying frequencies, along the length. The hedgerows are mostly managed by flailing to a box-shape, although some have been unmanaged for several years and are now outgrown hedgerows or lines of trees and scrub. Many of the hedgerows and lines of trees contain species in the ground flora that are listed in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, including bluebell Hyacinthoides non-scripta. The majority of the hedgerows are moderately species rich, assessed as containing an average of 3-4 woody species at frequency of occasional or higher; some hedgerows contain an average of 5 or more species at sufficient frequency and are classified as species rich hedgerows.

Standing and flowing water within the Site comprises several ponds, the majority of which are constructed ornamental or recreation features, and flowing water including the River Culm and several streams and ditches across the Site.

Small areas of habitat within the Site include tall ruderal vegetation, marshy grassland, swamp, and patches of scrub.

Several locations, particularly in the northern half of the Site, contain invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (amended). The majority of the locations contain populations of Himalayan balsam Impatiens glandulifera, however there is one location with a small population of Japanese knotweed Reynoutria japonica, and one location with a rhododendron bush Rhododendron ponticum.

There are opportunities to enhance habitats within the Allocation Area and wider Site through change of use and relaxation of current land management.

Species

The Site supports several protected and notable species, and consideration of these and the habitats that support them will be required. The key considerations are set out below.

Bats

The Allocation Area contains several buildings, in addition to scattered mature trees and hedgerow standards. It should be assumed that bats roost within existing buildings and trees within the Allocation Area and that appropriate mitigation and compensation for their loss will need to be built into proposals. New tree planting to provide enhanced foraging opportunities, and integration of bat roost boxes in new builds should be considered to enhance the Site for bats.

Bats also use hedgerows and woodland for commuting, and these 'corridors' should be kept dark. Final proposals should include considerate lighting plans to retain dark corridors for bats. Hedgerow removal should be minimised and will need to be compensated for through new planting to retain connectivity and satisfy the requirements of biodiversity net gain.

Badger

Badger setts have been recorded within the Allocation Area. Therefore, 'wildlife corridors' alongside hedgerows and woodland should be retained to allow continued dispersal of badger and other mammals, such as hedgehog and brown hare. Providing buffers from existing field boundaries will also reduce the risk of damaging or destroying an active sett.

Dormouse

Dormouse has been recorded within the Allocation Area, and the network of hedges and woodland throughout the Site provide suitable habitat for this species. Loss of hedgerows and woodland should be avoided as far as possible, with suitable buffers provided from built development to reduce possible disturbance effects. Supplementary planting within existing hedgerows, relaxing hedgerow management, new hedgerow planting, and softening woodland edges with new tree and scrub planting will benefit this species.

Great Crested Newt

The Allocation Area is within a great crested newt consultation zone. These consultation zones were created in order to help Local Planning Authorities, developers, and consultants identify where planning applications may need to consider the potential impacts of a development on great crested newt populations. Great crested newt have been recorded in a pond within the Allocation Area. Proposals should demonstrate that the availability of suitable terrestrial habitat for great crested newt will not be significantly reduced, and will not adversely affect the local population. This will necessarily require retention of the ponds and surrounding vegetation, as well as wider woody habitats and dispersal corridors. Creation of additional ponds and hibernacula with access to a retained hedge network should be part of the design.

Designated Sites

There are no statutory designated sites within 2 km of the Allocation Area. There are thirteen non-statutory designated sites within 500 m of the CGV Site. Of these sites, one is within the Allocation Area (East Culm House UWS), and five are within the CGV Site (Willand – Aller Wood CWS, Aller Wood (West) UWS, Weeks Farm Orchard CWS, Knights Wood CWS / PAWS, Cullompton Marsh UWS, and Sherwoods UWS). Policy DM28 of the Mid Devon Local Plan states that: "development proposals adversely affecting a County Wildlife Site [or other non-statutory site] will be considered on a case-by-case basis, according to the amount of information available about the site and its significance, relative to the type, scale and benefits of the development being proposed." and "Planning permission will be granted only when:

- The benefit of and need for the development clearly outweigh the direct and indirect impact to the protected site and the ecosystem services it provides;
- The development could not be located in an alternative, less harmful location; and
- Appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place. Where mitigation measures are not possible compensatory measures in some cases may be considered appropriate."

Designation*	Site Name	Location (OSGR)	Area (ha)	Description
CWS	Knight's Wood	ST023055	4.7	Ancient semi-natural woodland partly replanted with conifers
CWS	Aller Wood	ST045064	9.9	Plantation on ancient woodland site, wet in areas
CWS	Weekes Farm Orchard	ST032053	1	Traditional ridge and furrow orchard stocked with traditional varieties including cider apple, pear, plum and cherry. Approximately 30 mature trees.
OSWI	Peverstone Embankment	ST022052	5.3	Unimproved neutral grassland with scrub and areas of conifers
OSWI	Maddock's Farm	ST052066	1.9	Mixed plantation with a pond
UWS	Aller Wood (West)	ST041064	1.3	Broadleaved woodland
UWS	East Culm House	ST032071	0.9	Pond with amphibian interest
UWS	Willand - Cullompton Marsh	ST027096	261.7	Possible floodplain grazing marsh
UWS	Sherwoods (E)	ST036053	2.3	Orchard
UWS	Cullompton - Hele Marsh	ST016045	161.1	Possible floodplain grazing marsh
PAWS	KNIGHTS WOOD	ST023054	3.8	Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
		ST044063	6.1	Ancient Replanted Woodland
		ST047065	3.8	Ancient Replanted Woodland

*CWS: County Wildlife Site; OSWI: Other Sites of Wildlife Interest; UWS: Unconfirmed Wildlife Sites; PAWS: Possible Ancient Woodland Sites.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

4.4 Natural Capital

Introduction

Our environment is our life support system sustaining and providing our food, fuel, building materials, fresh air, clean water, and carbon storage. Climate change, significant declines in biodiversity, and population growth are all putting pressure on our environment. This section sets out the Natural Capital Assessment undertaken to inform the Masterplan. It explores where the environment is working well, where is the best place to site new development and how we can intervene to deliver multiple benefits to minimise risk of things such as erosion or flooding through nature based solutions.

The mapping is based on key natural aspects of the land i.e. the habitats, the soil and geology, the land form and hydrology. The mapping covers a wider area than just the East Cullompton allocation boundary to explore landscape and biodiversity net gain opportunities in the surrounding area potentially associated with the Country Park or Garden Village area. The findings and recommendations of the Assessment are incorporated in the East Cullompton Masterplan Framework.

Carbon Storage

Considering ecosystem goods and services, and the natural capital they provide, allows us to understand how the land is currently storing carbon and supporting carbon sequestration. These considerations play a significant role in helping us to reach carbon targets towards net zero. The data modelled here allows us to create a carbon budget showing how much each area of land in the Masterplan area is storing carbon, in tons per hectare. From this, we can understand what needs to be re-created, or restored, in order to reach that net zero target and help offsite carbon elsewhere.

The Carbon Storage Plan illustrates the current estimated Carbon storage, in tonnes per hectare. The areas of woodland are the best at storing carbon, and that the hedgerows are also prominent.

Currently, the total carbon stored on the site is estimated to be:

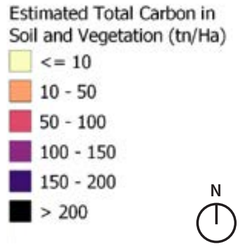
Allocation area	2,430 tonnes
Wider Garden Village	13,870 tonnes
Total Carbon stored	16,300 tonnes

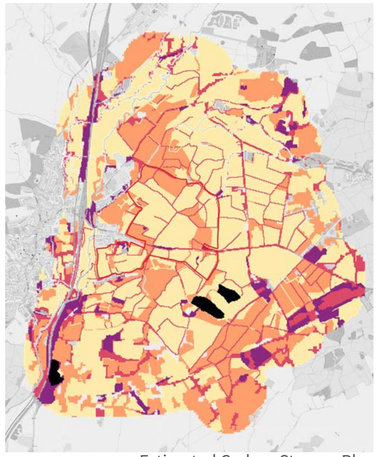
The existing habitats that have a high carbon storage potential (e.g., woodlands and hedgerows) should be kept in place and opportunities for restoring and converting relatively low carbon storage habitats into better opportunities should be explored.

For example, hedges that have been in place for centuries have very high carbon stores below ground. Minimising disruption around hedgerows and storing any removed soil as carefully as possible, will be important in maintaining carbon neutrality with existing habitats.

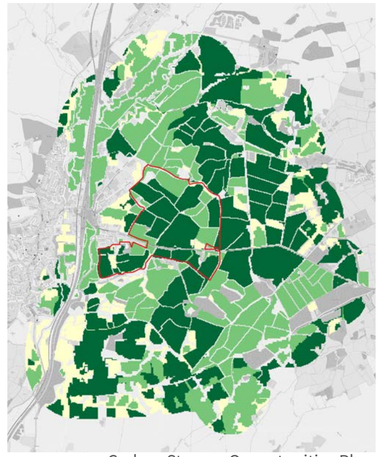
Currently, large areas of the site are arable, which, during harvests, removes a lot of the vegetation carbon, and releases the soil carbon. Establishing new areas of broadleaf woodland, wetland, and grassland habitats, preferably with native species, will help increase the carbon sequestration of the area, and keep it locked up in the soil as well.

The Carbon Storage Opportunities plan illustrates the potential opportunity for increasing Carbon storage, from low (yellow-green) to high (dark green).





Estimated Carbon Storage Plan



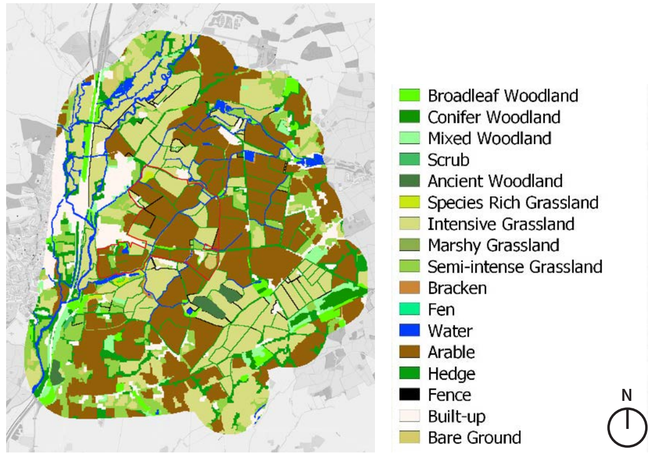
Carbon Storage Opportunities Plan

Natural Habitats and their Importance

Natural habitats are key for biodiversity as they tend to have a fully functioning ecosystem. These are made up of multiple parts, and provide the area with a strong resilience against climate change, as well as supporting a wide range of species; even those generally less common.

The bigger the block of habitat the more robust it to change, as it has a greater amount of genetic material to share. For example, a small woodland might contain only one nest of dormice, but a larger woodland block might contain a few. The spatial relationship between these blocks of habitats is also important.

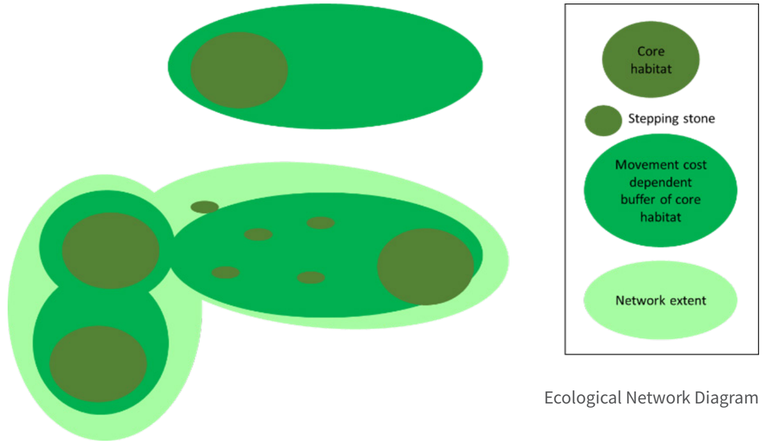
The nearer the blocks of habitats are together, the more chance they have of sharing the genetic material. Following on from earlier, even if a small woodland only has one nest of dormice, but is close to another small woodland with only one nest, there is a chance that the two can share their genetic material; particularly if the woodlands are connected by a hedgerow. Where habitats are close enough to share these resources is called an ecological network.



Habitat Class Plan

The Ecological Network Diagram diagram illustrates this concept. The dark green is the main habitat area, such as a woodland. These can be large (often called a core habitat), or small (termed a 'stepping-stone'). The lighter green areas illustrate the ecological network that facilitates the movement between the core and stepping stone habitats.

The Habitat Class Plan shows the habitats within the site, and the way they relate to those on the outside of the site. Some particularly important features for biodiversity are the ancient blocks of woodland, the more species rich grasslands and marshy grasslands, and the hedges and the trees.



Ecological Network Diagram

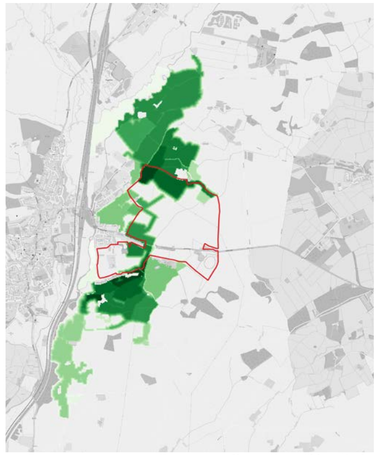
Habitat Networks

The following diagrams show how the existing habitats can support biodiversity when retained, and also where establishing new habitats on site will significantly enhance the biodiversity. Using this information allows the creation of a mixed landscape with the habitats which would work best in each space, and support cultural needs.

Grassland Features

The Grassland Habitats Plan shows the current ecological network of the grassland habitats, these areas have the best grassland connectivity. It is recommended that as much of the existing grassland network be left intact as possible and connectivity improved.

The Grassland Opportunity plan shows the most opportune locations for expanding the ecological network of the grassland habitats. Enhancing these areas with additional planting of native grassland species within the existing high connectivity areas, will assist biodiversity and maximise carbon capture.



Grassland Habitats

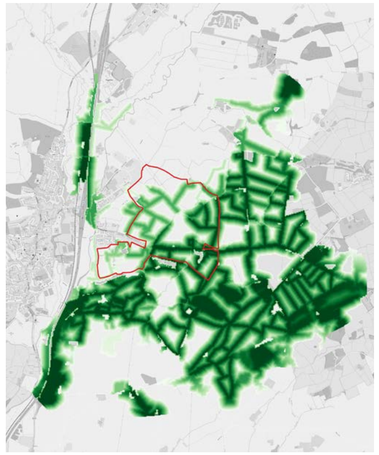


Grassland Opportunities

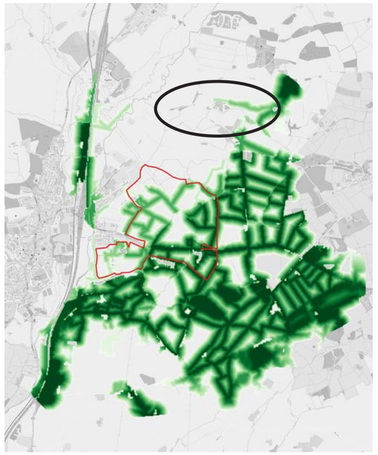
Woodland Features

The Woodland Habitat Plan shows the current ecological network of the woodland habitats, the areas to the south east have the best woodland connectivity. There is an extensive hedgerow network that connects large stands of woodland across the area. It is recommended that as much of the existing woodland network be left intact as possible.

The Woodland Opportunities plan shows the area that, if established with native woodland species, would provide the greatest impact for the woodland network in the area; making it bigger, better, and more joined up. Woodland features here would link the woodlands around Kingsmill to those around Bradfield. There is a synergy here with grassland and wetland networks, so woodland pasture, or marshy grassland would be beneficial.



Woodland Habitats



Woodland Opportunities

Wetland Features

The Wetland Habitat plan shows the current ecological network of the wetland habitats, the areas that have the best wetland connectivity are highlighted with circles. There is an extensive river network that connects a number of large water bodies and ponds throughout the site.

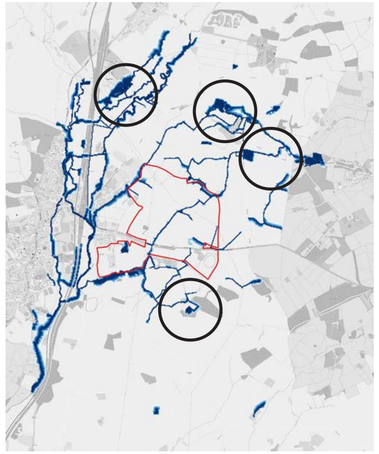
The Wetland Opportunity plan shows the most opportune locations for expanding the ecological network of the wetland habitats.

Generally speaking, the vast majority of the area is an opportunity for new wetland features. Establishment / enhancement of wetland features in the northern region would help make the existing network bigger, better, and more joined up, whilst in the south would help in establishing new corridors.

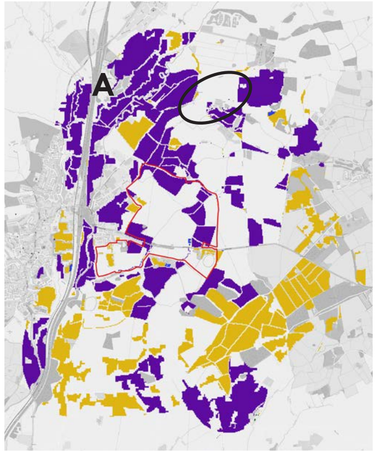
The area marked A is especially good for establishing wetland adjacent to existing wetland habitats, as part of a potential Country Park. There is a synergy here with a potential for woodland creation, and also grassland creation as well. This means that wet woodland or wet grassland features would benefit these networks as well.

The wider area to the north east of Venn Farm is currently located in a region that is great for establishing wetland features, which are also outside of the current network. Wetland features here would mean the network would be larger and more intact.

The Wetland Opportunities plan highlights an area north of Moorhayes that, if established with native wetland species, would provide the greatest impact for the wetland network in the area; making it bigger, better, and more joined up. If this area includes wetland features they would link the wetlands around Kingsmill to those around Higher Kingsford. There is a synergy here also with a potential for woodland creation, and also grassland creation as well. This means that wet woodland or wet grassland features would benefit these networks as well.



Wetland Habitats

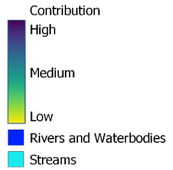


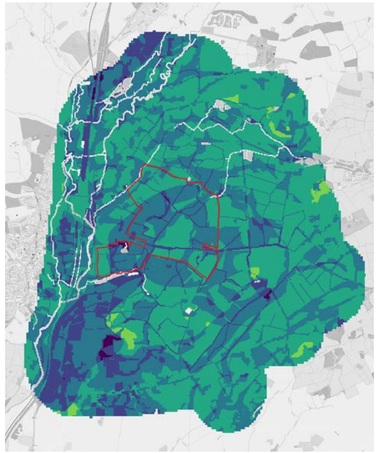
Wetland Opportunities

Natural Flood Management

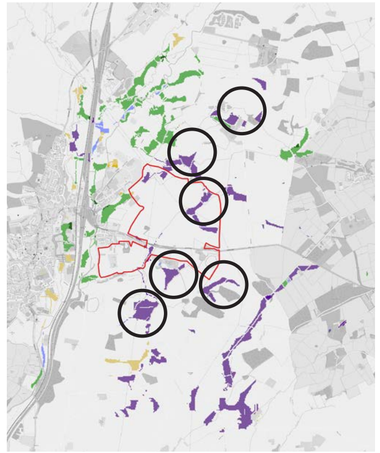
The Natural Flood Management Plan shows the combinations of soil and vegetation that provide a high degree of water infiltration and storage in the soil. The more water that infiltrates the soil, the slower the flood peaks are in reaching the river, helping to mitigate flooding events. Areas with a higher contribution could be factored into future plans for the site.

The establishment of a wetland would allow for storage of water and lengthening time for water to reach the watercourses, helping reduce the height of the flooding. The best way to help slow water down and prevent flooding is to plant native species of deciduous trees. The Natural Flood Management Opportunities plan shows the areas where tree planting will benefit natural flood management and biodiversity of the area.





Natural Flood Management Plan



Natural Flood Management Opportunities

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

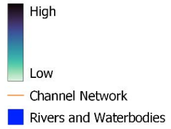
Water Quality

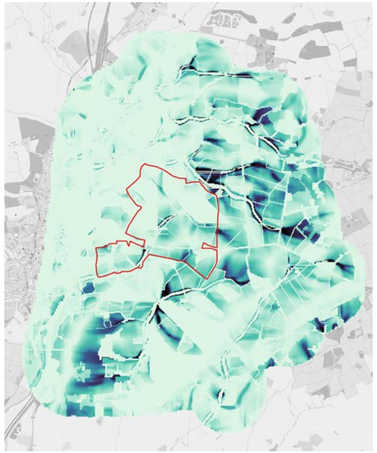
Water quality in the rural environment depends on the land use and pollutants, such as fertilisers and herbicides, blown or running off fields after rain. Another influence is soil particles from nearby fields washing into the streams — these particles tend to carry phosphorus directly into streams.

The Erosion Risk Plan shows the current erosion potential of the area. This is a useful resource to consider when planning soil management, in order to identify areas which should be permanently vegetated to prevent further erosion and help prevent pollution.

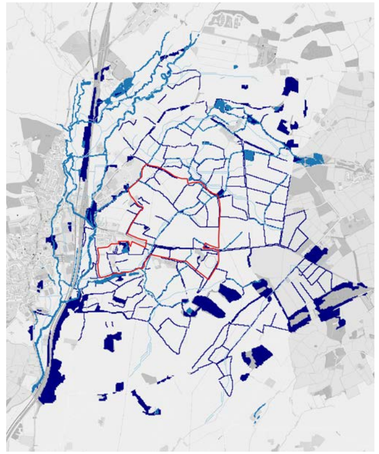
The Water Quality Contributions Plan shows the current features that help prevent water pollution by breaking the flow pathways to the river (in pink). These are predominantly made up of woodland and hedgerow features. Keeping as many of these features intact as possible would help mitigate pollution after development.

The Water Quality Opportunities Plan shows the most opportune locations marked 'A' for improving the water quality across the area.





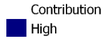
Erosion Risk Plan

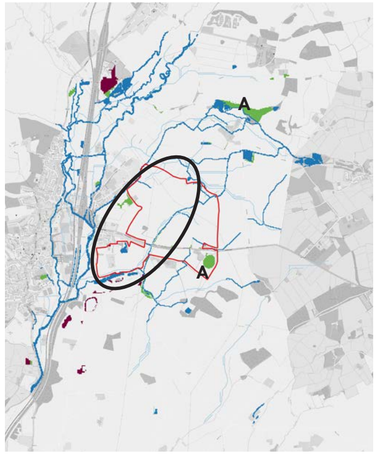


Water Quality Contribution Plan

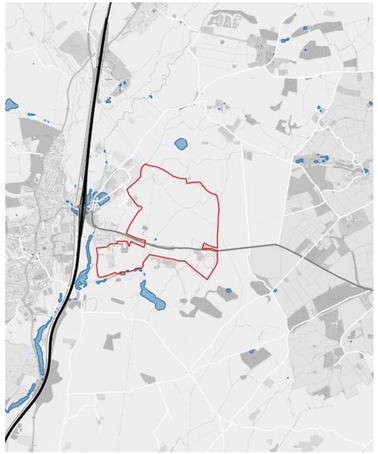
Enhancing these areas with additional planting of native species of hedgerow and woodland would help break the connections between the land and the water courses.

The area to the south marked with a circle is also a potential opportunity due to the optimal soil conditions, and would be a good place to establish open spaces with native habitats and sustainable drainage systems.





Water Quality Opportunities



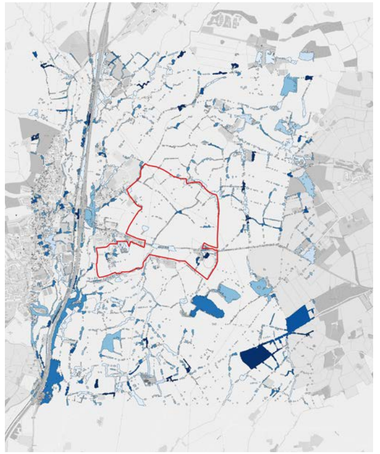
Air Quality Risks Plan

Air Quality

Most of the built area of Cullompton is declared as an air quality management area. The Council will continue to set out actions to improve air quality. Natural capital mapping can help by looking for risks and opportunities associated with topography and vegetation to managing air quality. In developing and siting roads, it is useful to consider where air could pool, as these may develop pollution levels higher than normal. The Air Quality Risks Plan shows these areas in blue; these should be avoided for larger transport routes during development.

Air quality is the largest environmental health risk in the UK. It shortens lives and contributes to chronic illness. Increased traffic is likely to increase vehicular emissions, which may impact on Air Quality. Although air quality assessments have been carried out, they will need to be monitored at regular intervals through the construction phases and afterwards.

Higher Risk Area



Urban Cooling Plan

Cooling

Large trees cool the air beneath them and the surrounding areas, with the larger the canopy providing a better cooling effect. Where works are planned to remove these trees, the top soil from underneath should be used as a separate resource for planting and establishing grassland or woodland features. This is because they are likely to have a well-developed seed bank of native species, which will be able to form a ground flora quickly and help establish their respective ecosystem services in as short a time as possible.

They can also be considered a carbon resource. Therefore, treating the trees and hedges, and the surrounding metre of soil, as a separate resource with its own management plan is a great way of minimising loss, and maximising their restoration potential.

The Urban Cooling Plan shows the trees with large canopies which, if incorporated into the Masterplan, could provide some urban cooling, as well as retaining biodiversity and carbon storage.



Flood Map for Planning Flood Zone 2 with SFRA Q1000 model results

4.5 Flooding

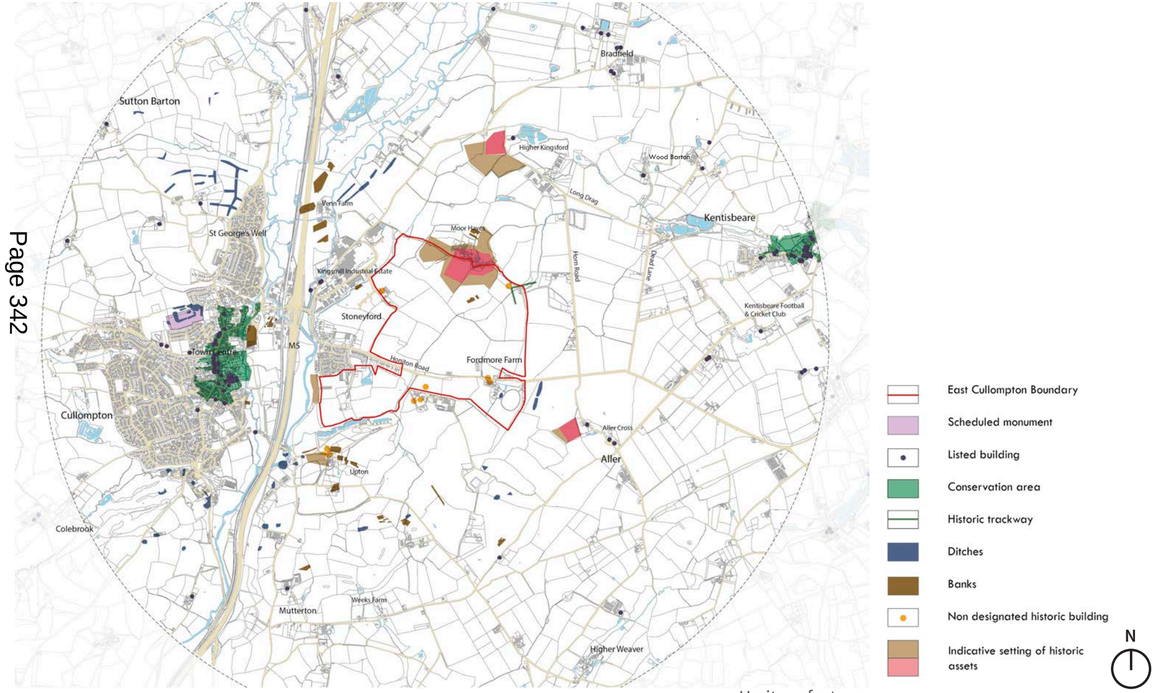
There are several drainage channels that flow through the site. The River Ken is the main watercourse and classified as an Ordinary Watercourse. The River Ken flows from east to west to the north of the allocation area, before flowing southwest where it has its confluence with the River Culm (a Main River) at Honiton Road, A373. There are a number of bifurcations of this watercourse. The first is in the area around the Goodiford Mill area, with the secondary channel flowing down towards Long Drag, where it splits again. One drain flowing south, with the other running alongside Long Drag before flowing southwest. After Horn Road, part of this drainage channel flows west and re-joins the main River Ken, with the remaining drainage channel continuing southwest and joining the River Culm by Old Hill.

The flood risk from the River Ken and the associated drainage ditches is presented by the Environment Agency via the Flood Map for Planning. This shows that the River Ken has a wide floodplain, with areas where the watercourse has become perched, i.e. the watercourse is not in line with the natural valley bottom. There is then much narrower floodplain associated with the drainage channels.

Further, more detailed flood modelling has been undertaken to better understand flood risk in the area. The more detailed flood modelling has been undertaken for 1 in 5, 30, 50, 100 and 1,000 year period events, along with climate change testing for the 1 in 100 year event. This helps to show the flood risk from more frequent events, up to extreme events. The preliminary results from the modelling work generally agree with the Flood Map for Planning, however with the level of flooding reduced, particularly in the wider floodplain areas of the main River Ken channel. This suggests that the current Flood Map for Planning may be overestimating the flood risk slightly through this area, particularly on the edges of the floodplain.

For the drainage channels through the allocation area and wider Garden Village opportunity area the flood zones and the model results are in close agreement. There are some locations where the modelling is showing some additional / wider areas of flooding, however this can be managed as part of the development via formalising and improving the drainage ditches through the area.

The more detailed flood modelling was also utilised to test a number of interventions to try and help reduce the downstream flood risk. Generally, the options had minimal impact on the wider flood risk. This work is ongoing and will be discussed further as part of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, to ensure that opportunities for flood risk improvements are considered further.



Heritage features

4.6 Heritage

There are no listed buildings within the East Cullompton allocation boundary but there are two Grade II farmhouses with five associated curtilage listed buildings situated immediately to the north, namely:

- Upper Moorhayes Farmhouse including front garden wall;
- Lower Moorhayes.

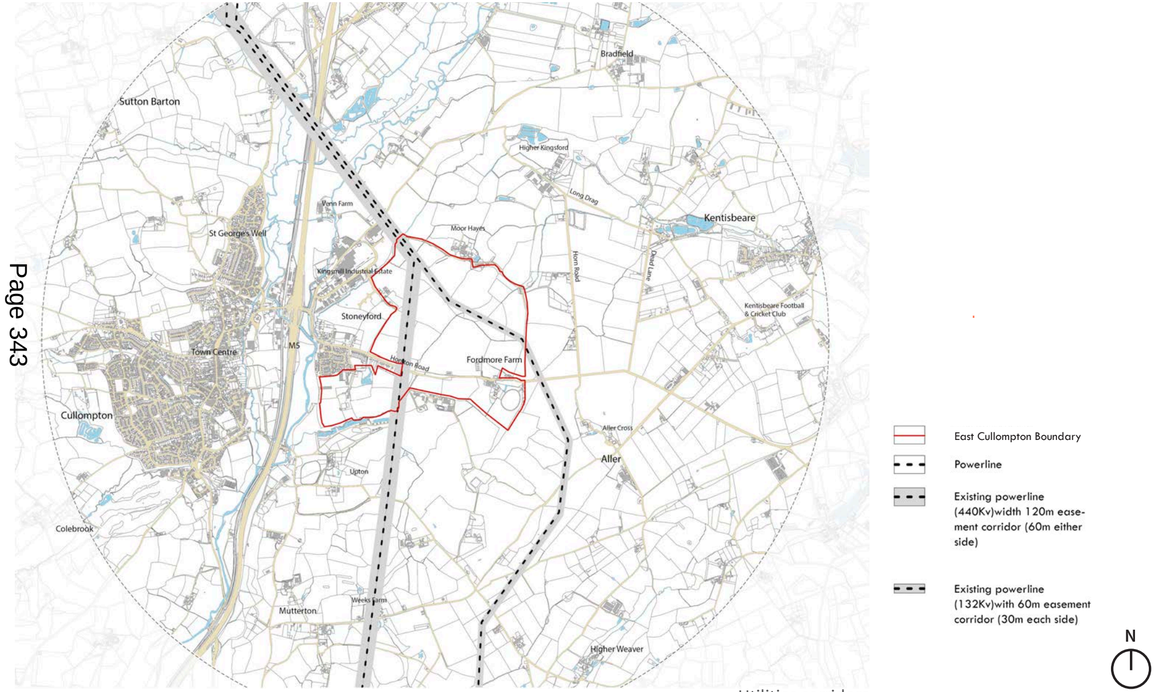
An indication of where development should be planned to protect the setting of these farmhouses is shown on the heritage plan. Where development does take place in the vicinity, particular attention and care will need to be taken to its layout, detailing and materials.

There are other historic buildings and features, some of which are non-designated heritage assets at Newlands Farm, Week Farm and East Culme House within the site together with a linhay and historic trackway in the north-east and a short stretch near Week Farm. Buildings associated with Bathill and Aller Barton lie due south of the site. Further afield there are a number of listed buildings at Maddocks Farm, Woodbarton Farm and Bradfield.

The site is located within a wider landscape containing evidence of prehistoric and Roman period activity. To the east there is evidence of Roman iron working as well as place names such as 'Orway' and Stoneyford' that could indicate the presence of a Roman road between the settlement at Cullompton and the iron ore extraction industry operating up on the Blackdown Hills. As such, there is the potential for this landscape to contain evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity in the form of buried archaeological and artefactual deposits.

The current field system and farm landscape dates to the later medieval and post medieval periods. There are likely to be below ground remains of early to post medieval activity associated with farmsteads with and adjoining the site. There is an opportunity within the site area for the enhancement of historic built and landscape features such as ditches, orchards and water meadows as well as the opportunity to incorporate existing water features and leat as important placemaking aspects of the Masterplan. This will be informed through further archaeological investigation.

All plans in this SPD will be subject to further archaeological investigation by developers prior to layouts being fixed and planning applications being submitted.



Utilities corridors

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

4.7 Utilities

Preliminary infrastructure work has identified the existing utilities within the site. 440kV National Grid (NG) power lines and 132kV Western Power Distribution (WPD) powers lines enter the site in the north-west and run in parallel for a short distance, before bisecting the area on different alignments.

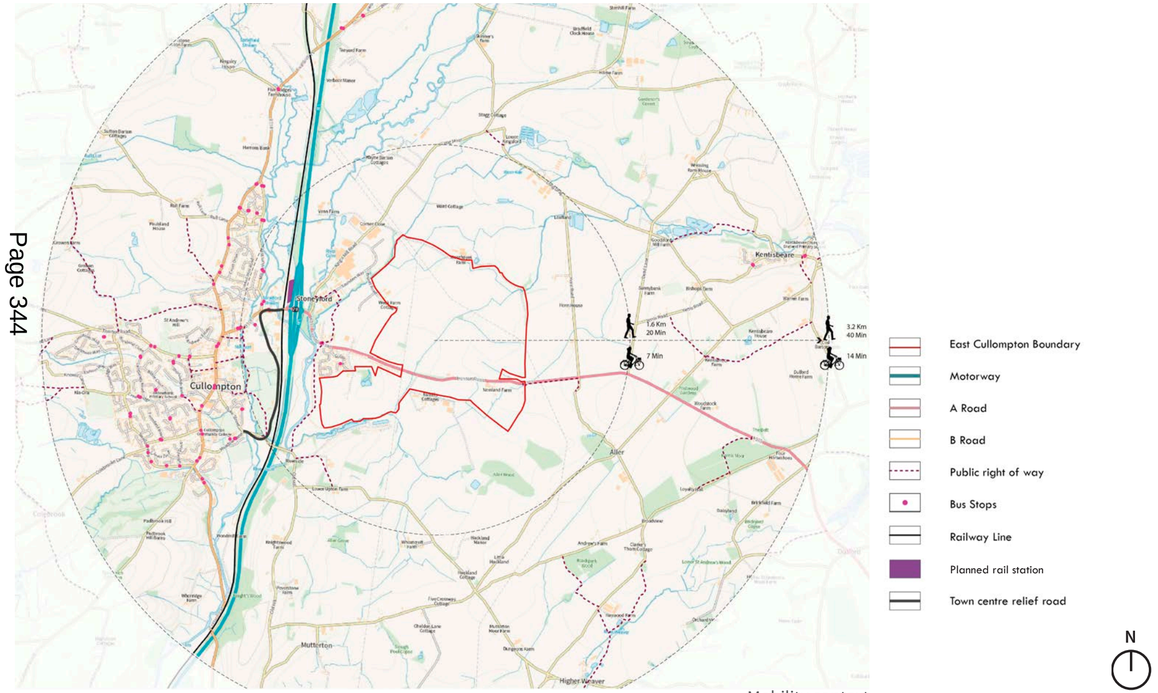
The National Grid (440kV) power lines are a fixed constraint and have been be factored into the masterplanning process. Not only will the easement need respecting, but a residential amenity buffer will need to be established.

There is no set formal guidance on the size of easements but a figure of 60m from any dwelling to the centre line of the 440kV transmission lines (i.e. a 120m corridor) is an approach that has been used in planning policy for development to the east of Didcot in South Oxfordshire. Non-residential uses may need to be considered closest to the transmission lines.

At a detailed level, The National Grid has produced design guidance, in respect of how to Masterplan around transmission lines and treat the space beneath them.

There are options available to reduce the effect of the Western Power Distribution (132kV) power lines. The land over which the lines pass within the site benefits from 'lift and shift' clause over the route easement. This enables the landowner (at their cost) to alter the path of the power lines if an alternative route is available. Land north of the allocation is also in the ownership of the landowner over which the WPD cables currently pass.

In respect of foul drainage, South West Water has indicated that directing foul flows north to Willand Sewage Treatment Works (approximately 3km away) via a new pumping station and rising main would be its preferred option.



Mobility context

4.8 Access and Mobility

One of the core principles embedded in the Masterplan SPD is the idea of the 20 minute place. The purpose of this principle is to encourage local living and self containment within the town for as many day to day needs as possible, reducing the need to travel further afield and creating more vibrant places and stronger local economies. It is therefore expected that East Cullompton and the existing town will be planned as one place, ensuring that all residents benefit from existing and proposed community facilities, shops and employment areas.

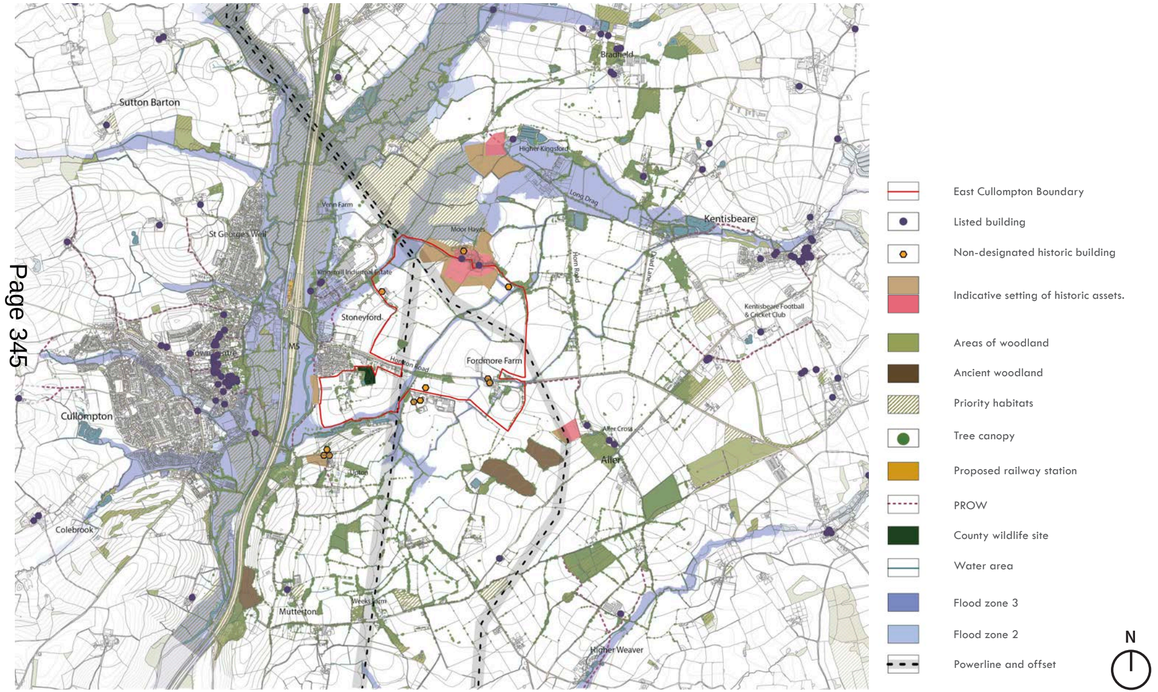
The objective of providing these services within 20 minutes of home is to reduce the reliance on the private car and encourage more active means of travel such as walking and cycling. There are currently no public rights of way across the site, there is a footpath to the west of the site along the floor of the shallow Culm Valley, between the M5 and the site boundary which connects to the two existing crossings of the M5. However, the M5 corridor places a significant barrier to active travel currently and it is important that the Masterplan for development to the east of the M5 incorporates attractive, direct active travel routes and improved crossings leading to key destinations including the Town Centre, schools, open spaces and employment areas on both sides of the M5.

It is recognised that although the site is located nearby to a wide range of facilities, and that the allocation includes provision of new employment areas, shops and community facilities, there will be some that still require day-to-day access outside of a reasonable walking distance. Stonyford is currently served by the 350 Cullompton Town Service and 694 Honiton, Cullompton, Feniton Circular buses, but the services are infrequent. The Exeter, Cullompton, Tiverton Service can be accessed from within Cullompton with an hourly service and journey times of approximately 50 mins to Exeter and 34 mins to Tiverton. Key destinations within the Masterplan will therefore need to be served by improved public transport, and emerging shared use modes of transport such as e-mobility, demand responsive transport and other future mobilities.

The proposed reopening of Cullompton Railway Station will provide a sustainable transport option for all residents of Cullompton, reducing carbon emissions, congestion and improving air quality in Cullompton as well as cutting commuting times. The Station will comprise an important element of any future mobility strategy, providing a vital means by which to reduce reliance on private car use for longer distance journeys currently utilising the neighbouring trunk road network. On this basis, any future railway station must be connected directly to development to the east via exemplary active and shared mobility connections.

East Cullompton is located to the north and south of Honiton Road to the east of the M5 corridor at junction 28. The vehicular access into East Cullompton will need to be achieved primarily from Honiton Road. Honiton Road itself will require significant improvements which may require downgrading of the existing highway to reduce vehicles speeds and reduce the impact future access proposals may have on existing hedgerows and trees. Multiple points of access will be required to allow access to both the north and south of Honiton Road. Options to reallocate space on Honiton Road or incorporate additional space for other users should be considered alongside parallel east - west routes that connect into Cullompton ensuring that priority can be given to active and shared modes.

In addition to the existing highways network, this SPD has been undertaken in parallel with work on both the Town Centre Relief Road and feasibility work on improvements to Junction 28 of the M5. A number of options for junction improvements are under consideration at the time of writing and so the SPD Masterplan retains some flexibility on how access to potential junction locations and crossing points will be configured.



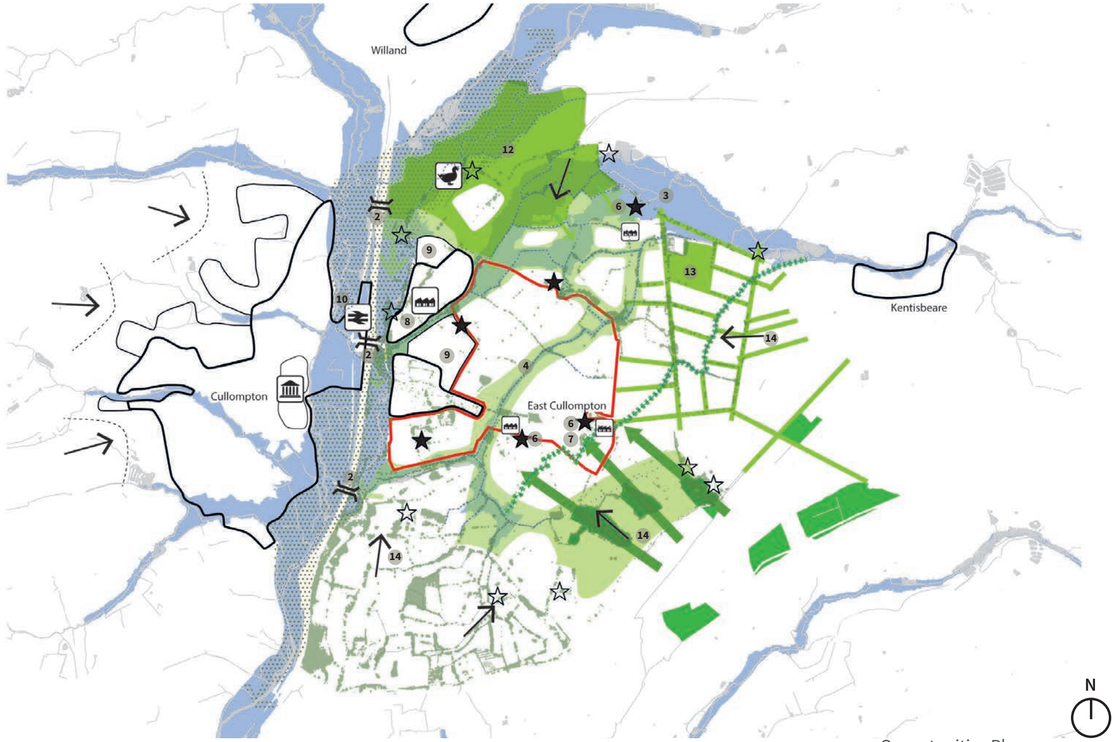
Combined Constraints Plan

4.9 Combined Constraints Plan

The combined constraints plan draws together physical constraints described above into a single plan to show their combined effect. These have been taken into account in the masterplan proposals and include.

- Existing hedgerows and trees to be retained as far as possible.
- Listed buildings around Moorhayes and the area which is currently considered important to their setting.
- Non designated historic buildings which should be incorporated into the masterplan.
- 400kV and 132kV power lines and the associated easements from any proposed dwellings.
- Noise and intrusion from Honiton Road.
- Potential noise and visual intrusion from the M5.
- Water courses and flood zones. The masterplan framework is based on avoiding development with associated flood zones.
- The potential to incorporate and enhance the County Wildlife Site near East Culme House.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD



Opportunities Plan

4.10 Opportunities Plan

The existing character and qualities of the site offer opportunities for successful placemaking if integrated in an appropriate way. Working with the existing qualities of place has been a central feature of the development of the Masterplan. The Masterplan Framework section explores this potential further, but in summary the main site opportunities include:

1. Consider East Cullompton and Cullompton as one settlement, using this to ensure incoming uses and spaces support the resilience and sustainable growth of Cullompton.
2. Ensure local active and shared travel connections across the river corridor are prioritised including the reconfiguration of existing crossing points which are well located in relation to surrounding land uses.
3. Emphasise the movement of water through the site along the existing water courses. Incorporate new water bodies and wetland planting in lower lying areas of the site to draw the influence of water in to the site.
4. Utilise the watercourses as important connections for active travel back to the historic crossing points of the river corridor to Cullompton.
5. Encourage interaction with water, drawing inspiration from the prevalence of fords in the surrounding landscape, the historic significance of mills in Cullompton and leat within the site.
6. Work with the rural qualities of the site by retaining existing farm clusters and expanding them sensitively as mixed use areas for community and commercial buildings.
7. Support the existing diversification of uses happening on site, such as Fordmore Farm as a focal point for early phases ensure a mix of uses from the beginning.
8. Connect into the existing employment areas to the west of the site.
9. Support the further expansion and intensification of employment areas to provide local jobs and shift away from the existing reliance on out commuting.
10. Provide active and sustainable travel connections to the proposed Cullompton Railway Station site.
11. Utilise existing mature vegetation as a structuring network of green infrastructure through the site.
12. Provide strong links to the proposed Country Park as a strategic area of open space and consider utilising the Country Park as focus for biodiversity net gain in the area.
13. Consider links to the relocated sports clubs to the east of Horn Road.
14. Consider views from the surrounding landscape including elevated land around Upton and Aller, from the open landscape and potential Country Park to the north and from open countryside and Blackdown Hills to the east.



East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

SECTION FIVE
MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

SPD Masterplan

Activity

Landscape

Mobility

Placemaking

Infrastructure, Delivery and Phasing



East Cullompton SPD Masterplan

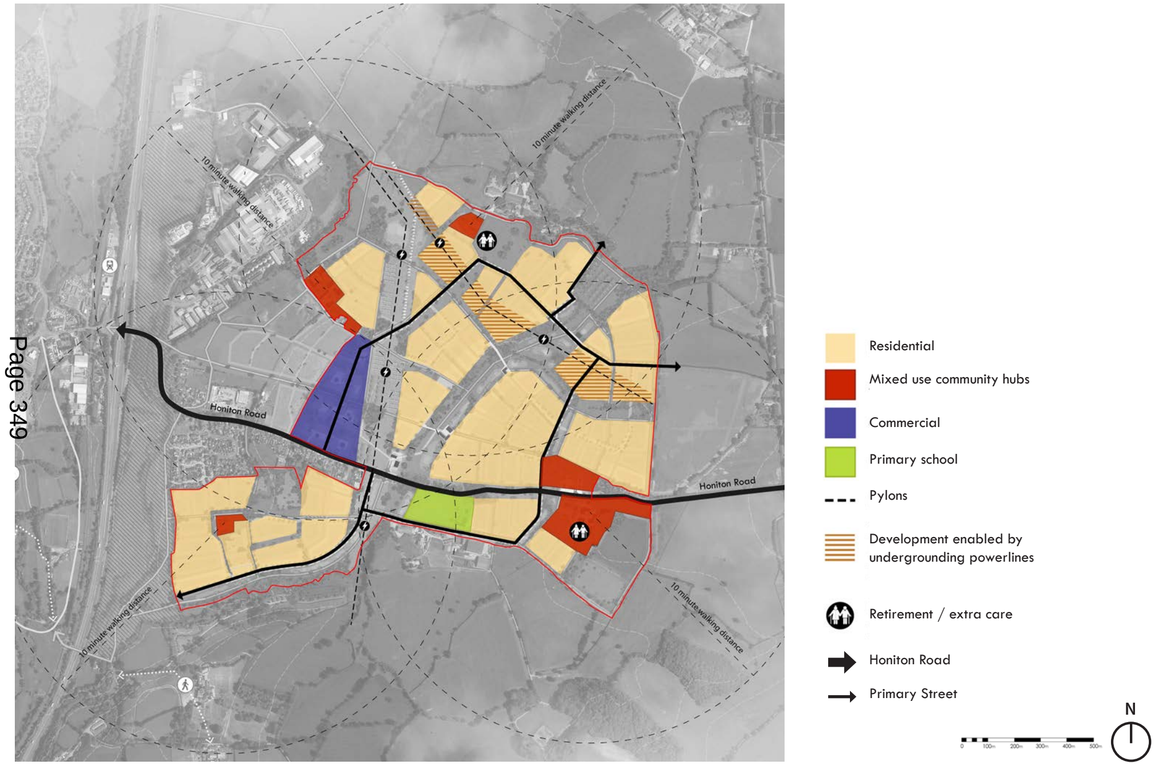
5.1 SPD Masterplan

This section of the SPD sets out a masterplan for the East Cullompton allocation area. It demonstrates how the requirements of the Local Plan can be accommodated on the site driven by the aspirations described earlier in this SPD.

The masterplan is described under the headings of Activity, Landscape, Mobility, and Placemaking. These layers should be seen as providing an organising structure to East Cullompton, setting out the broad locations of development, open space and movement and their relationship to each other. The masterplan also describes specific placemaking aspirations that are considered strategically important that have arisen in response to site constraints, opportunities and through local consultation.

The masterplan is strategic in nature and does not intend to define the precise location and extent of elements of the plan, this will be defined through planning applications and work to agree the detailed phasing and delivery strategy. However, to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to the planning of East Cullompton, this section translates the Masterplan SPD into a set of requirements in a green text box which planning applications are expected to meet.

Planning applications within the East Cullompton allocation should include a statement demonstrating how these requirements have been interpreted and applied.



East Cullompton Activity Framework

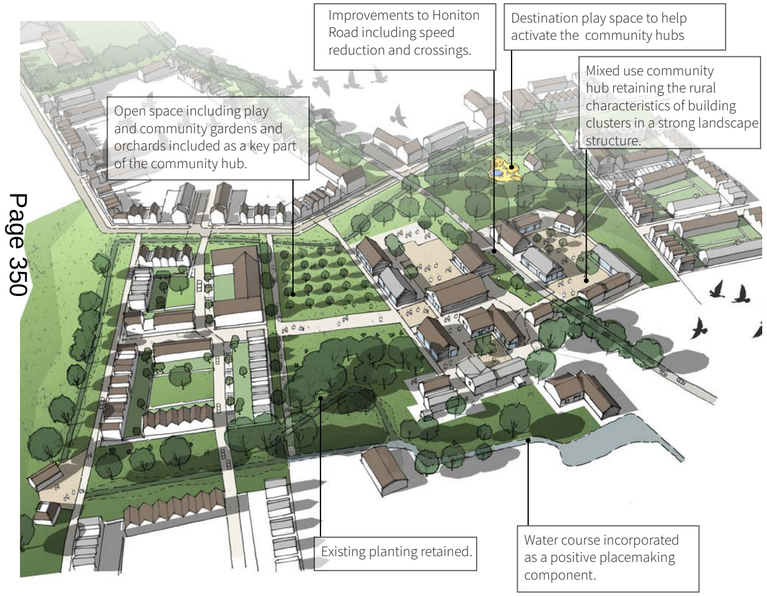
5.2 Activity

The Local Plan sets out the land uses, and quantities associated with the allocation of East Cullompton. The Masterplan SPD proposes a strategy for how this mix of uses can be accommodated and phased in a way which can create a strong identity in response to the existing qualities of the area. Place quality will be a key determinant of the successful integration and longevity of commercial and community space ensuring that they are places that people will be drawn to and choose to use as well as using out of convenience. Community and commercial uses will provide an important function in drawing the community together as well as meeting day to day needs of residents.

The overarching strategy has been driven by a response to activity already happening on site. The creative reuse and expansion of existing building clusters on site provides a model for how future community, commercial and civic buildings can be incorporated into East Cullompton in a distinctive way. These places also provide a useful starting point for future growth ensuring a mix of uses and sense of place is established before housing is delivered. The rural character and local vernacular of these clusters can also be used as a key determinant in new mixed use and community buildings.

	Land area	Notes
Residential	72 hectares	Including market and affordable housing, serviced plots for self builders and gypsy and traveller pitches. Capable of delivering 2,600 homes required by Policy CU7 at an average density of c. 35dph. Assumes limited residential uses will be incorporated in to the mixed use community hubs.
Mixed use community hubs	8 hectares	Area includes existing buildings retained. Capable of delivering an additional 2 hectares for shopping, community centre and multi-purpose community building required by Policy CU10. Assumes some residential uses can be included within the centres and some overlap of uses with commercial area.
Commercial area	6.5 hectares	Including allowance for care home, retirement complex, appropriately scaled retail, offices, hotel and leisure uses and ancillary landscaping. Capable of delivering 32,000 square metres of commercial floorspace required by Policy CU7 with some overlap of uses with the mixed use community hubs.
School site	2.5 hectares	To meet Policy CU10 requirement for a service site of 2.5 hectares for a new primary school.
Green Infrastructure	46 hectares	See separate table within landscape framework for breakdown of open space.
Area beneath 440kv powerlines	16 hectares	
Total	c. 160 hectares	Difference between areas above and the total area comprises area allowance for highways infrastructure (e.g. Primary Streets)

Land budget for Masterplan Framework



Indicative sketch of a mixed use community hub retaining the rural characteristics of the area

Mixed Use Community Hubs



The Local Plan allocates land and facilities for community use including a site of 2 hectares for a shopping and community centre, and the provision of a multi-purpose community building for youth, children and other community uses.

The East Cullompton site is currently very rural in character. Although large parts of the site will change fundamentally in character as development progresses, there is an opportunity to ensure the influence of the rural Mid Devon landscape is still apparent as a positive characteristic in its identity.
The Masterplan SPD proposes that the mixed-use community areas are, in part, focussed around existing farm clusters that are already providing a sense of place and generating activity and a local economy through a diversification of uses. A number of these clusters include listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets which can provide design cues for incorporating additional development in a sensitive way. Supporting the growth and considered expansion of these clusters to provide a broader range of commercial and community functions can be done in a way which preserves their characteristics as building clusters in a strong landscape structure. These can be considered as maintaining a rural character that is fundamentally different to more urban typologies, to differentiate the experience of living or visiting East Cullompton and complement the existing town centre offer. It can also ensure their delivery early which is something which has proven difficult to do successfully in other similar schemes.

- The principal community hub for East Cullompton will be located around an expansion of Fordmore Farm to the north and south of Honiton Road. This hub will expand to include community space as well as further retail and commercial space including potential healthcare, indoor multi-purpose spaces which can cater for a range of activities, including: dance, yoga/pilates, circuits, babies/toddlers activity sessions, short mat bowls, table tennis etc.
- The layout of the area around Fordmore Farm will be done in a way which retains the rural characteristics including an informal arrangement of buildings and courtyards in a strong landscape structure.
- Parking within mixed use areas will be provided in a way which does not compromise pedestrian experience, with main parking areas away from key buildings and spaces.
- These mixed use hubs can include residential use, where it does not detract from intended character or community hub function.
- The materials, detailing and scale of buildings and public realm in mixed use areas will take design cues from existing buildings on site and the aspiration to retain a rural influence.
- Secondary hubs, incorporating smaller scale shops and flexible community space will be encouraged in areas of high accessibility in areas further from the principal hub including at East Culme House near the existing community around Culm Lea and near Moorhayes serving the northern areas of the allocation close to the potential Country Park.
- A community hub near Moorhayes will demonstrate how it can also support the potential Country Park to the north with potential for ancillary uses, spaces and attractive connection points to the Park.
- The area around Week Farm is shown to provide further opportunities for incorporating a mixed use area with a commercial focus. This could serve as an expansion of the existing employment area around Stoneyford providing opportunities for smaller scale commercial uses and workspaces.
- Retirement, healthcare and aged services cluster should be co-located with the mixed use community hubs with good accessibility to public transport.
- Mixed use community hubs should also incorporate appropriate workspace.
- The mixed use community hubs are to be easily accessible from active travel routes and the primary street network.
- Developer proposals will need to demonstrate clear governance structures for community facilities.



Image showing the character of the mixed use community hub at Fordmore Farm



Example of farm buildings converted into a mix of community and commercial buildings around high quality public realm.



Example of community buildings with rural character integrated into open space.

School site



The Local Plan states a requirement for a serviced site of 2.5 hectares for a new 630 place primary school or alternatively 3 hectares of serviced land in 2 parcels of 1.1 hectare and 1.9 hectares appropriately located for the delivery of 2 new primary schools. The Local Plan also requires that serviced land for the school should be provided prior to the first occupation of residential development. The SPD masterplan has sought to locate the school in an area of high accessibility, close to the mixed-use areas. The site shown to the south of Honiton Road has been identified previously as the preferred site of the education authority. Alternative locations may be suitable for the school but would need to meet the following requirements.

- Any school sites to be located close to other employment, community and retail spaces with clear and attractive active travel links between them.
- Clear, attractive active travel routes should be provided from residential areas to the school sites.
- A safe and attractive crossing of Honiton Road should be provided on a clear desire line to any school sites.
- The school buildings should be designed and located to be a prominent and positive feature of the development.
- Proposals should demonstrate how schools will provide an important anchor in the early phases of development.
- The active travel network should include attractive, safe routes to Cullompton Community College in the early phases.
- Appropriate drop off space should be provided away from Honiton Road and the primary streets.



Inset plan of commercial area.

Pedestrian and cycle friendly primary street as a central feature with high quality public realm and strong building frontage.

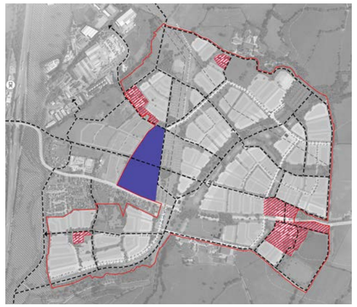
Attractive active travel route linking East Cullompton and Cullompton with strong building frontage.

Existing tree planting retained and extended to provide a strong landscape structure.

Overarching character of commercial area to be defined by individual buildings or buildings grouped around a shared courtyard within a strong surrounding landscape. structure.

Building frontage onto Honiton Road.

Integrating commercial space



The Local Plan allocates 20,000sqm of commercial floorspace within the plan period and a further 12,000sqm post 2033, to include a care home or retirement complex, appropriately scaled retail development and other suitable uses such as offices and a hotel or leisure development. A commercial area of 6.5ha. is shown to the north of Honiton Road. This is of sufficient size to accommodate the majority of the floor area required by the Local Plan. The mixed use community hubs should be used to accommodate the remainder of the commercial space. For example it is anticipated that the care home, retirement complex, smaller scale retail and some leisure uses would be better located adjacent to the community hubs.

An Employment and Skills Strategy commissioned by Mid Devon in parallel to the Masterplan SPD includes recommendations on the employment opportunities and how skills improvement programmes can help to drive business interest in the area. The findings of this report have been factored into the development of the Masterplan SPD and include spatial influences such as:

- Viewing employment as crucial elements of the overall masterplan with a high priority for development in the early phases.
- The clear need for units and serviced, developable employment plots in Mid Devon, with East Cullompton offering a good opportunity to help meet need.
- To expand employment areas adjacent to existing and permitted industrial elements at the edge of the allocation around Kingsmill Industrial Estate.
- To include an element of dispersed employment that could have differing functions and target markets, with proposed employment uses at Fordmore Farm cited as an useful example.

The Masterplan is set out to the following principles:

- Land adjacent to the employment allocation CU17 will provide additional space for commercial uses as an important expansion of the employment area to the east of the M5 and proposed railway station.
- The commercial area will incorporate an east – west active travel route to connect into the rest of East Cullompton. Co-ordination with proposals for employment allocation CU17 will be required to ensure continuity of the route into Cullompton.
- The commercial area will include the mix of uses allocated including retail, offices, hotel and leisure, but should be planned to provide an appropriate transition between larger employment uses to the west and residential use to the east. This will include an emphasis on provision for walking and cycling.
- The layout of the main commercial area should follow the principles described on the employment area inset plan.
- Commercial uses should also be included into mixed use community hubs including smaller scale workspace and co-working space and work hubs that will be drawn to the place quality of these clusters.



Extract of proposed residential areas

Residential

The Local Plan allocates 1750 dwellings within the plan period and at least another 850 dwellings post 2033 taking the overall residential capacity of the East Cullompton allocation to 2600 dwellings. Policy CU7 also requires 28% affordable housing and extra care housing and at least ten pitches for gypsies and travellers and 5% of housing to be provided as serviced plots for sale to self-builders.

The residential neighbourhoods have been formed around the Landscape, Mobility and Land Use Frameworks. Parcels of residential land are identified where they can form coherent neighbourhoods around the organising structure of open spaces, streets and mixed-use areas avoiding areas of development constraint. The Masterplan SPD assumes an average density of 35 -40 dwellings per hectare to achieve the residential capacity set out in the Local Plan. The Placemaking section provides further guidance on character.

Mid Devon District Council wants to enable more people to build their own home with Custom and Self Build housing growing in popularity. The Council recognises the benefits of Custom and Self Build in meeting the housing needs of Mid Devon residents. It provides opportunities to reduce costs by sourcing your own materials and being involved in the construction and fitting yourself and create high quality, well-designed buildings bespoke to your needs. Custom and Self Build Housing is also more likely to draw upon local tradespeople and suppliers, supporting the local economy. Further guidance on the provision of the custom and self build plots will be provided in the forthcoming Meeting Housing Needs SPD. This will provide detail on planning, design and delivery processes and locational requirements such as positioning the plots in smaller clusters and avoiding locating plots on remote corners of the site.

- No residential development to take place within flood zones.
- Typical densities will be in the region of 35 – 40 dwellings per hectare with potential for higher densities in areas of greatest access to sustainable travel and mixed-use areas and potential for lower densities towards the edges of the community.
- Building heights are expected to typically be 2-3 storeys with incorporation of 4 - 5 storey buildings in appropriate landmark locations such as on key junctions or terminating views. Proposals must demonstrate a clear logic to building heights that assists placemaking.

Powerlines

The potential to underground overhead powerlines should be explored, particularly where leaving them in-situ would place a significant obstruction and detraction from the quality of residential areas. Mid Devon District Council's preference is for the powerlines to be moved underground but a final decision will be subject to further masterplanning, feasibility and viability work. The SPD Masterplan shows the eastern 132kv line undergrounded as this would cut through and segregate residential areas hindering the creation of a coherent development form. The area of land made available for development by undergrounding the 132kv lines (as shown) equates to around 7ha. or approximately 250 homes within the allocation area. The potential to realign the route while undergrounding should also be explored. The larger 440kv powerline is left in situ and its alignment used to define the extent of extended commercial areas.

The land beneath the powerlines is not considered suitable for the primary useable areas of public open space, where the presence of the lines would undermine the quality of the spaces beneath. The land beneath may be used for ancillary open space, wildlife corridors, streets and active travel corridors and potentially renewable energy generation. It may also be possible to accommodate commercial space in the area beneath the powerlines although this would be subject to further consultation and demonstrating an appropriate design response to Mid Devon District Council. A 10m wide corridor of open ground would be required above any undergrounded cables.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD



East Cullompton Landscape Framework

5.3 Landscape

Policy CU9 sets out environmental protection and enhancement measures required for East Cullompton, this section of the SPD elaborates on these requirements showing their application and contribution to placemaking at East Cullompton. Policy CU7 requires allocation site to deliver 40 hectares of strategic green infrastructure, laid out and managed with an appropriate mix of public parkland, open space and landscaping. The site benefits from an existing landscape structure that offers great placemaking potential. Existing watercourses, hedges, tracks, mature trees, and landform can all be used to drive the character and sense of place at East Cullompton.

The MDDC Open Space and Play Area Strategy can be referred to for general guidance on design of open space types. The objective of the Landscape Framework described here is to use the existing clues in the landscape to frame interventions ensuring that:

- New development is rooted in the existing qualities of the site providing a sense of identity and permanence from the outset
- Incoming open spaces simultaneously provide multiple benefits to people, wildlife, and the environment informed by a natural capital approach.

	Land area	Notes
Amenity green space	6 hectares	Accessible areas of green space to be provided within Blueways, Community Greens and areas shown on the Landscape Framework plan as 'Green Infrastructure', where these areas are not adversely effected by flooding, powerlines or sustainable drainage features.
Parks, sports and recreation grounds	9 hectares	To be provided within the Community Greens as more formalised and functional spaces.
Allotments	1.5 hectares	Community growing space such as orchards to be incorporated into Community Greens. Allotments to be provided within the central Blueway, indicative location shown.
Equipped children's play space	0.4 hectares	Primarily provided within the Community Greens with smaller areas for play integrated across the site.
Teenage facilities	0.12 hectares	Older years outdoor and recreation space to be provided within the Community Greens.
Other areas of strategic green infrastructure	29 hectares	Area required for Blueways, retaining existing vegetation and provision of strategic areas of sustainable drainage features.
Area beneath 440kv powerlines	16 hectares	While this area does not form part of the open space requirements, this land could provide space for important green infrastructure functions including wildlife corridors and sustainable drainage features.
Total	46 hectares	Excluding area beneath powerlines.

The Blueways:



Water has played a central role in the history and evolution of Cullompton. The growth of Cullompton to the east of the Culm offers an opportunity to use water as an important placemaking feature and place a renewed focus on water in the town.

A series of existing watercourses traverse the site which each vary in character and ultimately lead to the Culm providing natural connectivity between east and west Cullompton. The placemaking principles below set out how a series of Blueways can embed these watercourses in plans for the future.

- Water courses will be incorporated into three Blueways, shown on the accompanying plan as a positive placemaking feature of East Cullompton.
- Blueways will provide sufficient set back to ensure no development is located within flood zones.
- Blueways will provide the primary areas for consolidation of sustainable urban drainage features including swales and basins making the management and storage of water a visible and positive feature of East Cullompton.
- A 1.5 ha allotment site is required for East Cullompton. An indicative location for this is shown in the central Blueway.
- Blueways will incorporate attractive walking and cycling routes along their length as part of a site wide network of active travel.
- The Blueways will incorporate naturalistic wetlands and water features providing generous naturalistic open space providing continuity with the proposed Country Park to the north.
- The design of these routes will explore the potential for interaction with water and incorporation of water bodies. Design of the southern Blueway will describe how the leat can be retained and celebrated as a positive feature around Fordmore Farm.

- The Blueways will be planned to enable the potential for connectivity into the surrounding area as important landscape corridors and walking and cycling routes.
- The places where the Blueways cross the primary streets and/or the Greenways (described below) will be important points of orientation in the development. Developer proposals must demonstrate how buildings, paths and open space support this landmark function. This may include bringing buildings closer to the water locally, providing community gathering space or varying building height and form. They will also incorporate water or wetland planting as a significant characteristic.



Naturalistic planting around water bodies mixed with areas of mown grass serving a broad range of functions.



Drainage features characterised by naturalistic planting.



Strategic drainage areas with strong building frontage.



Rain gardens integrated in waling and cycling route.

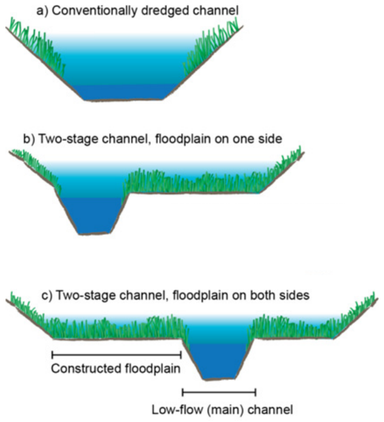


Strategic drainage areas with naturalistic planting and water storage.



A high-level drainage strategy has been developed as part of the Masterplan SPD. The principals of the strategy are to allow for rainwater storage on plot (e.g. in rain gardens) and then the remaining storage provided as a combination of network storage (e.g. swales or linear drainage features in parallel with existing flow paths or channels) feeding into larger strategic storage elements (e.g. infiltration / attenuation basins). This will follow the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) train to ensure the necessary treatment of any runoff. The advantage of utilising larger storage features is to reduce / make more efficient the overall maintenance requirements for the drainage features and to provide areas of habitat and amenity.

- The SuDS hierarchy should be followed, by using infiltration as far as is practicable. In addition, all off-site surface water discharges from development should mimic “Greenfield” performance up to a maximum 1 in 10 year discharge rate or lower if possible.
- All on-site surface water should be safely managed up to the “1 in 100+climate change” conditions. This will require additional water storage areas to be created thereby contributing to a reduction in flooding downstream.
- Strategic storage areas should be located in the Blueways, with some of the storage providing areas of permanently wet habitat to also help provide increased biodiversity as part of the development.
- Explore the use of cascade basins in strategic storage locations where this would help deal with the steepness of the overall catchment. The basins, and the connectivity between them, offer the potential for amenity and ecological benefits, as well as drainage and flood risk management.
- Explore the use of two stage channels, in combination with storage basins, weirs and meandering channels, as a means of ensuring a permanent water presence can be maintained, while providing additional capacity for flood flows and storage.





Buildings adding to the character of green space with natural materials.



Incorporating water as a positive feature.

Minimum levels for development parcels

The development parcels for the SPD Masterplan have taken into account the location of the flood zones. The parcels avoid areas of flood risks and allow space adjacent to the drainage channels to incorporate strategic storage as part of the overall Surface Water Drainage strategy for the area.

- The minimum acceptable levels of the development parcels will be set based on the 1 in 100 year plus climate change peak water level with a freeboard allowance included. This ensures that all of the development will be safe in during a flood event based on the recently updated guidance.

Crossing points and fords

The aim for the management of the drainage channels through the allocation area is to utilise and improve the existing channels where possible. This will include consideration of crossing points for transport links. Fords already have a distinctive presence in the wider landscape allowing a connection to the watercourse to be maintained, providing an alternative to bridge and culverts, which have a risk of blockage, particularly with beavers known to be within the wider Culm catchment.

- Fords will be considered within the overall water management strategy. These can be designed to have small culverts underneath to pass the normal flow so that the ford itself is only utilised in flood events.
- Due to the risk that in a flood these will not be passable, the wider transport strategy will ensure there are alternative routes available so that safe access/egress is always possible.
- Where fords are proposed as part of the allocation area, signage will be provided to explain the idea and when there are potential restrictions to access.



Indicative study of crossing points on Blueways.



Existing fords in the surrounding area.



Inset plan of crossing points on Blueways.

Greenways



Greenways will be planned to complement Bueways, providing a connected network of active travel routes across the site. Generally, they will run towards and across Blueways to form a grid.

- The character of each Greenway can vary to its context either running through larger green spaces or provided adjacent to streets within built areas but must provide attractive, dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists and planting.
- The combination of Greenways and Blueways will provide walking and cycling loops around the site. The loops will serve multiple functions from direct routes to key destinations to slower, recreational routes at the edges of East Cullompton.

The Eastern Loop



Defining the eastern edges of East Cullompton is important in the early phases where development meets the open countryside. The potential future expansion of East Cullompton promoted through the wider Garden Village opportunity requires that this edge also considers the flexibility required to allow possible further phases of development to connect in future. It is envisaged that this will form an attractive edge to East Cullompton defined by walking and cycling routes, planting and a building edge that responds to views from the surrounding area.

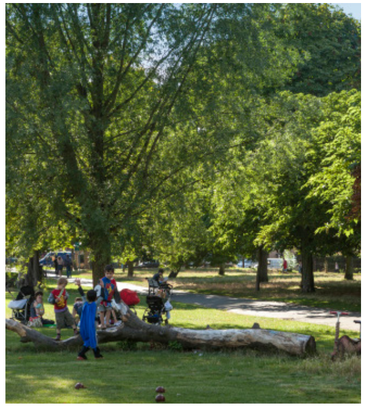
- The Eastern Loop will be a Greenway planned to follow the northern, eastern and southern edges of East Cullompton, in the early phases this will provide an active travel route around the outer limits of the development providing interaction with the open countryside.
- The design of the Eastern Loop will demonstrate how it allows for future phases of development to connect into this route to ensure a positive interaction between East Cullompton and any potential future phases of the Garden Village.
- The Eastern Loop will vary along its length but will provide sufficient space to retain existing trees and hedges at the edge of the site and provide space for new planting, hedge banks, and hedges to filter views of development.
- The Eastern Loop will run from the Public Right of Way at Old Hill around the site boundary to Week Farm.
- The Eastern Loop will run through and connect key green spaces including the Community Greens, Blueways and demonstrate the potential to connect to the Country Park.
- Screen planting to be incorporated within the Eastern Loop to protect the amenity of existing houses properties on Honiton Road and views from the surrounding area.

Enhancing the Existing Landscape Structure



The inherited landscape features of the site will only thrive if they are given sufficient space and will only realise their full potential for nature if they are part of linked open space and habitats. The positive retention of existing trees and hedges is a core part of the placemaking objectives for East Cullompton established in policy CU9 of the Local Plan and Stage 1 SPD. The natural capital mapping also stresses the importance of avoiding disturbance to soil beneath existing trees and hedges, the Landscape Framework therefore extends areas of open space around and between significant areas of existing vegetation as far as possible.

- Existing trees and hedges will be incorporated within areas of open space with sufficient building setbacks to ensure longevity of trees and allow for additional complementary planting that can provide habitat enhancement and connectivity.
- Significant trees and hedges will be incorporated as linear features as far as possible and part of a connected grid of open spaces that lead to the edges of the development providing connectivity with the surrounding landscape.
- New tree and hedge planting will be required to the site boundary, particularly the east where there are no existing hedges and trees. This planting should filter and manage views rather than attempt to completely screen development.
- Additional planting will be included to the western boundary of the site helping to provide screening to the M5.
- Additional planting will be required to demonstrate climate resilience and improve biosecurity.



Open spaces incorporating existing mature trees as a central feature.

Community Greens



The Community Greens (shown in dark green) are intended to serve as key community gathering spaces in East Cullompton, providing the principal focus for play, parks and recreation grounds as set out in the Landscape Framework Land Budget. Sports pitches will need to be provided in accordance with the MDDC Playing Pitch Strategy, this includes a preference for a 3G pitch. The Community Green at Fordmore Farm is shown at sufficient scale (5.5ha) to accommodate the allocated requirement for sports pitches in one location but off-site provision of these would be considered if a more suitable location can be demonstrated. Although the exact size and location of open space will be determined through planning applications, the SPD masterplan shows approximately 9.8ha of space within Community Greens which is sufficient to provide the main play space, teen facilities and policy requirement for Parks, sports and recreation grounds.

- At least three Community Greens will be provided in the areas around East Culme House, Fordmore and Moorhayes.
- The Community Greens will be laid out to provide the core open space functions required by the Local Plan open space standards incorporating parks, play areas, teenage facilities, recreation space, sports pitches and community orchards.
- Plans for the Community Greens should demonstrate how they provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate a range of temporary community events and gatherings.
- The Community Greens are co-located with mixed use areas and must be planned to be visually prominent from within areas of surrounding mixed-use development.
- The Community Green at Moorhayes will be planned to create an appropriate setting to listed buildings at the edge of the allocation boundary.
- The Community Green at East Culme House will provide an appropriate setting to the County Wildlife Site in this location.
- The Community Green at Fordmore will provide an appropriate setting to the non-designated heritage assets as well as enhancing the character of this area as a mixed-use hub capable of retaining the rural qualities of the area and will incorporate areas for community gardens and orchards.
- The Community Greens will be supplemented with smaller areas of informal open space and play across the site.
- Sports pitches are to be provided within the Community Greens in accordance with Mid Devon District Council Playing Pitch Strategy unless offsite provision in a favourable location is agreed with MDDC.
- Areas adversely effected by powerlines or flooding will not contribute to meeting open space standards.

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD



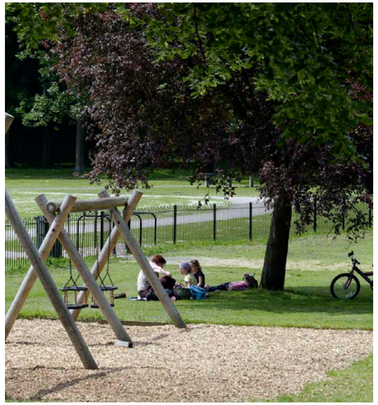












Character images of Community Greens showing a broad range of functions, including food growing, play, sports and community space.



Aerial view of the River Culm in the area being explored for the Country Park

Country Park and off site landscape improvements along the River Culm



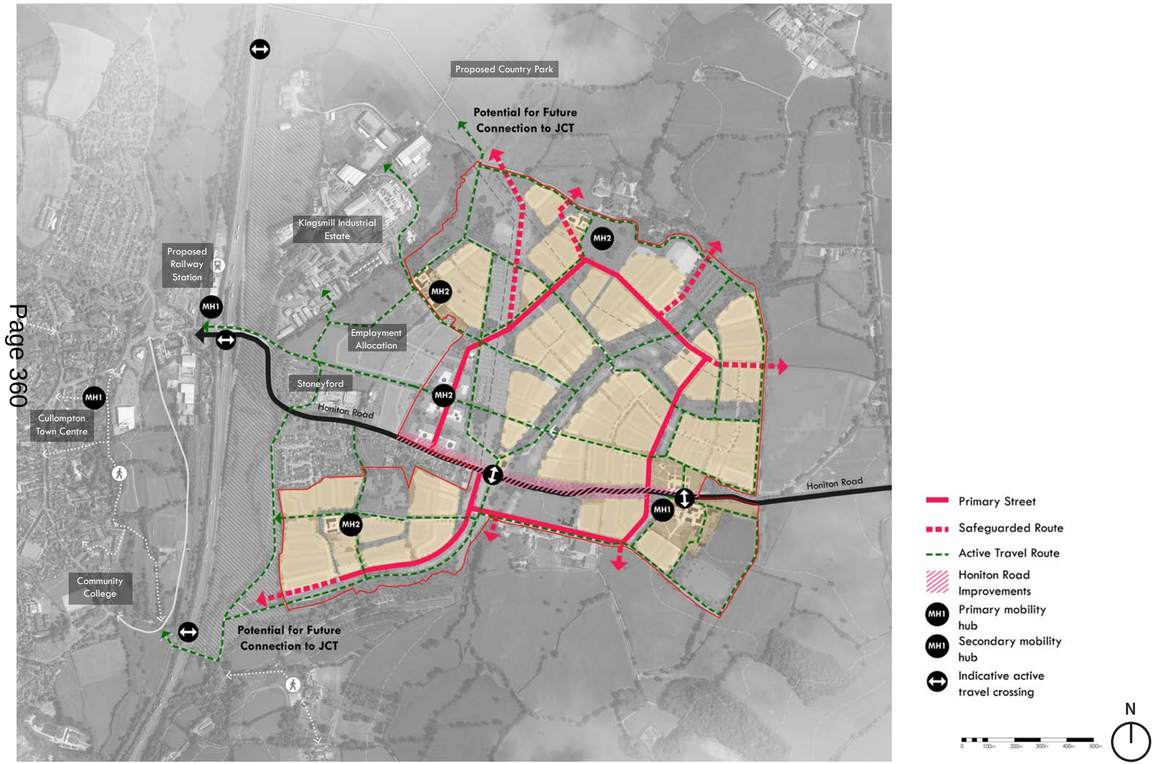
One of the key principles of the SPD is to ensure that East Cullompton is experienced as part of one town with existing parts of Cullompton. This aspiration places significance on the River Culm corridor in creating the setting and point of connectivity between eastern and western parts of Cullompton in the future. Mid Devon District Council are exploring plans for a Country Park to the north of East Cullompton around the River Culm to serve new and existing residents. The Country Park has the potential to provide an outstanding asset to the wider area. The Masterplan Framework also identifies the areas of riverside adjacent to the M5 as having a potential role in providing strong links between all parts of Cullompton. While not a formal requirement of the SPD, the Country Park and areas of riverside can provide important walking and cycling links, off site public open space provision and also assist with delivering off site biodiversity net gain if required. Mid Devon District Council will work with developers to explore the delivery of these enhancements.

In addition, proposals at East Cullompton can support and enhance these proposals by ensuring the Blueways provide attractive walking and cycling connections to the proposed Country Park to the north and by ensuring that the landscape design of the Blueways provide a continuation of the qualities of the Country Park into the East Cullompton allocation area.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required by the National Planning Policy Framework, The Environment Act 2021 and Policy DM26 of the Mid Devon Local Plan 2020. To demonstrate measurable biodiversity gain, the Defra Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculation tool (Defra, 2022) has been used to provide an initial indicative calculation of the biodiversity value of the Allocation Area, both for the existing baseline conditions and for the post-development masterplan scenario. Although strategic in nature at this stage, this calculation indicated that the masterplan framework would not deliver the biodiversity net gain required within the allocation area alone, although this should be explored and prioritised in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. The biodiversity net gain calculations did however identify suitable land within the wider area to provide habitat creation and enhancement outside the allocation boundary. The wider area includes cropland and modified grassland which have the potential to offer significant biodiversity net gain. As an example, the enhancement of approximately 15 ha of existing modified grassland to create neutral grassland of moderate condition, and replacement of approximately 15 ha of cropland to provide neutral grassland of moderate condition will provide an overall gain of 55.88 units, and a 10.77 % net gain. These enhancements could be provided as part of the Country Park.

Developer proposals must demonstrate how biodiversity net gain will be delivered, either on site within the allocation boundary in the first instance, or through off-site contribution to the delivery of landscape enhancements. Mid Devon District Council's preference would be for off-site improvements to be delivered in areas adjacent or accessible to the East Cullompton allocation.



East Cullompton Mobility Framework

5.4 Mobility

Approach to mobility

Policy CU8 of the Local Plan sets out the required transport provision associated with East Cullompton. This includes contribution to, or delivery of improvements to junction 28 of the M5, the Town Centre relief road, reopening of the railway station and provision of walking, cycling and bus routes at appropriate locations throughout the development as part of future planning applications.

The Masterplan Framework has adopted the 20 minute place principles and Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility (SAM) framework, where the priorities are as follows;

- Substitute Trips: Replace the need to travel beyond your community
- Shift Modes: For longer trips, use active, public and shared forms of transport
- Switch Fuels: For any trips that must be made by car, ensure the vehicle is zero emission

The Vision and Overarching principles for East Cullompton re-enforce this at the local scale with the aspiration to reduce the reliance on out-commuting from Cullompton to create more vibrant communities and to help address the current climate emergency. With this approach and the overall vision in mind, traffic assessment should be focused on people's core access requirements, over capacity enhancements or optimisation of route convenience for cars. The prioritisation of highway infrastructure, may inhibit the full potential of other measures. To achieve the site's full potential, an approach to the assessment of traffic impact should be used which realises the greatest level of modal shift. It is expected that the Sustainable Accessible and Mobility hierarchy guides planning applications for each phase of development in support of the overarching vision for East Cullompton. The Infrastructure, Delivery and Phasing section sets out the requirement for a co-ordinated approach to transport assessment.

Junction 28

At the time of preparing the SPD, the preferred option for strategic highways improvements had not been determined. The Masterplan therefore leaves flexibility for the preferred solution to be developed, indicating locations for safeguarded routes should alternative junction locations to the north or south be required. What is clear through the preparation of the Masterplan SPD is that newly designed highways and junction infrastructure and modifications to existing infrastructure that improve mobility must not adversely impact the qualities of Cullompton and its environs as a place. Indeed, it should contribute to place-making.

It is clear that local connections across the M5 corridor are critical to delivering the aspirations for East Cullompton. Initial consultation has identified that Suicide Prevention should be a priority for a bridge crossing in a location of this nature. Indicative locations for active travel crossings of the M5 are shown on the SPD Masterplan, further co-ordination with ongoing design of offsite infrastructure will be needed, including junction improvements to ensure this requirement is delivered effectively against the following principles.

- Delivering effective active and shared travel crossings of the M5 in the locations shown should help to define the preferred location and arrangement of junction improvements ensuring active and sustainable travel is a key consideration in the overall movement strategy. These broad locations have been set to provide the most direct routes possible to the Town Centre, Community College and Railway Station.
- The central and southern active and shared travel crossings must be prioritised as an early part of proposals at East Cullompton. The northern crossing should be considered where it could be delivered in parallel to a new junction.
- The detailed design of active and shared crossings must demonstrate how these will be attractive and safe for users and encourage their use.
- Well-designed infrastructure must "fit" in terms of scale height and visual impact and make its own contribution to place.

Active Travel



The Blueways and Greenways described in the Landscape Framework set out how a connected network of active travel routes can be provided across East Cullompton. As well as providing an important healthy living and recreational function they will form an important part of a mobility strategy that reduce the reliance on trips made by car.

- An active travel network must be developed that demonstrates how it provides direct and attractive connectivity to key destinations within the site and into the surrounding area.
- A dedicated active travel route will be provided between the community hubs and Cullompton Town Centre, Community College, key employment areas and Rail Station. This will comply with current best practice. Active travel routes should ensure that the earliest stages of development benefit from viable alternatives to the private car, from the outset.
- A phased approach to the provision of key active travel links will be provided, seeking to maximise the connectivity of subsequent development parcels. This will provide links to key land uses and transport interchanges outside of the site, along with internal connectivity to a network of key Mobility Hubs throughout the site. Such links will comply with current best practice guidance, such as that contained within LTN 1/20 or its successor.
- To increase the attractiveness of such links, secured by design principles will be key. Routes may therefore benefit from facilitating multiple modes, including light traffic use such as bus/shared mobility.
- Active and shared travel routes should be supported by clear signage to facilitate wayfinding within the development and connecting to surrounding routes and destinations.
- Active and shared travel routes may run alongside other streets but proposals must demonstrate how they provide attractive and functional space for a variety of users and how priority can be given over vehicles.
- Active travel routes should be more direct and attractive than using the private car and



Example of dedicated space provided to cyclists and pedestrians separated from the carriageway with tree planting and sustainable urban drainage.

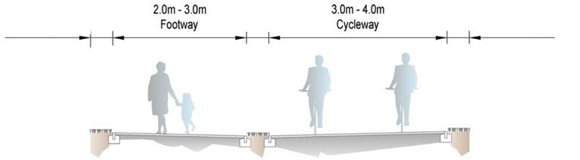


Example of a junction between a street and a footpath where a raised table and textured paving gives priority to pedestrians

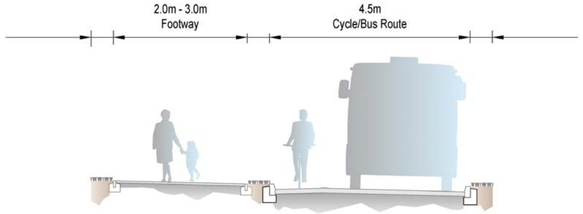
should be free of interruption as far as possible.
- To deliver the points above Active Travel connections into and through employment areas to the west will need to be explored particularly through allocation CU17 and along the River Ken Blueway past Week Farm.
- Proposals should demonstrate how active travel routes can be extended into neighbouring parcels and beyond into communities including Kentisbeare and Willand.
- Walking and cycling routes should connect to the Public Rights of Way at the River Culm and opportunities to improve and extend these routes explored.
- Active travel routes and street design to provide sufficient space for all users including mobility vehicles.

Shared Mobility

- The implementation of key shared mobility routes providing spaces for buses and demand responsive transport will be agreed to connect the site with the town centre and railway station. Consideration should be given to a circular route encompassing both existing M5 crossing points, allowing residents the opportunity to benefit from direct links to the south of the town, bypassing Junction 28, with Cullompton Community College providing a key destination during the earlier stages of development.
- Demand responsive transport may represent a viable alternative to timetabled public transport provision, and provide a commercially viable solution during the initial development phases. A range of options will need to be considered which may increase in scope and coverage throughout the lifetime of construction.
- Careful consideration needs to be given to key destinations outside of the town, particularly those that currently rely on the private car for journeys, such as major employment destinations.
- The implementation of key active and shared mobility connections will be required in advance of strategic highway infrastructure improvements, making best use of existing links across the M5 during early stages of development. This should aim to ensure that traffic is managed down at every opportunity.



Typical section of active travel route.



Typical section of active travel route alongside shared mobility route.

Street Hierarchy



A clear street hierarchy must be demonstrated that creates an easily understood structure to all development areas in each phase.

- The primary and secondary street network should be planned to minimise crossings of green infrastructure corridors and dedicated active travel routes.
- The design of the primary street network must demonstrate how it is co-ordinated with junction improvements to the M5, which may require demonstration of safeguarded routes to potential future junction locations.
- The design of the primary and secondary street network must demonstrate how it could be extended into surrounding parcels, ensuring continuity and clear street hierarchy in potential future phases of development.
- SUDs and planting should be incorporated into all primary streets, which could include permeable paving and other features such as swales or rain gardens.
- Tree planting should be incorporated as a prominent feature into all primary and secondary streets.
- All streets through development areas will be designed to a maximum of 20mph speed and this will be clearly apparent in the detailed design of the street. On long straight sections of street, slower speeds will be encouraged through changes in carriageway material, build outs to alter the carriageway alignment and narrowing of carriageways at key places.
- Streets for a Healthy Life should be used as a detailed checklist for developing appropriate design response to each street type.
- The primary street network should provide access to the mixed-use community areas and schools but highways design should not dominate these areas. Opportunities to separate key gathering spaces from parking and highways should be explored to ensure public spaces can remain at a comfortable, human scale.
- The Masterplan Framework shows a primary mobility loop serving the main areas of development with a view to incorporating a bus route through East Cullompton.
- Subject to the preferred junction 28 solution the primary street to the south of East Culme House could be realigned to run through the centre of the development.



Example of a primary street with strong building enclosure, space for pedestrians and tree planting.



Example of a primary street consistent built form and boundaries, street trees and sustainable urban drainage.



Example of a secondary street with consistent building line and boundary treatment, front gardens, street trees and on street parking.



Example of a tertiary street with limited vehicle role and the scale of the street has been reduced.

Honiton Road

Whilst Honiton Road is an A road and plays a key movement role in the wider highway network, it will also need to form a stronger place function within East Cullompton achieving safe and pleasant environment that responds to local context along its length.

The current alignment has the potential to disconnect key parts of East Cullompton which in turn may discourage walking and cycling. Low speed environments should be promoted with the reallocation of road space through the allocation area, enabling road users to give way on a more conciliatory basis facilitated by a range of both uncontrolled and controlled crossing points to cater for all users and abilities.

A strong sense of place will need to be created around Fordmore Farm, whilst facilitating movement in a manner that does not create unnecessary conflict between road users. Detailed highways design to reduce vehicle speed along Honiton Road will assist in ensuring that a higher priority can be given to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. The context of each section of the road within the East Cullompton area should be used to develop a proposed movement framework with distinct character types in residential, commercial and mixed use areas that seek to reduce the overall vehicle dominance of Honiton Road.

It should be demonstrated that the priority afforded to each mobility mode reflects its function within the development, and the volume of pedestrian and cycle traffic anticipated. Vulnerable road users should be given appropriate priority, noting that different demographics may benefit from alternative levels of priority over traffic. Within mixed use areas, at active travel crossings and in the vicinity of schools, where pedestrian footfall and cycle traffic is higher, priority should be facilitated through both active and passive means, relying on both signal crossings and informal crossings.

Junction layouts from Honiton Road should avoid highways dominance and will need to prioritise active modes, ensuring safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists across key areas of conflict. Alongside this, consideration should be given to other forms of mobility including e-mobility and traditional and future forms of shared mobility. It should be demonstrated that the level of priority is commensurate with its movement function and the vulnerability of road users, including priority at side roads and signal crossings at key routes along its length.

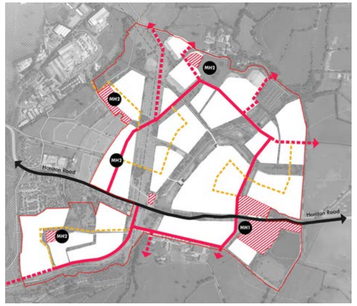
Consideration needs to be given to how the use of the corridor will change over time, both during the phasing of the development but also it's longer term life cycle. Mobility strategies should be developed to predict and incorporate

future expectations over the long term. Some flexibility should be incorporated to ensure that key interchange points can adapt to future mobility expectations. This might mean greater space for pick-up/drop-offs for example, the recognition of changing demands on the mixed use buildings fronting the route or the need for greater space for people to pass, stop, rest and socialise.

A co-ordinated design scheme is required for Honiton Road which would allow the road to perform a 'place' function regardless of volumes of traffic. Reduction in speed reduces the space required for vehicles as well as offering potential environmental benefits and reduced noise. A scheme design should demonstrate:

- Zoning of the route where it moves through either residential or mixed use areas with appropriate development frontages.
- Reallocation of space to multiple users.
- Active travel crossings at key desire lines.
- Place over movement function.
- Direct access points off Honiton Road while aiming to reduce the scale of access junctions.
- A range of parallel mobility solutions reducing the priority given to cars.

Mobility Hubs



Mobility hubs are points in the new development where a range of mobility solutions are offered. Detailed proposals will need to be developed through design codes and planning applications and agreed with key stakeholders to ensure that Mobility Hubs are implemented at key locations in the town and throughout East Cullompton. The range of transport solutions available at these destinations should form part of a strategy that will seek to prioritise shared and active modes over the car, and provide a range of inclusive mobility solutions that can be utilised by the widest possible demographic. This may include on demand solutions such as bike or scooter hire, car club spaces, along with complementary services and facilitates that will encourage the take up of alternative modes such as buses.

- Mobility hubs should be well integrated into development areas, providing high quality public spaces offering people an alternative to the private car.
- The success of mobility hubs will be dependant on usage, primary hubs should be prioritised in areas of highest demand, i.e. around the railway station, primary mixed use areas i.e. Formore Farm, the Town Centre and employment areas.
- Secondary and tertiary hubs can be provided as part of a wider interconnected network where they can provide services appropriate to their area. They will include a more limited provision of services, and points at which docking stations or drop off/collection points could be provided. These will need to be included within attractive and convenient locations throughout East Cullompton.
- The effectiveness of mobility hubs is reliant on a network that allows convenient and predictable movement to the wider area. They should aim to provide greater ease and offer a more attractive proposition than travelling by car. A clear branding across the whole hub network will increase visibility and user awareness, which would complement a marketing strategy to raise awareness, inspire change, and provide advice on how to use the facilities.
- Further detail on the provision of mobility hubs will be developed through planning applications.

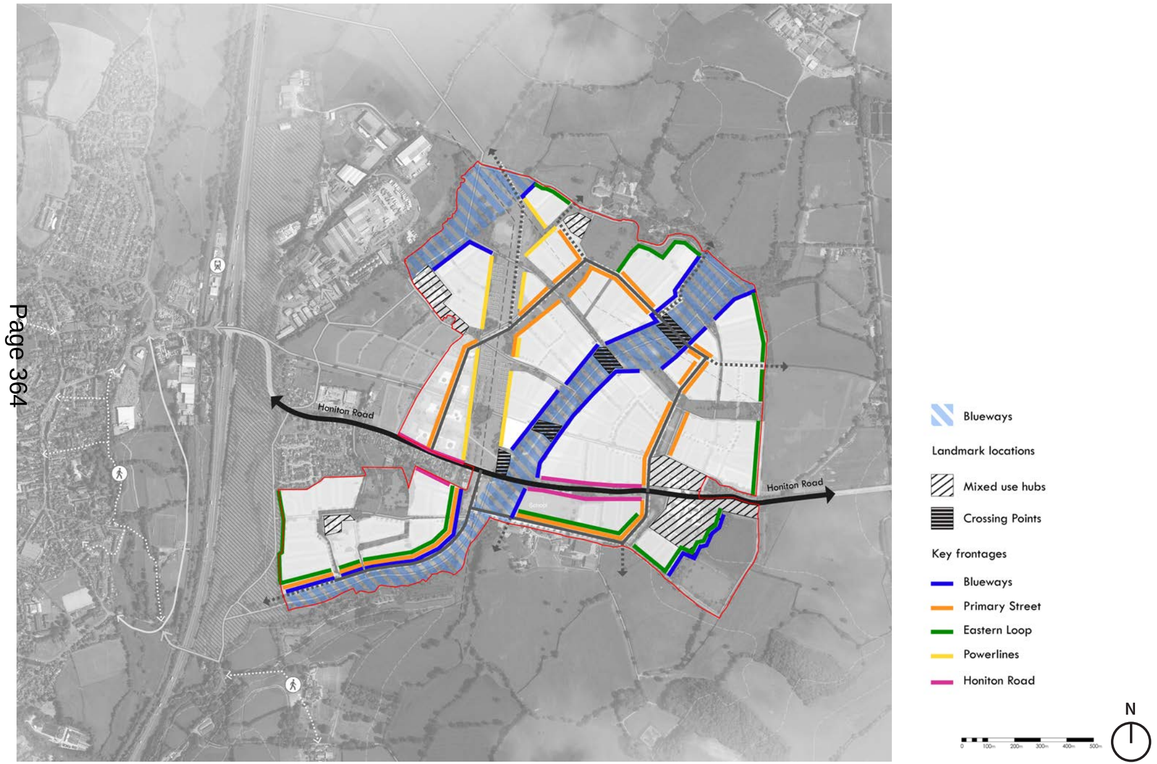








Examples of mobility hubs, demand response travel and space dedicated to active travel.



East Cullompton Placemaking Framework

5.5 Placemaking

The Placemaking Framework is primarily made up of a combination of the Landscape, Mobility and Activity layers described above. This sets out the organisation of the key spatial features of the SPD masterplan and how they relate to each other. The following additional principles have been defined in response to site characteristics, the vision and through consultation as important placemaking principles for East Cullompton.

Integrating water

- Masterplan proposals must demonstrate how water has been used as a positive placemaking feature. This may include areas of wetland, new water bodies and integration of moving water as a visible part of the scheme. It is expected that water will be incorporated into prominent areas of the plan i.e. in mixed use areas and at key crossing points of movement corridors.
- Development parcels should be clearly structured around water and water courses and explore opportunities for bringing key buildings closer to water.

Overarching character

- It is expected that the overall character of East Cullompton will be defined by the interaction of buildings and the elements described on the Placemaking Framework. There should not be arbitrary changes in character, instead neighbourhoods should be structured clearly around this Framework.
- Building enclosure and architectural detailing should be planned with sufficient consistency to a neighbourhood, street or greenspace to create recognisable character. Consistency can be achieved by providing a repeating pattern of development components such as building line, height, form, roof line, boundary treatments, architectural style, or restrained palette of high quality materials. Variations in these components should be done in a deliberate way to place emphasis on landmark locations.

Key Frontages

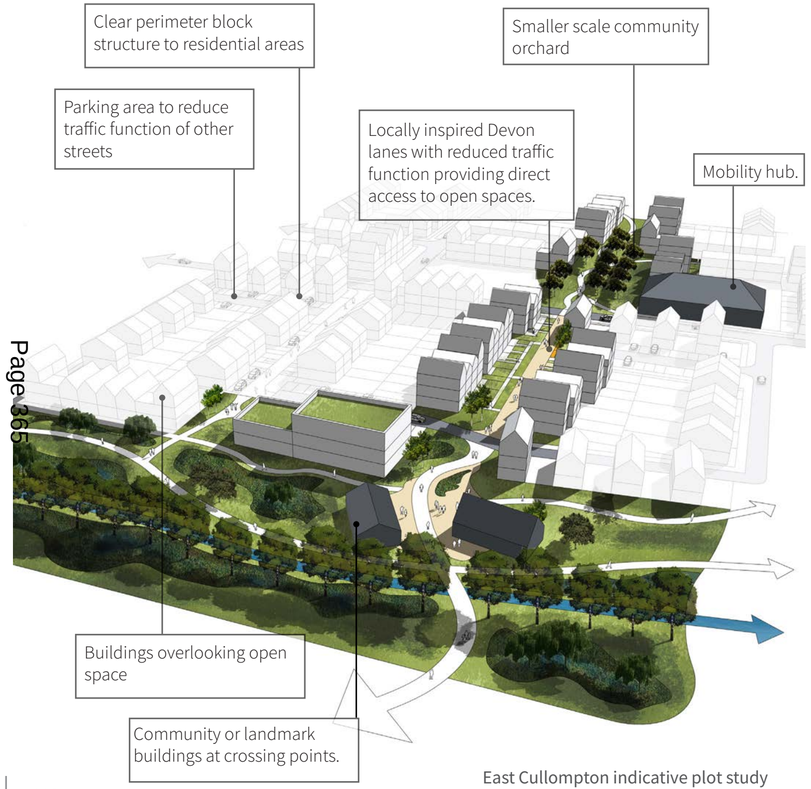
- Buildings should provide frontage and overlooking onto adjacent publicly accessible streets and spaces. Rear fences, walls and parking courts must not become dominant features. In addition, the following have been identified on the Placemaking Framework as key frontages in setting the overall character and legibility of East Cullompton.



Consistent approach to character through materials, building form and building set back. Planted boundary to public space. Coloured render is used to add interest.



Example of a strong building frontage onto a green space.



East Cullompton indicative plot study

- Blueway: The Blueways are a key organising feature of the masterplan, the open spaces of the Blueway are an important part of the character. Proposals must demonstrate how buildings can contribute to the character of these corridors in a consistent way. It is expected that a strong frontage is created to the Blueways.
- Primary Streets: Buildings should have active frontages with windows and front doors onto the street. Large areas of blank façades will not be allowed. The buildings along the street should have a uniform rhythm with consistent height, roof lines and massing with marker buildings in key locations as the exception to this. Buildings should have a consistent building line and set back from back of footway. The set-back should be minimum of 2 metres. Buildings should provide consistent and high degree of street enclosure. All gardens should have a defined boundary treatment such as a low wall with planting and this should be consistent along the primary street.
- Eastern Loop frontage: The Eastern Loop forms the development edge to East Cullompton and will meet the open countryside. Proposals must demonstrate how the building frontage can create a lower density edge where building massing is matched by tree and hedge planting.
- Honiton Road: The Mobility Framework describes how Honiton Road will need to change as part of East Cullompton to ensure that it forms a place function as well as its current movement function. A key part of that will be ensuring that a strong development frontage is created. Proposals must demonstrate how this will be achieved. It is expected that the building frontage will vary as the road moves through different areas including the mixed use community hubs, residential areas and the commercial area.
- Powerlines: Where powerlines are left in situ, they will present a significant obstruction due to their associated easements. Proposals must demonstrate how buildings will provide some overlooking of the powerline corridors from adjacent properties. It is expected that this will not be from the primary frontage of buildings but from gable ends with windows and building entrances. Continuous rear fences to publicly accessible green spaces will not be accepted.

Landmark locations

- Mixed use community hubs: Non-residential buildings should reinforce the aspiration to utilise the rural character of the site and its context in the layout, detailing and choice of materials. Typically, this will involve single, or two storey buildings laid out in an informal arrangement within a very strong landscape utilising the form and type of materials found in the surrounding area.
- Crossing points: The Landscape Framework describes the use of crossing points as key points of orientation in East Cullompton. Landmark buildings should re-enforce this role with taller buildings, bringing buildings out into the landscape or including mixed use buildings.

Layout

- The Landscape Framework sets out the strategic areas of open space in response to site constraints and to meet the local standards. In addition, proposals should demonstrate how smaller scale community spaces can be incorporated within residential areas to provide functional and attractive spaces close to home. These may incorporate informal or incidental play opportunities or spaces for orchards and outdoor seating areas.
- A clear, rational, and understandable



Strong building enclosure to streets and junctions.



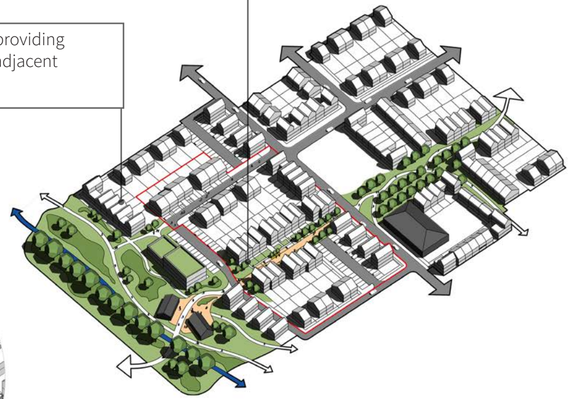
Consistent street frontage and boundary.



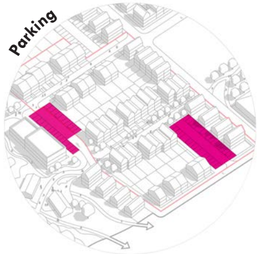
Use of gable ends to provide overlooking.

Streets planned to provide good levels of permeability and lead to strategic areas of open space and mixed use areas to encourage walking and cycling.

Perimeter block structure providing consistent overlooking of adjacent streets and spaces.



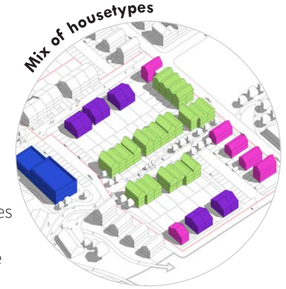
Variety of approaches to parking including areas of communal or more strategic parking for additional cars enabling tertiary streets to have a reduced traffic function.





Locally inspired lanes that are accessible, encourage social interaction, that provide good pedestrian and bicycle links to surrounding open spaces and that reduce the dominance of cars.

The housing density at East Cullompton allows for innovative and adaptable homes with a mix of detached, semi detached, terraced and apartments. Sufficient space for front and back gardens.



East Cullompton indicative plot and density study

residential street layout is required which clearly delineates public and private space, avoiding small, inefficient and poorly overlooked spaces. The most effective way of achieving this will be with rational perimeter blocks with buildings clearly facing public spaces. Perimeter blocks are expected to be consistent throughout East Cullompton and should be of a sufficient scale to provide an easily understood structure to residential areas.

- Proposals must demonstrate how the residential block structure responds to the structuring elements of the framework above. For instance, by organising streets with direct links to primary streets, strategic green infrastructure, or mixed-use areas as far as possible to ensure a clear and legible street pattern.
- Homes should be planned to have front gardens of sufficient size to suit the needs of families and vulnerable groups in orientating on leaving and arriving home. Front gardens should be defined in a low wall or hedge in a consistent way along a street.
- Plots should allow appropriate space for the storage of bicycles.
- Building for a Healthy Life should be used as a useful accompanying checklist for application of good urban design principles.

Parking

Dominance of highways and design for parking was cited as one of the critical failures of residential led developments in the Housing Design Audit for England undertaken by the Place Alliance. The Masterplan SPD does not intend to promote one outcome for parking, but proposals are expected to demonstrate how parking can be incorporated without having a detrimental effect on place making or the aspirations for encouraging other means of travel. Street designs should demonstrate how they create an unmistakable Mid Devon character.

- A range of parking solutions will be appropriate but preferred solutions should demonstrate how they will work alongside and encourage active travel as an attractive alternative.
- Innovative solutions to parking will be encouraged that explore incorporation of more strategic provision of parking through shared parking areas, car clubs and mobility hubs described in the Mobility Framework.
- Strategic parking should be provided in a way that avoids expansive rear parking courts that compromise the clear perimeter block structure and definition of public and private space.
- Proposals should demonstrate how the dominance of cars in streets will be avoided.



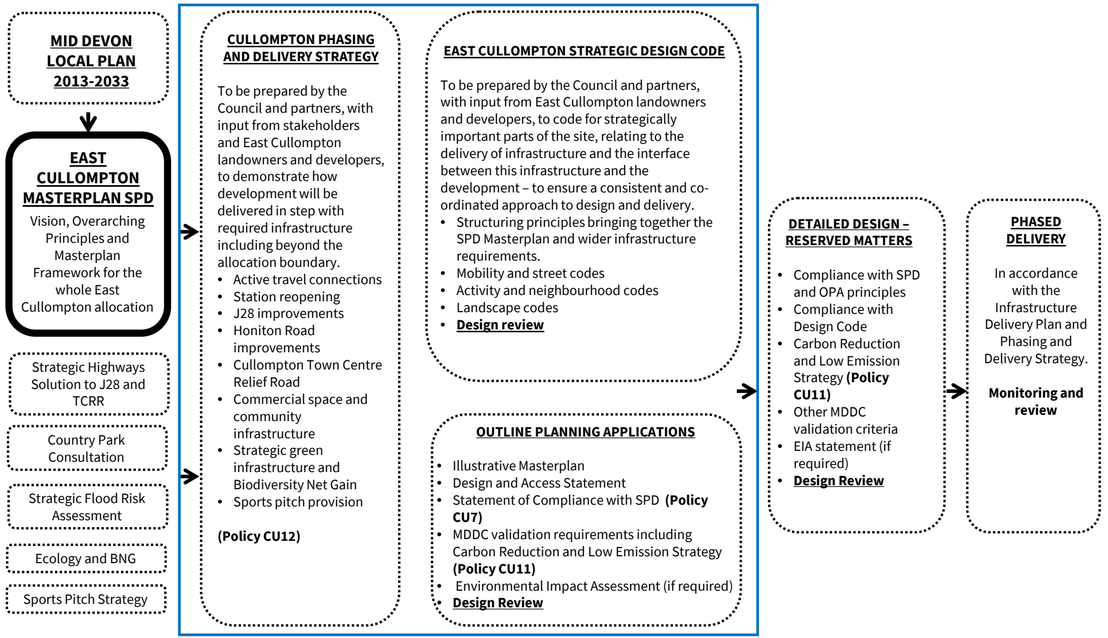
Courtyard parking with planting and overlooking



On plot parking to the side.



On street and on plot parking.



NB: Work within the blue box can be progressed in parallel but the Phasing and Delivery Strategy and Strategic Design Code are to be complete before determination of planning applications.

Planning and Design Process Flow Diagram: The role of the SPD in relation to the Local Plan and the planning application process

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

5.6 Infrastructure, Delivery and Phasing

Delivery Strategy

It is essential that the development is taken forward in a co-ordinated and cohesive manner to ensure the overall vision and aims of the area can be achieved. Important to the consideration of each planning application or phase will be that it does not prevent or inhibit other areas of the site to be delivered.

Local Plan Policy CU7 requires an agreed phasing strategy to ensure that development and infrastructure come forward in step, minimising the impact of the development, while ensuring it remains viable. Further detail in relation to specific phasing requirements is then set out in Policy CU12 including expectations for the phasing of commercial and housing, green infrastructure, highway improvements, bus service enhancements and transfer of land for the primary school. Phasing will be a critical factor in ensuring place quality and delivering the vision for East Cullompton. An effective phasing strategy will establish the opportunity for patterns of local living and sustainable travel from the outset.

There is more than one landowner and site promoter involved in delivering East Cullompton, and it is important that it should be delivered as a single unified development. How this is achieved in practice will be the subject of further discussions and collaboration between landowners, site promoters, stakeholders and Mid Devon District Council. Following the adoption of this SPD, the Council will work with stakeholders and landowners to prepare a phasing and delivery strategy to inform the sequence of development on the site, capacity of each phase coming forward and the associated infrastructure requirements. It is therefore anticipated that a Phasing and Delivery Strategy document will be produced prior to determination of any planning applications at East Cullompton. The Council recognises that the high infrastructure costs of this site will not solely be funded by the development. The Council will work with its partners and the development industry to secure external funding to ensure the delivery of the necessary infrastructure as necessary.

The Phasing and Delivery Strategy should:

- Achieve the spatial principles set out in this SPD, to create self-sustaining places which are supported by facilities and infrastructure;
- Set out phasing and milestones for delivery;
- Demonstrate delivery of on and off site infrastructure needed for the development in accordance with the agreed phasing and milestones;
- Be collaborative and developed by a joined-up delivery team comprising stakeholders who work together to build the various components of the masterplan;
- Set a clear plan for long term stewardship;
- Achieve the build-out rates needed to deliver the site allocation in the Local Plan, and captures uplifts in land value to resource the features needed to create a sustainable place;
- Be aligned with the phasing set out in the Council's Infrastructure and Delivery Plan and Local Plan Policies and this SPD; and
- Be adaptable, monitored and updated, and include provisions to overcome barriers to delivery.

Strategic Design Code

It is proposed that a strategic design code for East Cullompton is prepared prior to planning applications for the site coming forward. The Design Code will be produced in parallel to the Phasing and Delivery Strategy and future planning applications. The purpose of this is to ensure a coordinated approach to more detailed design considerations with a specific focus on the strategically important aspects of East Cullompton and their relationship to planned infrastructure delivery. It is expected that the Design Code will assist the delivery of the requirements of this SPD and will include the following:

Structuring Principles

- The site wide framework, building on the SPD Masterplan, wider infrastructure requirements including preferred interventions at junction 28 and the Phasing and Delivery Strategy.
- Overarching character statement and design response to the requirements of the SPD.

Street and Mobility Codes

- Details of the infrastructure plan providing links to Cullompton, Junction 28 works and Honiton Road design scheme.
- Design approach to streets, spaces and active travel routes, including typical street sections for primary streets, secondary streets, tertiary streets and active travel routes.
- Strategic approach to provision of mobility hubs, vehicle and cycle parking.

Neighbourhood Codes

- Mixed use hub and commercial area codes setting out layout principles, height, frontage, massing, character and public realm treatment.
- Codes for typical residential block structure, character, boundary treatments, frontage and amenity space.

Landscape Codes

- Codes for key areas of open space including the Blueways, Greenways, Eastern Loop and Community Greens covering size, function, character, materials, planting and layout principles.
- Sustainable urban drainage.
- Planting codes for retaining existing vegetation and new structural planting.
- Codes for public realm treatment.

Ensuring a comprehensive approach

Further measures that could ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to development will be explored with MDDC and could include:

- The role of a lead / master developer in co-ordinating delivery of site-wide infrastructure, s106 obligations and planning applications, the draw-down and disposal of individual parcels of land and overall marketing and promotion;
- The preparation of an outline planning application for the whole allocation site or a process for the effective co-ordination and phasing of multiple applications that accord with the masterplan framework set out in this SPD;
- A consistent approach to the assessment of transport that starts with the vision for the site and then assesses the impacts on that basis, offsetting any impact with a range of agreed initiatives;
- The potential for community involvement through mechanisms such as a management company or community land trust (CLT).

This SPD has been prepared to assist a comprehensive approach to development and infrastructure across the whole site. A high level Infrastructure Delivery Plan and initial indicative phasing strategy and phasing principles are set out in the following sections to guide more detailed proposals.

Phasing

Policy CU12 requires a phasing strategy for East Cullompton to ensure that development and infrastructure come forward in step. Phasing will be a critical factor in ensuring place quality and delivering the vision for East Cullompton. An effective phasing strategy will establish the opportunity for patterns of local living and sustainable travel from the beginning. In addition to the requirements of Policy CU12, the phasing and delivery strategy will be expected to demonstrate the following:

An immediate step away from a "business as usual", traffic-dominated environment to one that is genuinely pedestrian-friendly and has all the qualities of local living and village life built-in from the beginning building on the principles of the 20 minute place in each phase.

- All phases are required to contribute towards the delivery of mixed-use, walkable communities from the outset. It is expected that phases will be planned around existing, new and expanded mixed-use clusters around established existing places or hubs such as Fordmore Farm including small- scale flexible workspace or workshops , local shops and space for community activities. The loose farmstead-type arrangements of barns and outbuildings of these places is an important aspiration and key to developing a strong place identity and visitor experience that can help to ensure their long term success. These centres should be largely traffic-free and pedestrian priority.
- Priority must also be given to the early establishment of high quality, pedestrian-priority, public spaces in and around these hubs including community greens. This will help reinforce the sense of place and form the focus of village life from the start of the development.
- Street design through all areas of East Cullompton is planned to manage design speeds and avoid dominance of cars. The scale and width of new roads and streets is to be designed to slow or restrict traffic to create the intimate and people-friendly qualities of a village.
- Central to this will be the early transformation of the A373 Honiton Road. Early phases of development will happen on both sides of Honiton Road including development north and south of Fordmore Farm and the building of the primary school and crossing it must be made safe and convenient for everyone. This includes possible narrowing of the carriageway, and measures to improve the quality of the route for all users including pedestrian and cycle crossings.
- Early phases of development must make active travel, and shared transport links to existing workplaces at Kingsmill and include connections into the allocated employment sites.
- Phasing should emphasise a linear east – west orientation of development to ensure priority is always given to ensuring connectivity back to Cullompton and employment areas.
- The early delivery of strategic active travel and Bus/Demand Responsive Transport connections between East Cullompton and Cullompton and beyond the boundaries of the East Cullompton site allocation is also a top priority. These may need to cross a number of land ownerships and across the physical barriers of the Culm, the M5 and the railway. The proposed new station will be a critical destination. The precise location of routes will be dependent upon the continuing work on improvements to Jct 28 and potential new links over the M5.
- Multiple, simultaneous phases may be appropriate where they can demonstrate compliance with the requirements above with development emanating from multiple centres.
- Early delivery of strategic areas of open space with clear walking and cycling routes from areas of development.



East Cullompton Indicative Phase 1 and 2

Phases 1 and 2

Early phases are built around the mixed use community hubs, school site and associated Community Greens to build a sense of place and provide community facilities from the outset.

Complete active travel routes are delivered to connect back to employment areas and Cullompton. Honiton Road improvements delivered.

Commercial areas delivered in parallel.

Opportunities to deliver offsite landscape improvements to the Country Park and River Culm explored.

All infrastructure delivered in line with infrastructure delivery plan and Phasing and Delivery Strategy.

- Mixed use community hubs
- Residential
- School
- Green Infrastructure
- Active travel routes
- Commercial area delivered in parallel
- Country Park and landscape improvements to Culm river side
- Honiton Road improvements
- Access streets

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East Cullompton Masterplan SPD



East Cullompton Subsequent Phases

Subsequent Phases

Further areas of development extend from Fordmore Farm with an east west orientation initially, strengthening links back to Cullompton.

Further areas of development are focussed and expand from around mixed use areas and community hubs.

Complete active travel routes are delivered to connect back to employment areas and Cullompton and between neighbourhoods.

Commercial areas delivered in parallel.

Opportunities to deliver off-site landscape improvements to the Country Park and River Culm explored.

All infrastructure delivered in line with infrastructure delivery plan and Phasing and Delivery Strategy.

- Mixed use community hubs
- Residential
- School
- Green Infrastructure
- Active travel routes
- Commercial area delivered in parallel
- Country Park and landscape improvements to Culm river side
- Honiton Road improvements
- Access streets

N

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

East Cullompton Infrastructure Delivery Requirements

Highways and Accessibility

Infrastructure Requirement	SPD Position	Local Plan Policy	Timing	Mechanism
Capacity improvements at M5 Junction 28	Masterplan designed to work with options for J28 – sets design principles for active travel connections across J28 and safeguarded routes to provide connection	Policy CU8 Policy CU12	Informed by capacity studies completed to assess the impact of the traffic generated from the site - provision likely to be required after first 500 homes completed and delivery of the Town Centre Relief Road	Funded through a combination of developer contributions and public funding
Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road	Masterplan provides design principles and locations for active travel routes and connection to the Town Centre.	Policy CU12 Policy CU20	To be delivered first prior to new homes being completed	Funded through a combination of developer contributions and public funding
Local highway enhancements to ensure any traffic impacts are mitigated	Determined through transport assessment work but to include early works to improve Honiton Road and introduce traffic calming (particularly around Fordmore Farm) which forms a strong place function in the Masterplan.	Policy CU8 Policy CU20	Delivered in Phase 1 (to be defined in the agreed phasing and delivery strategy) and then in step with development	Developer contributions towards identified works.
Reopening Cullompton Railway Station	Active travel links and safeguarded routes across the M5 and J28 to access the railway station shown on Masterplan.	Policy CU8	MDDC intention for the Station to be operational by 2025	Funded through a combination of developer contributions and public funding
Provision of a network of streets linking to the existing highway network	Sets requirements in terms of location and hierarchy of street design and active travel connections.	Policy CU8	Deliver connection to Honiton Road in Phase 1 (to be defined in the agreed phasing and delivery strategy) and then in step with development	Developers to show how facilitating these connections and contribute to improvement works.
Safe and attractive cycle and pedestrian links to and from the town centre	Active travel links and safeguarded routes across the M5 and J28 to access the town centre shown on Masterplan.	Policy CU8	Deliver in early phases and in step with capacity improvements to Junction 28 (to be defined in the agreed phasing and delivery strategy) and then in step with development.	Funded by developer contributions / linked to public funding projects. Developers to demonstrate how proposals link to the active travel routes and principles set in the SPD
Safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links to Kingsmill Industrial Estate	Early phases of development must make active travel, and shared transport links to existing workplaces at Kingsmill and include connections into the allocated employment sites. SPD sets design requirements for development adjacent to employment sites	Policy CU8	Complete active travel routes delivered to connect back to employment areas and Cullompton town centre in early phases (to be defined in the agreed phasing and delivery strategy).	Delivered by developer
Local and strategic bus service enhancements	The early delivery of strategic active travel and Bus/Demand Responsive Transport connections between East Cullompton and Cullompton and beyond the boundaries of the East Cullompton site allocation is a top priority.	Policy CU8 Policy CU20	Improvements in step with phased housing development	Funded by developer contributions/bus operator

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

Housing

Infrastructure Requirement	SPD Position	Local Plan Policy	Timing	Mechanism
Affordable Housing - 28% To include 10 gypsy and traveller pitches as a minimum Affordable extra care housing will be required either as part of an extra care development or delivered separately.	Masterplan provide 72 hectares of land proposed for residential use, including market and affordable housing, serviced plots for self builders and gypsy and traveller pitches. Capable of delivering 2,600 homes at an average density of c. 35dph. Assumes limited residential uses will be incorporated in to the mixed use community hubs.	Policy CU7 Policy CU12	Trigger linked to market housing to ensure delivered together. Contribution within each phase of development and phased delivery linked to occupation.	Funded by developer – provision within each phase and to comply with policy target of 28% affordable housing, subject to viability
5% Self Build Plots	-	Policy CU7 Policy CU12	Provide all serviced self-build after strategic highways access to the site completed and operational.	Planning applications will be expected to include the 5% self-build plots and developers to identify plots for private sector purchase

Commercial

Infrastructure Requirement	SPD Position	Local Plan Policy	Timing	Mechanism
20,000 square metres commercial floorspace within the plan period and a further 12,000 post 2033 To include a care home or retirement complex, appropriately scaled retail development and other suitable uses such as offices and a hotel or leisure development	Sets spatial and design principles for the delivery of new commercial floorspace adjacent to existing allocated employment areas and ensuring connectivity through these spaces to wider allocation site as well as to the Town Centre.	Policy CU7 Policy CU12	Provision of commercial development in step with housing, at a rate of at least 1 hectare per 500 occupied dwellings. Provision of active route connecting through these spaces to be safeguarded.	Phased provision of space and delivered by developer and offered to private sector

Community

Infrastructure Requirement	SPD Position	Local Plan Policy	Timing	Mechanism
Primary school (630 place or 2 schools) including early-years provision and children's centre service. SEN provision to be included.	Sets indicative location for the Primary School, as discussed with Devon County Council, to the south of Honiton Road and area of high accessibility, close to the proposed mixed-use areas. Will require early delivery.	Policy CU10 Policy CU12 Policy CU20	Transfer of serviced land at no cost to the County Council together with legal right of access for primary school(s) prior to the first occupation of residential development and contributions towards the build costs phased with development.	Funded by developer contributions
Contributions towards expansion of local secondary education facilities to meet needs arising.	-	Policy CU10 Policy CU20	In step with housing	Funded by developer contributions
Site of 2 hectares for a shopping and community centre, and the provision of a multi-purpose community building for youth, children and other community uses	Expected that phases will be planned around existing, new and expanded mixed-use clusters around established existing places or hubs such as Fordmore Farm including small- scale flexible workspace or workshops, local shops and space for community activities.	Policy CU10 Policy CU20	Delivery of mixed use local centre in Phase 1 (to be defined in the agreed phasing and delivery strategy) to build a sense of place. Then in step with future phases with development focused around community hubs.	Funded and delivered by developer
Contributions towards the expansion or improvement of local library services	-	Policy CU10 Policy CU20	In step with housing	Funded by developer contributions
Contribution towards sporting and leisure facilities	-	Policy CU10 Policy CU20	In step with housing	Funded by developer contributions
Contributions towards a new waste and recycling centre to serve Cullompton	-	Policy CU10 Policy CU20	In step with housing	Funded by developer contributions
Contribution towards expansion of emergency fire and rescue services	-	Policy CU20	In step with housing	Funded by developer contributions
Contribution towards healthcare and wellbeing facilities for Cullompton	-	Policy CU20	In step with housing	Funded by developer contributions

Green Infrastructure

Infrastructure Requirement	SPD Position	Local Plan Policy	Timing	Mechanism
Provision of at least 40 hectares strategic green infrastructure and to deliver biodiversity net gain To include areas of equipped and laid out public open space, totalling: - 0.4 hectares of equipped children's play - 0.12 hectares for teenage facilities - 6 hectares amenity green space - 9 hectares of parks sports and recreation grounds - 1.5 hectares of allotments	Masterplan provides 46 hectares strategic green infrastructure. Masterplan provides space for: - 0.4 hectares of equipped children's play - 0.12 hectares for teenage facilities - 6 hectares amenity green space - 9 hectares of parks sports and recreation grounds - 1.5 hectares of allotments	Policy CU9 Policy CU12 Policy CU20	Early delivery of strategic areas of open space with clear walking and cycling routes from areas of development and delivered in step with development. Public open space provided at a rate of at least 1 hectare per 150 dwellings or phased to deliver a larger area of multi-functional public open space at a suitable stage in the development	Funded / provided by developer
A strategic landscaping and tree planting scheme to mitigate landscape impact, protect the setting of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and enhance biodiversity and the character of development	Sets Landscape Framework to use the existing cues in the landscape to frame interventions ensuring that new development is rooted in the existing qualities of the site and that incoming open spaces simultaneously provide multiple benefits to people, wildlife, and the environment informed by a natural capital approach.	Policy CU9	Scheme to be agreed prior to construction. Phased delivery as development comes forward	Funded / provided by developer. Principles to be agreed in site wide design code.
Appropriate provision of a sewerage system to serve the development and a strategically designed, and phased, Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme to deal with all surface water	A high-level drainage strategy has been developed as part of the SPD. The principals of the strategy are to allow for rainwater storage on plot and then the remaining storage provided as a combination of network storage feeding into larger strategic storage elements as shown on Masterplan. Sets further principles in relation to detailed SuDS design.	Policy CU9	SuDS strategy to be developed as part of future planning applications, in accordance with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Phased delivery as development comes forward.	Funded / provided by developers.

Carbon Reduction

Infrastructure Requirement	SPD Position	Local Plan Policy	Timing	Mechanism
Carbon Reduction and Low Emissions Strategies	To set clear principles around carbon reduction and framework as part of each planning application.	Policy CU11	To be submitted with each application for each phase. Phased delivery as development comes forward	Funded / delivered by developers. Also to be considered in Strategic Design Code to allow for spatial implications associated with decarbonisation (e.g. renewable energy solutions on site).

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD



East Cullompton Masterplan SPD

SECTION SIX

GROWING EAST CULLOMPTON

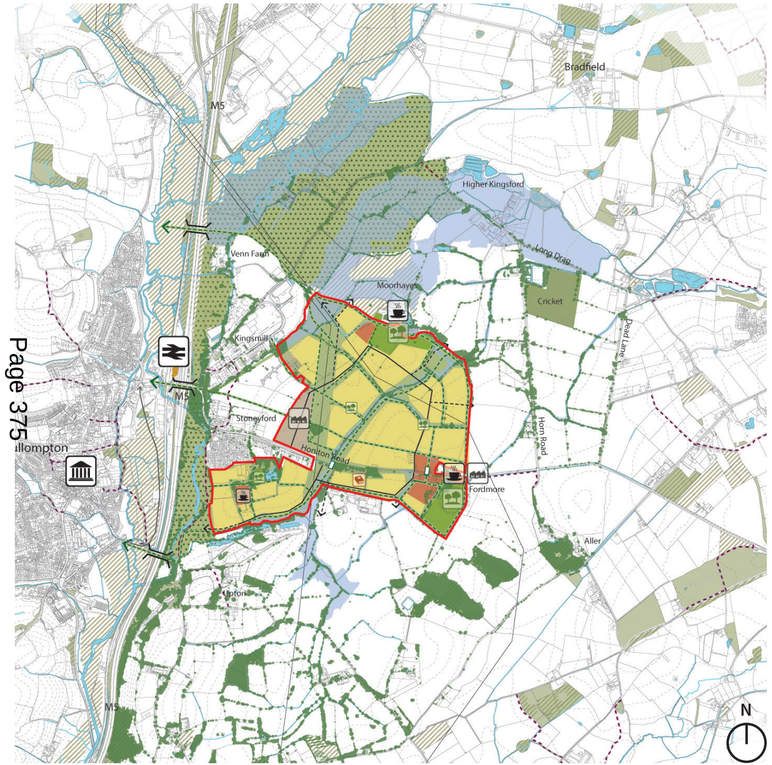
Developing a framework for the wider opportunity area

Activity

Landscape

Mobility

Placemaking



Simplified version of the East Cullompton Allocation Area Masterplan

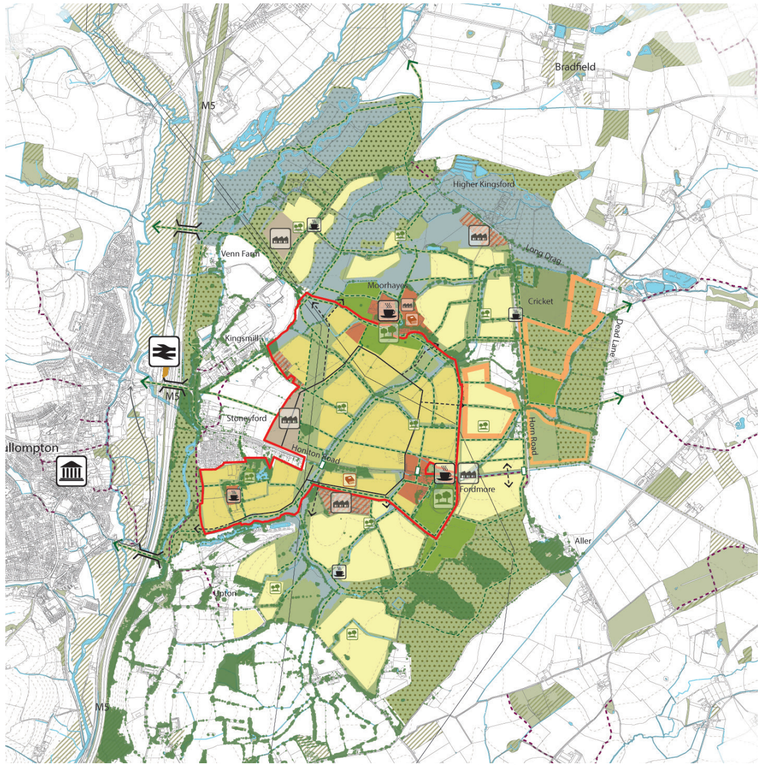
6.1 Developing a framework for the wider opportunity area

The Masterplan SPD for the East Cullompton Allocation has been developed alongside the exploration of a Masterplan which considers opportunities associated with the wider Culm Garden Village project.

The Masterplan and principles described in the previous section set out how the requirements of the Local Plan could be met at East Cullompton. The Masterplan demonstrates how multiple influences can be reconciled and brought together into a comprehensive plan without any further development associated with the wider Garden Village.

This section sets out how the principles defined within the allocation area for East Cullompton could be used to inform a model and framework for further growth to the east of Cullompton should the Garden Village project continue, without setting defined outcomes.

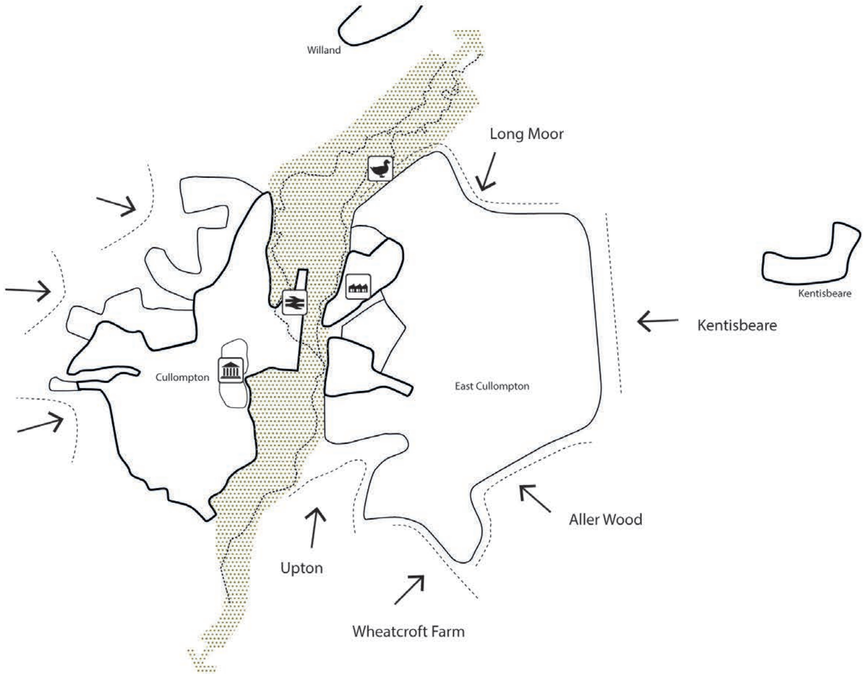
The opportunities set out for the wider Garden Village in this section are intended to provide a commentary and indicative arrangement only, further work will be required to define any proposals definitively through the Local Plan process.



A masterplan framework for the wider Culm Garden Village project

The plans presented in this section show one possible way that East Cullompton could grow in the future following the same placemaking principles established for the allocation area masterplan and is intended to be illustrative only.

- Allocation boundary
- Development area (allocation)
- Wider development area
- Mixed use areas
- Employment areas
- Primary School location
- Potential all through school location
- Strategic green infrastructure
- Indicative Country Park
- Tree canopy
- Neighbourood parks and sport
- PROW
- Active travel routes
- Potential bridge crossings
- Honiton Road crossings
- Main streets
- Surrounding priority habitats
- Local open space
- Community hubs



Influences defining the settlement extent of the Garden Village

Opportunities to explore in the wider Garden Village Masterplan informed by the East Cullompton Masterplan:

Defining the settlement extent

The overall extent of the Garden Village should always link strongly back to existing parts of Cullompton to support the aspiration for new development to feel as though it is a part of one town. The Garden Village should also continue to be organised around a primary infrastructure of open spaces, active travel routes, community hubs, employment and mixed-use community hubs. Residential areas should be planned to form an overall coherent structure of walkable communities clearly linked to the primary infrastructure. Retaining a compact form overall should be a priority to avoid peripheral areas becoming car dominated. Residential areas should continue to be brought forward in step with improved infrastructure, strategic open space and employment space to assist with shift away from a reliance on out-commuting.

The extent of the Garden Village should be driven by the natural capital opportunities defined below, should respect the landscape character of the area and the key influences at the edges of the site including:

Long Moor
An area of historic water meadows in the north that provides the setting for listed buildings and could become part of a large Country Park to serve new and existing parts of Cullompton and nearby villages. Landscape character, areas of flood constraint, priority habitats and opportunities for wetland and woodland planting should frame development extent and character to the north.

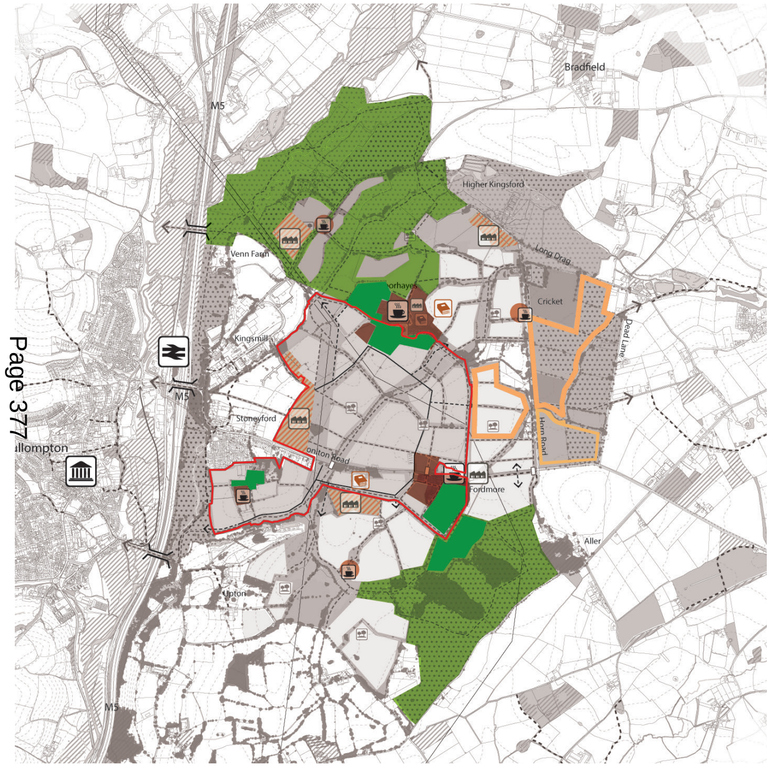
Horn Road
This area is characterised by large rectilinear fields, straight roads with verges and mature hedgerow trees that create a distinct ‘grand avenue’ feel. The objective of maintaining settlement separation from Kentisbeare and an appropriate settlement edge and transition to the open countryside around Horn Road has also been clearly stated through local consultation. The distinct linearity and rectangular layout could inform the identity and character of a new neighbourhood framed around new broadleaf planting, avenues and terraces, allowing retention of important trees and hedgerows to create a strong landscape to the eastern edge of the Garden Village.

Aller Woods
The two ancient woodlands on the hillside to the southeast could be linked through new woodland and grassland areas offering recreation and productive woodland potential that would expand this important habitat. The Garden Village should maintain an appropriate set back from areas of woodland and the local ridge utilising existing lines of vegetation to define the edge of the Garden Village.

Wheatcroft Farm
Development should respect and avoid harming the character of the area around Wheatcroft Farm with an irregular medieval intact field pattern of ancient important hedges, veteran trees, and remnant traditional orchard which offer significant biodiversity and landscape value.

Upton
Use the landform of the local ridge at Upton to enclose the extent of the Garden Village. This is a pronounced and distinct ridge offering views east towards Blackdown Hills and intimate streamside landscape that provides the setting for Upton Lakes holiday lodges.

Residential Capacity
The capacity testing undertaken at this stage utilising these principles suggests a Garden Village of around 5000 homes is possible in this location at an average density of 35-40 dwellings per hectare. The final capacity will be developed through further testing and local consultation.



Land Use opportunities in the Wider Garden Village

Expanding the 20 minute place principle

The Land Use plan shows how the principle of building the community hubs around existing farm buildings could be expanded. The Wider Garden Village could include the further expansion of Fordmore Farm linked to a strategic area of open space or Country Park to the south around existing and extended blocks of woodland. In addition, the area around Moorhayes could be explored as an additional community hub to the north, reducing the walk distances. Moorhayes could mirror Fordmore in identity and form and incorporate similar community, retail and community spaces and also link to the potential Country Park to the north around the River Culm and Ken.

LEGEND:

- Allocation boundary
- Mixed use areas
- Employment areas
- Primary School location
- Potential all through school location
- Indicative Country Park
- Neighbourood parks and sport
- Community hubs

N

6.2 Activity

Opportunities to explore in the wider Garden Village Masterplan informed by the East Cullompton Masterplan:

Mixed Use Community Hubs

Explore the potential to expand Fordmore Farm centre further to the east along Honiton Road in a way which retains the character of this area.

- Explore the potential for the area around Moorhayes to expand to become more of a community focal point in the north taking equal significance and function to Fordmore in the wider Garden Village.
- The form of Fordmore and Moorhayes could mirror each other to the north and south of Honiton Road providing a mixed-use area of community buildings, workspace and shops in a strong landscape defined by the Community Greens with a direct connection out to the Country Parks to the north and the south.
- Further Community Hubs providing facilities like local shops, community meeting spaces and small scale workspaces should be explored to minimise walking distances anchored to other uses including schools and sports clubs.

Integrating Commercial Space

The original Garden Cities were based on a strong foundation of industry and employment. The TCPA's Garden Village principles include the need for a wide range of jobs within easy commuting distance of homes. Further integration of commercial and workspace will therefore be essential to the successful growth of East Cullompton into a larger Garden Village. Opportunities for new and expanded commercial and employment areas should be explored alongside any plans for a growing community.

- Further expansion and intensification of the industrial uses around Kingsmill and Stoneyford should be explored in the Wider Garden Village particularly in areas of high accessibility to the railway station and junction 28 of the M5. The area immediately around the station may offer some potential for intensification and incorporation of additional space.
- The potential to retain and expand existing employment clusters at Higher Kingsford and Aller Barton should be explored.
- The potential to incorporate further commercial and employment areas at Fordmore and Moorhayes community hubs should be explored.
- The potential to incorporate small scale workspace and work hubs within residential areas, with a particular focus around smaller scale community hubs should be explored.

Schools

The emerging education strategy for the wider Garden Village includes provision of an all-through education campus to include both primary and secondary provision alongside a further separate primary school.

- Plans for the wider Garden Village should determine the most appropriate location for the all-through school demonstrating a priority for walking, cycling and bus links to the school site.
- Potential to co-locate the all-through school with proposed sports clubs to the east of Horn Road should be explored.
- The potential to use the larger, all-through school site to establish an appropriate eastern edge to the Garden Village should be explored, avoiding a 'hard' urban edge to the Garden Village.
- The potential for a second primary school site near Moorhayes should be explored. A school in this location would reduce the walk distances to school sites from residential areas and would also support the creation of a secondary community hub in the area around Moorhayes and the proposed Country Park.



Landscape opportunities in the Wider Garden Village

6.3 Landscape

Opportunities to explore in the wider Garden Village Masterplan informed by the East Cullompton Masterplan:

Blueways

- Blueways could continue to provide a central organising feature of the Garden Village. The three Blueways established within the allocation area could extend through further development areas and beyond into the surrounding landscape. Additional Blueways could be established to the north and the south along additional existing watercourses. Blueways would continue to be a key connecting feature of the area and could provide attractive connections to, and effectively an expansion of, large open spaces and country parks to the edges of the Garden Village.
- Explore the potential to create a new watercourse to the north of Moorhayes providing a better defined water and drainage channels potentially reducing flood risk as well as providing a key placemaking feature in an expanding community hub at Moorhayes.
- Use the leat as a key placemaking and connecting feature through the larger Garden Village site.
- Potential for incorporating large wetlands or waterbodies could be explored in the County Park to the north of Moorhayes and in the low lying basin between Upton and Aller Barton.

Greenways and Loops

- The principle of the Greenways could continue, expanding connections and attractive active travel routes across the larger Garden Village area.
- The Eastern Loop established within the allocation area can become a green infrastructure corridor within the extended settlement area of the Garden Village with development on either side. A new Eastern Loop could be defined around the edge of the new Garden Village. The extended Eastern Loop can set the landscape edge of the Garden Village establishing the relationship to Kentisbeare and views of the Garden Village from the surrounding landscape.
- An extended Eastern Loop can provide a recreational route around the edge of the Garden Village, connecting to the planned Country Parks and providing interaction and potential connectivity into the open countryside.

Community Greens

- The Community Greens established at Fordmore and Moorhayes, at the edge of the allocation boundary could expand into the wider Garden Village area to serve a growing community.
- The Community Greens established at Fordmore and Moorhayes could be planned to link directly into the proposed County Park areas to the north and the south as part of a much larger open space resource.
- Additional, smaller Community Greens can be established as part of additional mixed-use areas within the wider Garden Village opportunity area providing local open space.
- Community Greens can continue to create a rural character and strong landscape structure as a key part of mixed use community hubs.

Sports Hub

- There is an opportunity in the wider Garden Village area to establish a sports hub that consolidates relocated sports clubs with playing pitches required as a result of the growing community. The sports hub would be located to the east of Horn Road around the proposed cricket club. Sports pitches would provide a good fit with the linearity of this landscape which is also relatively flat.
- A primary sports hub could work alongside smaller sports facilities within the Community Greens.
- Opportunities for co-locating the all-through school with the sports hub should also be explored to take advantage of the potential to share facilities.

Opportunities to explore in the wider Garden Village Masterplan informed by the East Cullompton Masterplan:

Country Parks

- In addition to the Proposed Country Park planned to the north around the River Culm, there is potential to establish a second Country Park to the South around the blocks of woodland near Aller. This Park could have a different character to the lower lying riverside park to the north with areas of parkland and additional areas of woodland planting connecting woodland blocks together.
- Explore the potential for other areas of strategic open space such as the Blueways and Greenways to connect in to the Country Parks to ensure habitat connectivity and to bring the benefit of naturalistic open space into development areas and throughout the Garden Village.

Flooding and Drainage

- The overall aim for the wider opportunity area will be to continue the main principles of the drainage strategy for the allocation area.
- Particularly in the north and south of the wider opportunity area, the ground levels are flatter than the allocation area and therefore larger single attenuation basins / ponds will be possible which can aid with development of strategic drainage areas and raises potential for permanent wet features such as water bodies and wetlands.
-
- Management of development levels, drainage and surface water flow paths will be key elements for managing flood risk in these areas which require agreement with the Environment Agency regarding how these features can interact with the existing floodplains and flow routes.

Natural Capital

Carbon

- Retain existing woodland, trees and hedges for carbon storage.
- Minimise disruption to soil from beneath hedges and trees and if disturbed, store as carefully as possible.
- Habitat improvements for increased carbon storage. Establish new areas of broadleaf woodland, wetland and grasslands with native species. The area marked **(1)** is identified as an area with particularly high potential for increased tree cover.

Habitats Grassland Features

- Retain existing grassland habitats where possible.
- Establish new grasslands including north south connectivity in area marked **(6)**.
- Incorporate grasslands, alongside additional tree planting, around existing woodland to the south in area marked **(2)** to enhance connectivity, biodiversity and carbon storage.

Habitats Woodland Features

- Retain existing features.
- Establish new areas of woodland planting including to the north in area marked **(3)**. Woodland features here would link the woodlands around Kingsmill to those around Bradfield. There is a synergy here with grassland and wetland networks, so woodland pasture, or marshy grassland would be beneficial.

Habitats Wetland Features

- Retain existing features.
- The vast majority of the area is an opportunity for new wetland features. Establishment / enhancement of wetland features in the north would help make the existing network bigger, better, and more joined up, whilst in the south would help in establishing new corridors.
- The area marked **(5)** is especially good for establishing wetland adjacent to existing wetland habitats, as part of the proposed Country Park. There is a synergy here with a potential for woodland creation, and also grassland creation as well. This means that wet woodland or wet grassland features would benefit these networks as well.
- Wetland features in area marked **(4)** would link the wetlands around Kingsmill to those around Higher Kingsford. There is a synergy here also with a potential for woodland creation, and also grassland creation as well. This area co-insides with the potential creation of a new watercourse to reduce flood risk.

Natural Flood Management

- Position SUDS features in areas of high infiltration and storage adjacent to existing watercourses.
- Include native deciduous tree. In particular, planting in areas marked **(A)** will benefit natural flood management and biodiversity of the area.

Water Quality

- Retain existing hedges and trees to break flow pathways to streams.
- Enhancing areas marked **(B)** with additional planting of native species of hedgerow and woodland would help break the connections between the land and the water courses to improve water quality.
- Establish native habitats and SUDS in area marked **(7)** to take advantage of soil conditions.

Urban cooling

Retain existing trees and woodland and establish new tree planting and areas of woodland.



Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services opportunities in the Wider Garden Village

East Cullompton Masterplan SPD



Mobility opportunities in the Wider Garden Village

6.4 Mobility

Opportunities to explore in the wider Garden Village Masterplan informed by the East Cullompton Masterplan:

Active Travel

- Further active travel crossings of the M5 to the north, in addition to the central and southern crossing.
- The principle of a regular grid of active travel routes utilising Blueways and Greenways can be applied to the wider Garden Village opportunity. Additional routes should be planned that demonstrate connectivity to key destinations and how they can offer priority over use of private cars.
- Active travel routes can be planned to connect into existing public rights of way around Kentisbeare. Potential for an improved route to Willand should also be explored.

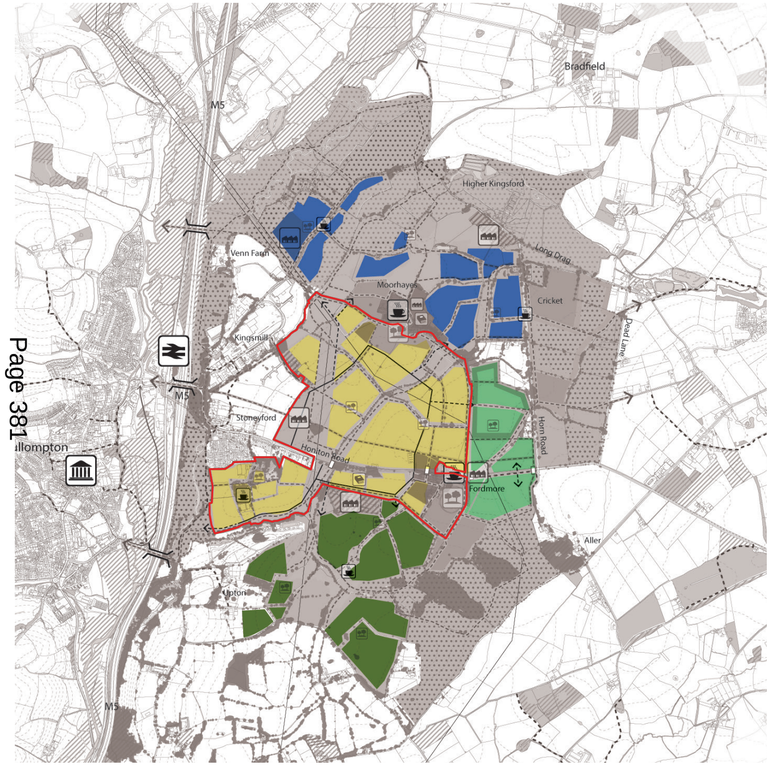
Street Hierarchy

- The Street hierarchy principles established as part of the East Cullompton allocation area can be applied to the Wider Garden Village.
- Proposals for the wider Garden Village should demonstrate how the primary street network can be effectively expanded to serve the larger development area without compromising the need for a clearly understood primary street network.
- Any improvements to Honiton Road should expand into the wider Garden Village area with additional crossings established to coincide with active travel routes.

Mobility Solutions

The mobility strategy for the site should evolve to embrace the innovation, new technology and new mobility solutions that may emerge as East Cullompton grows. A successful larger settlement can support a broader range of services and therefore greater levels of self containment. The mobility strategy should continue to be driven by the vision and issues such as parking standards and timing of infrastructure kept under review to support the overarching principles at East Cullompton.

Mobility hubs and public transport should continue to be planned following the principles from the allocation with a focus on key areas of activity and ensuring that more peripheral areas of the settlement, with longest walk distances, are well served.



Character Areas in the Wider Garden Village

6.5 Placemaking

Opportunities to explore in the wider Garden Village Masterplan informed by the East Cullompton Masterplan:

The placemaking and phasing principles established as part of the East Cullompton allocation area should continue to influence the character of the wider Garden Village with a review of lessons learned from early phases.

The potential to use the following influences to determine the layout of streets, spaces, and development parcels as well as materials and planting should be explored. These features can be used to define a four distinctive character areas to the Garden Village.

- The central character area of East Cullompton framed around the central Blueways and Fordmore Farm.
- The Water Meadows character area formed around the influence of lower lying, flatter areas to the north close to the River Culm, the Country Park and the greater presence of water.
- The Avenues character area framed around the longer, straight lanes, avenues and field patterns around Horn Road and Dead Lane emphasised in development areas to the east.
- The Woodland Character Area where the large blocks of woodland and the presence of mature trees in the area to the south of Fordmore Farm could define the character of development parcels and open spaces to the south.



Additional character influences in the wider Garden Village area

CABINET
7 FEBRUARY 2023

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor R M Deed - Leader
Responsible Officer: Stephen Walford – Chief Executive

Reason for Report: To endorse the Policy Framework

Recommendation: To recommend to Council that the Policy Framework be adopted.

Financial Implications: None arising from this report.

Budget and Policy Framework: This report outlines the Council's Policy Framework.

Legal Implications: The report is required by the Constitution.

Risk Assessment: Not updating the strategic policies of the Council would result in policies not being aligned to corporate objectives and an inefficient use of resources.

Equality Impact Assessment: There are no concerns with regard to equalities impact relating to the content of this report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: An efficient and effective policy framework helps provide the infrastructure to deliver the corporate plan

Impact on Climate Change: Several policies within the Policy Framework have a direct link to climate change.

1.0 Introduction/Background

1.1 The Policy Framework consists of both statutory documents that have to be adopted or approved by the Council as well as locally determined policies and strategies that form an integral part of the decision making process and their subsequent implementation.

1.2 A list of Strategies and Policies covered by the Framework is attached at Appendix 1.

1.3 It is recommended that these Strategies and Policies be formally approved as the Council's Policy Framework in accordance with the Constitution so far as they still apply and are relevant.

1.4 As new policies are approved by Council they will automatically be added to the Policy Framework.

2.0 Way Forward

2.1 Under the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Cabinet will be responsible for the implementation of the Budget and Policy Framework.

2.2 The purpose of this report therefore is to inform the Cabinet of their role in the implementation of the budget and policy framework, and highlighting to the Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee and Policy Development Groups its work for the coming year.

2.3 The Policy Framework covers all strategic rather than operational policies and highlights those which are for Cabinet only approval and those which require full Council approval.

Contact for more Information: Stephen Walford, Chief Executive or Andrew Seaman, Member Services Manager

Circulation of the Report: Cabinet Members and Leadership Team

Appendix 1 - Community Policy Development Group						
Policy	**Head of Service**	**Last Approved**	**Group/Committee to review/develop**	**Expected date for next approval**	**Approval required from**	**Frequency to be reviewed**
Air Quality Action Plan	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Nov-21	Community PDG	Nov-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
CCTV Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Jan-21	Community PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	3 yearly
Community Engagement Strategy (including Action Plan)	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-21	Community PDG	Mar-23	Cabinet	2 yearly
Corporate Anti Social Behaviour Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-21	Community PDG	Mar-24	Cabinet	3 yearly
Corporate Heath & Safety Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-21	Community PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	3 Yearly
Customer Care Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-22	Community PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	3 yearly
Grant payments to external organisations (the strategic grants review process)	Director of Place	Jan-22	Community PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	when appropaire
Enforcement Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Oct-20	Community PDG	Jan-23	Cabinet	When required
Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-22	Community PDG	Mar-25	Cabinet	3 yearly
Single Equalities Policy and Equality Objective	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-22	Community PDG	Mar-23	Cabinet	Annually
Town and Parish Charter	Director of Place	Jan-18	Community PDG	Jan-23	Cabinet	3 yearly
Unauthorised Encampment Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Jun-22	Community PDG	Jun-25	Cabinet	3 yearly
Contaminated Land Cost Recovery Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-20	Community PDG	Sep-25	Cabinet	5 yearly
The Council Tax Reduction Scheme & Exceptional Hardship Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Dec-19	Community PDG	Jan-23	Cabinet	When required
Regulation of Investigatory Powers	District Solicitor (Monitoring officer)	Jan-22	Community PDG	Jan-23	Cabinet	Now Annually

Annexe 1
Notes
Joint PDG Community/Environment & Homes
Coming in Nov 2022 - Forward Planning
Coming in Jan 2023

Appendix 2 - Economy Policy Development Group

Policy	Head of Service	Last Approved	Group/Committee to review/develop	Expected date for next approval	Approval required from	Frequency to be reviewed
Destination Management Plan for Mid Devon	Director of Place	Mar-18	Economy PDG	Mar-23	Economy PDG - Cabinet	Every 5 years
Economic Strategy 2019-2024 (formerly known as the Mid Devon Economic Development Strategy 2012 - 2015)	Director of Place	Feb-19	Economy PDG	Jan-24	Economy PDG - Cabinet	5 yearly
Shopfront Enhancement Schemes (£15k non-key)	Director of Place	Nov-22	Economy PDG	Nov-25	Economy PDG - Cabinet	3 yearly
Strategy for Tiverton 2017/27	Director of Place	Feb-17	Economy PDG	Feb-27	Economy PDG - Cabinet	Every 10 years

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Appendix 3 - Environment Policy Development Group						
Policy	**Head of Service**	**Last Approved**	**Group/Committee to review/develop**	**Expected date for next approval**	**Approval required from**	**Frequency to be reviewed**
Bereavement Services Fees and Charges	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Nov-22	Environment PDG	Nov-23	Cabinet	Annually
Climate Strategy and Action Plan	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Oct-20	Environment PDG	Oct-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
High Hedges Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Aug-16	Environment PDG	Aug-23	Cabinet	7 yearly
National Assistance Burial Procedure	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Jun-19	Environment PDG	Jun-24	Cabinet	5 yearly
Open Space and Play Area Strategy (2013 - 2033)	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-15	Environment PDG	Jan-33	Cabinet	18 yearly
Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Management Plan and Design Principles	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Nov-17	Environemnt PDG	Nov-27	Cabinet	10 yearly
Play Area Safety Inspection Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Jul-22	Environment PDG	Jul-25	Cabinet	3 yearly
Environment Educational Enforcement Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-20	Environment PDG	Mar-23	Cabinet	3 yearly
Tree Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	May-21	Environment PDG	May-26	Cabinet	5 yearly

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Appendix 4 - Homes Policy Development Group

Policy	Head of Service	Last Approved	Group/Committee to review/develop	Expected date for next approval	Approval required from	Frequency to be reviewed
Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard						
Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-22	Homes PDG	Jan-26	Cabinet	4 yearly
Service Standards	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Aug-16	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	Will review when legislation /
Neighbourhood and Community Standard						
ASB Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jul-15	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
ASB Procedure	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jul-15	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Car Parking Management Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-20	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Garage Management Po	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-20	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Domestic Abuse Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jun-15	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly

Pets and Animals Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Oct-19	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Tenancy Inspection Polic	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jul-16	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Harrassment Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Oct-19	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Hoarding Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-18	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
Neighbourhood Management Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-18	Homes PDG	Jul-24	Cabinet	4 yearly
CCTV and Camera Doorbell Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Nov-22	Homes PDG	Nov-27	Cabinet	5 yearly
Homes Standard						
Void Management Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-23	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly
Improvements to Council Properties Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-20	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly

Fire Risk in Communal A	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jul-17	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly
Aids and Adaptations Po	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-16	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly
Asbestos Management F	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	?	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly
Gas Safety Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-18	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly

Tenancy Standard

Tenancy Standard Fram	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jul-22	Homes PDG	Jul-26	Cabinet	4/5 yearly

Rent Standard

Income Management Po	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Aug-15	Homes PDG	Sep-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly

Recharges Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-18	Homes PDG	Sep-24	Cabinet	4/5 yearly
Strategies						
Tenancy Strategy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	?	Homes PDG	Nov-24	Cabinet	3 yearly
Housing Strategy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Sep-21	Homes PDG	Nov-24	Cabinet	3 yearly
Other						
HRA budget	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-23	Homes PDG	Jan-24	Cabinet	Annually
Private Sector Fees and Charges	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Nov-22	Homes	Nov-23	Cabinet	Annually

Appendix 5 - Licensing & Regulatory Committees							
Policy	**Responsible Officer**	**Last Approved**	**Group/Committee to review/develop**	**Expected date for next approval**	**Approval required from**	**Frequency to be reviewed**	**Comments**
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and Conditions	Corporate Manager for Public Health , Regulation and Housing	Nov-18	Regulatory Committee	Mar-23	Council	3 Yearly	
Licensing Policy	Corporate Manager for Public Health , Regulation and Housing	Nov-18	Licensing Committee	Oct-23	Council	5 yearly	
Statement of Principles for Gambling Act 2005	Corporate Manager for Public Health , Regulation and Housing	Dec-21	Licensing Committee	Oct-24	Council	3 Yearly	
Mobile Homes FIT AND PROPER PERSON FEE POLICY	Corporate Manager for Public Health , Regulation and Housing	Sep-21	Regulatory Committee	Sep-22	Delegated to Officers	Annual	

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Appendix 6 - Audit Committee						
Policy	**Head of Service**	**Last Approved**	**Group/Committee to review/develop**	**Expected date for next approval**	**Approval required from**	**Frequency to be reviewed**
Annual Governance Statement and Governance Framework	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-23	Audit Committee	Sep-23	Audit Committee	Annually
Anti-fraud and Corruption and Anti-Money Laundering Policies	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-21	Audit Committee	Jan-23	Audit Committee	2 yearly
Corporate Recovery Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Mar-21	Audit Committee	Mar-24	Cabinet	3 yearly
Financial and Contract Procedure Rules	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Jan-22	Audit Committee	Jan-25	Audit Committee - Full Council	3 yearly
Four year Strategic Audit Plan and Work Programme	DAP	Mar-22	Audit Committee	Mar-23	Audit Committee	Annually
Internal Audit Charter and Strategy	DAP	Mar-22	Audit Committee	Mar-23	Audit Committee	Annually
Risk Management Strategy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-22	Audit Committee	Mar-23	Audit Committee	Annually
Whistleblowing Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Mar-21	Audit Committee	Mar-25	Audit Committee	4 yearly

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Appendix 7 - Cabinet

Policy	Head of Service	Last Approved	Group/Committee to review/develop	Expected date for next approval	Approval required from	Frequency to be reviewed	Detailed notes
Statement of Community Involvement	Director of Place	Aug-20	PPAG	when required	Council	As and when required	
Area of Special Control for advertisements	Director of Place	Dec-11	PPAG	Linked to the Local Plan	Council	When required	
Asset Management and Capital Strategy Plan 2016-2020	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Mar-21	Cabinet	Mar-25	Cabinet	4 years	
Channel Access Strategy 2014-2017	Director of Business Improvement and Operations	Sep-18	Cabinet	Mar-23	Cabinet	3 years	
Community Infrastrure Levy	Director of Place	Jan-21	PPAG	As and when required as part of the Local Plan	Council	As and when required as part of the Local Plan	
Complaints and Feedback policy	Director of Business Improvement and Operations	Jan-21	Cabinet	Jan-24	Cabinet	3 years	
Corporate Asbestos Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Feb-20	Cabinet	Feb-23	Cabinet	3 years	
Corporate Debt Recovery Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Mar-21	Audit Committee - Cabinet	Mar-24	Cabinet	3 years	
Corporate Plan (2020-2024)	Director of Business Improvement and Operations	Feb-20	Cabinet	Feb-24	Council	4 yearly	
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Dec-16	Cabinet	When Required	Cabinet	When required	This includes the Exceptional Hardship Policy . It also includes the MDDC Fraud penalty Policy (as per JC Apr 16)
Data Protection Policy	Director of Business Improvement and Operations	Oct-22	Cabinet	Oct-25	Cabinet	3 yearly	

Appendix 7 - Cabinet

Policy	Head of Service	Last Approved	Group/Committee to review/develop	Expected date for next approval	Approval required from	Frequency to be reviewed	Detailed notes
Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Feb-19	Cabinet	awaited	Cabinet	Annually	The changes that have come in are mandatory – PM/Chancellor to advise anymore and then request s151, portfolio holder sign off
Email Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-21	Cabinet Member for Community-Well-Being	Jan-23	Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being	2 Yearly	Have asked the question
The Establishment	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Feb-22	Cabinet	Feb-23	Council	Annually	Now includes details of the Workforce Plan and the
Freedom of Information Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Oct-22	Cabinet or Cabinet Member	Oct-25	Cabinet	3 yearly	
ICT Strategy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Feb-19	Cabinet	Feb-24	Cabinet	5 yearly	
Internet Policy	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-21	Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being/and Corporate Manager	Jan-24	Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being	5 Yearly	
Leisure Pricing Policy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Dec-22	Individual Decision by the Cabinet Member for Community Well Being	Dec-23	Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being	Annually	
Local Development Scheme	Director of Place	Jan-22	PPAG	As and when required as part of the Local Plan	Cabinet	As and when required as part of the Local Plan	
Local Enforcement Plan (replaces Development Control Enforcement Policy)	Director of Place	Jan-18	PPAG	awaited	Council	3 yearly	
Local Plan	Director of Place	Jul-20	Cabinet	Jul-25	Council	5 Yearly	
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Nov-22	Cabinet	Dec-23	Cabinet	Annually	

Appendix 7 - Cabinet

Policy	Head of Service	Last Approved	Group/Committee to review/develop	Expected date for next approval	Approval required from	Frequency to be reviewed	Detailed notes
Pay Policy	Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation	Feb-22	Cabinet	Feb-23	Council	Annually	
Records Management Policy	Director of Business Improvement and Operations	Oct-22	Cabinet	Oct-26	Cabinet	4 yearly	
Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy	Deputy Chief Executive (S151)	Feb-22	Cabinet	Feb-23	Council	Annually	
Information Security and Information Security Incident Policies	Director of Business Improvements and Operations	Jan-22	Cabinet	Oct-25	Cabinet	3 yearly	

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL – SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS – 2023-2024

Ratified by Council on ……..

MEETING	Normal day and Time	1 2023	2	3	4	5 2024	6	
Planning Committee *(first meeting of cycle)*	Wed	14th June	2nd August	13th September	22nd November	10th January	13th March	
Planning Committee *(second meeting of cycle)*	Wed	12th July	30th August	11th October	13th December	14th February	10th April	
CABINET *(first meeting of cycle)*	Tues	6th June	1st August	19th September	14th November	9th January	5th March	
CABINET *(second meeting cycle)*	Tues	4th July	29th August	17th October	12th December	6th February	2nd April	
ENVIRONMENT PDG	Tues	20th June	15th August	10th October	7th November	9th January	12th March	
HOMES PDG	Tues	13th June	8th August	26th September	21st November	16th January	19th March	
ECONOMY PDG	Thurs	8th June	3rd August	4th October	17th November	4th January	7th March	
COMMUNITY PDG	Tues	27th June	22nd August	24th October	5th December	23rd January	26th March	
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (*first meeting of cycle)*	Mon	19th June	14th August	2nd October	27th November	15th January	18th March	
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE *(second meeting of cycle)*	Mon	17th July	11th September	30th October	18th December	19th February	15th April	
AUDIT COMMITTEE	Tues	27th June	22nd August	24th October	5th December	16th January	26th March	
Standards Committee	Weds	21st June		18th October		7th February		
Licensing Committee	Fri	30th June			1st December			
Regulatory Committee	Fri	30th June			1st December			
Away Days	Fri 9.30am							
COUNCIL	Wed 6.00pm	19th July	6th September	1st November	20th December	21st February	24th April	**22 MAY 2024**

Note: (i) *Annual meeting of the Council at 7.00pm. **Annual Meeting in 2023 is on 24 May**
(ii)*Annual meeting of the Council at 7.00pm. **Annual Meeting in 2024 is on 22 May**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 7 March 2023 at 10.00 am

Present Councillors B G J Warren (Leader)
G Barnell, Mrs C P Daw, D J Knowles, A Wilce and Mrs N Woollatt

Also Present Councillors S J Clist, R J Dolley and B Holdman

Also Present Officers: Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Richard Marsh (Director of Place), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Dean Emery (Corporate Manager for Revenues, Benefits and Recovery), Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing), Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

145. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were given.

146. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Paul Elstone:

Question 1
MDDC Officers seem to place a lot of credibility in the fact that Zed Pods constructed the developments at Hope Rise Bristol and in Bromley. Are Officers and Cabinet Members aware that these developments where in fact built and project managed by a company called impact modular to Enhanced Energy Performance Standards. Zed Pods are not a SWPA appointed company for this work-stream. That there are other questions worthy of asking in terms of the SWPA Procurement process and the required level of MDDC oversight and governance. Is this another 3 Rivers in waiting? Will this Cabinet implement a full investigation including in respect of project cost prior to committing to any further Zed Pods Projects being implemented?

Question 2
In a written reply to a question about the Zed Pod Module overspend of Four Hundred and Sixty-Seven Thousand Pounds (£467,000) related to the Shapland Place development. It is said that One Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Pounds (£125,000) this overspend is mostly due replacing the wooden trellis with opaque glass screens. These are 4 screens each about 5 meters long. Planting semi mature trees which are just 1.8 to 2.4 meters tall. There being a total of 16 trees. Also adding a small clear glazed panels to just 3 windows. On checking these cost the figure of £125,000 seems to be a gross over statement being nearly five times market rates. Will MDDC Officers arrange for a detailed written cost breakdown to be provide to Cabinet Members and ideally myself? This to ensure full transparency.

Question 3
Even if cost is One Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Pounds (£125,000) it means an additional Three Hundred and Forty Two Thousand Pounds (£340,000) for foundation upgrades. Again, seems a massive price hike in foundation cost. Equivalent to nearly Forty-Three Thousand Pounds per apartment. Put another way conventional build cost at £150 per square foot would equate to around £708,000 for the 8 apartments measuring Four thousand seven hundred and nineteen (4,719) square feet in area, excluding stair towers. Zed Pods increased cost of £340,000 is for foundations alone. Will MDDC Officers arrange for a detailed written cost breakdown to be provided to Cabinet Members and ideally myself this to ensure full transparency?

Question 4
It is stated that reason for cost increase is after identifying foundation change requirements this after high-cost intrusive investigations. A site visit reveals that just four (4) small holes have been dug – now filled in. Holes not all in the location of module supporting pillars i.e. foundation locations. Will MDDC Officers arrange for a copy of the intrusive foundation report and recommendations to be provided to Cabinet and ideally to myself this for full transparency?

The Leader thanked Mr Elstone for his questions and noted that a written response would be given.

147. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members were reminded to make declarations on interest where appropriate.

Cllr Mrs N Woollatt declared a personal interest that she lived near Station Road Car Park.

148. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting from 7 February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

149. **FINANCIAL MONITORING**

The Cabinet were presented, and **NOTED** a financial update in respect of the income and expenditure so far in the year. The following was highlighted:

- The General Fund position had not changed over the past month.
- A planning appeal costing had been received which was a six-figure sum.
- After a Government consultation, planning fees were likely to be increased next year.
- Energy costs remained to be a significant pressure on Mid Devon District Council, bills had risen by 33%.
- The Leisure Centres had a positive month following the post-Christmas campaign.
- Investments in the South West Mutual Bank were likely to be lost but had already been written off in 2022.
- Congratulations to the Leisure Centre staff was given.

150. **UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The Cabinet **NOTED** a verbal update from the Member for Continuous Improvement.

The following was highlighted:

- 'low' cases made up 90.35% of the caseloads.
- Work had commenced on the replacement of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system replacement.
- Parking enforcement performance remained at a good level.
- To date, 95 complaints had been received in 2022/2023.

The following was discussed:

- There was a need for Councillors to be kept up to date on enforcement cases within their wards.
- Thanks was given in relation to the work done on business rates.
- Officers explained that complaints followed the necessary processes that were in place which were available on Mid Devon District Council's website.

151. **CULLOMPTON TOWN CENTRE RELIEF ROAD**

Cabinet received a report* which informed Members of the outcome of Mid Devon's application to the second round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF2) to support delivery of the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road (CTCRR).

The following was discussed:

- The cost of submitting bids, to which the Director of Place explained that funds were drawn against the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) fund, which therefore meant there was no direct cost for Mid Devon District Council.
- The life span of the s106 monies, to which the Director of Place explained that these funds had a long lifespan and could be used for other transport intervention projects if needed.
- Concern over the HIF deadline, to which the Director of Place explained that an announcement was due in spring 2023 and that bids would be submitted towards the end of 2023.
- It was suggested that a 50 year loan be used, to which the Deputy Chief Executive advised that would put Mid Devon District Council under additional cost pressure and was not recommended. In addition the Deputy Chief Executive noted that the cost of the project had doubled since 2019.
- A road north of Cullompton would be beneficial.
- That lobbying Government was important.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet consider the contents of this report and instructs Officers to:

    i. Continue to investigate and negotiate additional funding opportunities to support timely delivery of the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road

    ii. If an additional funding mechanism to support timely delivery of the relief road project (working with the existing HIF grant) can be negotiated and agreed in detail, to bring this back to Cabinet as soon as possible for consideration and decision, as appropriate.

2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Place to develop and submit a bid to the third round of the Levelling Up Fund in respect of the gap funding required to enable or support delivery of the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road, should the scheme still qualify for a District Council submission and should the LUF3 fund be confirmed.

(Proposed by Cllr G Barnell and seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

152. **LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND**

The Cabinet received a report* which sought agreement with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing Communities (DLUHC) for the provision of affordable housing under the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF).

The following was highlighted:

- Mid Devon District Council had recently welcomed people from countries suffering from conflict such as Ukraine and Afghanistan, however, these support schemes had a limited time frame.
- It was expected that Mid Devon District Council's homelessness programme would be under significant pressure when these schemes end, however a funding programme from the Government had been introduced. This Government scheme provided 40-50% of the funding and there was an aim to provide as much accommodation as possible.
- This accommodation could be used within the wider homelessness accommodation programme.
- Modular developments provided a higher volume of units for this programme.
- This would become a long-term asset that would de-risk the homelessness cost pressures.

The following was considered:

- That there should be a degree of flexibility in regards to the location for this scheme.
- Station Road Car Park may not be the most appropriate location.
- If modular housing was not used, Mid Devon District Council could only house 50% of the original target. It was acknowledged that there would be some long term pressures using Station Road Carpark, but the cost of using hotels as well as Bed and Breakfasts were rising.
- There would be pressures and compromises for any location for this programme.
- The lifespan of the pods was raised and what would happen to them when they were no longer fit for purpose. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing explained that this accommodation had a 100 year life expectancy.

RESOLVED:

1. That delegated authority be given to the S151 Officer to sign the LAHF Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the DLUHC and Mid Devon District Council as set out in Annex A

2. Subject to recommendation 1, that under the LAHF the Council purchase Property 1 and 2 described within the report and set out further in Annex B

3. Subject to planning permission being granted for the proposed affordable rent modular housing development at a suitable location within the district, yet to be identified:

   i. A bid for the Phase1 and Phase 2 work be accepted under the terms of the South West Procurement Alliance (SWPA)

   ii. This will therefore be a direct award under the SWPA NH2 modular housing framework

4. If a suitable location for the development set out in recommendation 3 cannot be found or planning permission is not granted, the Council purchase suitable additional market properties within the district to include at least one 4-bed property and do so within the terms of the LAHF funding and additional match-funding budget as set out within the report.

5. Delegated authority be granted to the S151 Officer to complete the associated property purchases and the Phase 1 and Phase 2 contracts as required.

(Proposed by Cllr A Wilce and seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

153. **MEETING HOUSING NEEDS SPD**

The Cabinet received a report* which sought approval for the draft Mid Devon Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document for Public Consultation, with the following highlighted:

- This report related to the adopted local plan.
- Included a broader scope of guidance when compared to the previous version.
- This document would need to be published for a 6 week public consultation.
- The adopted local plan had not considered today's housing needs within Mid Devon.
- There was a need for the availability of social and affordable rented housing to be improved.
- There was a need for a wider range of house sizes, particularly housing for families.

The following was discussed:

- Whether the target for affordable housing could be met. The Director of Place explained that the nature of the planning process had meant that changes to the quantity of housing delivered could change over the course of the application's lifetime.

RESOLVED:

1. The draft Mid Devon Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1 to this report), the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (Appendix 2 to this report) and the Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report (Appendix 3 to this report) be approved for public consultation.

2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to finalise the material and arrangements for consultation.

3. That officers consider the options available to Mid Devon to enable the authority to achieve significant improvements in housing mix for the District as set out within Table 1 (page 6) of the SPD document and as established through the Local Housing Needs Assessment, with particular emphasis on improving the availability of social and affordable rented accommodation and of lower cost family housing. While noting that further work on housing mix will be undertaken through the development of our new Local Plan; Plan Mid-Devon. Cabinet requests that the Director of Place reports to Cabinet on the outcome of this work by October 2023.

(Proposed by Cllr G Barnell and seconded by Cllr A Wilce)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

154. **VOIDS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Cabinet received a report* which provided an updated, draft policy on the management of void properties within the Council's housing stock. This had been developed following an in-depth review of voids management and with an aim that ensured properties which become void continued to be re-let as quickly and efficiently as possible. The policy also sought to balance this approach with the needs of tenants and the requirement to maintain properties to an appropriate, safe lettings standard, whilst retaining a sustainable stock and Housing Revenue Account.

The following was discussed:

- Regarding the use of working days as a measurement for void performance and whether time taken for allocations to tenants made would look to be reduced. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation & Housing and Public Health explained that working days needed to be used as a measurement as it was accurate, but could report in different measurements. In addition, it was aimed for these targets to be reduced.
- Whether officers could cope with this extra work. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation & Housing and Public Health explained that the team was fully staffed and that the team had been fully staffed since the second quarter of 2023.
- Long-term voids were sometimes intentional, for example, when developments were needed.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet adopt the updated Voids Management Policy contained in Annex B. With a review after one year.

(Proposed by Cllr A Wilce and seconded by Cllr D J Knowles)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

155. **RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS**

The Cabinet were presented, and **NOTED** a report* which provided an insight into the results of the resident survey. The following was highlighted:

- Results had shown that positive feedback had been received, the results had also identified opportunities for improvement and that these would be considered.

The following was discussed:

- That 39% of residents felt that the Council acted on concerns of residents and that 41% of residents were fairly or very satisfied with Mid Devon District Council's street cleaning service.
- Whether this survey should be done earlier in the municipal year.
- That areas other than Tiverton should be invested in.

- That more public engagement could be done, and that not all carparks were well used.
- Although there was not a timeframe for setting out action plans, this would be discussed.
- That it was important that local businesses were supported, to which the Director of Place explained that there were a number of initiatives that supported local businesses.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

156. **DRAFT NON-STATUTORY INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT: CLIMATE EMERGENCY (POST CONSULTATION)**

The Cabinet received a report* which asked Cabinet to adopt the Non-Statutory Interim Planning Policy Statement.

The following was highlighted:

- This document had been through public consultation. It aimed to enable a focus on tackling climate change.
- Enabled planning tools to be more in line with climate goals.
- Could be applied to the local planning process.
- A new zero carbon toolkit and net zero housing assessment tool was also introduced.
- Members should be offered training in the use of the new climate change policy statement.

RESOLVED:

1. The proposed amendments to the draft Non-Statutory Interim Planning Policy Statement: Climate Emergency detailed in the Statement of Public Participation (Appendix 4) and in section 4.0 of this report be approved and these are included in the finalised version of the Non-Statutory Interim Planning Policy Statement: Climate Emergency (Appendix 1).

2. The amendments made to the Net Zero Carbon Toolkit detailed in the Statement of Public Participation (Appendix 4) and the schedule at paragraph 2.13 in this report be approved.

3. The Non-Statutory Interim Planning Policy Statement: Climate Emergency (Appendix 1), including the Net Zero Carbon Toolkit (Appendix 2) and the Net Zero Housing Assessment Tool (Appendix 3) be adopted, published on the Council's website, and brought into effect in the council's development management process.

4. The Council's validation checklist "4 – Application for Planning Permission" be amended to include the local validation requirement for the completion of the "Climate Emergency –Planning Applications Checklist".

5. Applicants for planning permission be encouraged to use the Net Zero Carbon Toolkit and the Net Zero Housing Assessment tool where these are relevant to the proposed development.

6. Delegated authority be given to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to approve future amendments to the Non-Statutory Interim Planning Policy Statement: Climate Emergency (Appendix 1 including the Climate Emergency – Planning Applications Checklist), the Net Zero Carbon Toolkit (Appendix 2) and the Net Zero Housing Assessment Tool (Appendix 3) and where these are factual and are in relation to updated national policy and guidance, regulations and legislation.

7. That members are offered training in the use of the new climate change policy statement in order to ensure their familiarity of the document, and the use of it in supporting the determination of planning applications

(Proposed by Cllr G Barnell and seconded by Cllr Mrs C P Daw)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

157. **2023/24 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which proposed the 2023/24 Capital Strategy which also sought approval of the 2023/24 Capital Programme and requested the Cabinet noted the indicative Capital Programmes for 2024/25 to 2027/28.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that 3 Rivers could not enter into any development opportunities prior to business cases being presented to Cabinet for approval, before any lending could be made.

RESOLVED to Recommend to Full Council:

1. That the proposed 2023/24 Capital Strategy is approved.

2. To approve in principal the current estimated amounts of Slippage of £6,201k from the 2022/23 Deliverable Capital Programme and £33,231k of 2022/23 Capital Programme expenditure profiled over the life of the MTFP. This will be finalised and formal approval sought as part of 2022/23 Outturn report.

3. The overall Capital Programme for projects commencing in 2023/24 of £98,375k be approved and the indicative Capital Programmes across the four remaining years of this Medium Term Financial Plan covering 2024/25 to 2027/28 be noted.

4. To approve the 2023/24 Deliverable Budget based on the forecast spend profile of £64,826k, this will include elements of amounts detailed in recommendations 2 & 3 above and will form the budget to monitor against in 2023/24, subject to any changes referred to in recommendation 2 at Outturn.

(Proposed by Cllr B G J Warren and seconded by Cllr A Wilce)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

158. **2023/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which presented the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council:

That Cabinet recommends to Full Council that the proposed Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24, including the prudential indicators for the next 3 years and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (Appendix 1), be approved.

(Proposed by Cllr B G J Warren and seconded by Cllr D J Knowles)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

159. **NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which provided an update of the income generation and financial implications of the number of Business Rate properties in Mid Devon. The report sought to approve the NNDR1 (estimated income to be generated in 2023/24 from business rates). There was a statutory deadline for notifying Precepting Authorities and the Government by 31 January 2023 of their appropriate shares in accordance with the Non Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 Regulation 2(b). The Government return had been submitted and Preceptors informed of the estimated income.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council:

1. That the calculation of the NNDR1 net yield of £16,921,552 from 3,519 Business Rated properties is noted for 2023/24;

2. That the proportions distributed to the respective authorities and Central Government be allocated as per the statutory regulations; and

3. That Members note that Central Government will reimburse the Council through a Section 31 grant to compensate it for the reduction in collectable business rates as a result of introducing various reliefs under section 47.

(Proposed by Cllr B G J Warren and seconded by Cllr G Barnell)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

160. **REVISED 2023/24 BUDGET**

The Cabinet were presented a report* which provided revised budgets for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for the year 2023/24.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that recommendations 7 and 8 were added as a revision to the budget following recommendations made by Full Council.

The following was considered:

- That the budget for open spaces increased by £145k. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that this was due to maintenance costs for those services.
- That the waste collection budget increased by nearly £249k. The Deputy Chief Executive explained this was due to the increase in the national living wage and that this service was hit hard by the increased cost of fuel and utilities. In addition income had decreased.
- Administration building had seen an increase of nearly £230k, but the building was not fully utilised. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that utility costs had increased and he commercial property rate value had changed. However, negotiations were underway with Devon Police to utilise part of the building.
- The increased budget for the 3 leisure centres. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the increased national living wage and utility spend were contributing factors. In addition, this service had still not recovered to pre-pandemic levels.
- The paddling pools within Mid Devon District Council were raised, with potentially a need to review the funding options for the Paddling Pools within Mid Devon. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the total costs for this service was circa £40k. In addition, it was felt that it was possible for the pools to be kept open.
- Corporate functions covered Mid Devon District Council's technical teams such as performance management and data protection.
- Whether the savings outlined had been considered as deliverable and whether the increased costs were justified. The Leader explained, the increased costs were challenged and noted that officer advice was taken on the potential savings.
- 3 Rivers Developments Ltd was raised, the Corporate Manager for Finance and Procurement explained that the interest from 3 Rivers Developments Ltd had been removed from the revised budget and had been replaced with estimates from temporary treasury investments.
- Whether the use of reserves could be justified and if there was a plan to replenish the reserves. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that this had put the next administration into a difficult position and that this was the situation Mid Devon District Council was in, with an aim for reserved to be replenished.
- Whether new homes bonus could be used as temporary funding, to which the Deputy Chief Executive explained that all new homes bonuses were already allocated and that there was a plan for it to be replenished.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council:

1. A Council Tax Requirement of £6,724,350 calculated using a Council Tax of £225.40 for a Band D property, an increase of £6.56 or 2.99% from 2022/23 and a Tax Base of 29,832.98, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulation 1992, as amended, after the relevant adjustments in respect of the Council tax support scheme approved by Cabinet on 3 January 2023;

2. The overall budgeted Cost of Services within the General Fund of £16,830,364 for 2023/24 is approved as detailed across Appendices 1 – 2 and inclusive of the adjustments included within Table 1 in paragraph 5.1 of the Cabinet Report for 7 February 2023;

3. The 2023/24 budget requires no transfer from the General Fund Balance and a further temporary transfer of £57,657 from the New Homes Bonus EMR in order to balance and agree all of the transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves as detailed in Appendix 3;

4. HRA budget for 2023/24 be approved – Appendix 4;

5. HRA fees/charges are approved based on the attached Appendix 5;

6. Work on strategic planning for delivering a balanced budget for 2024/25 is commenced immediately. This work will need to include provision to replenish the General Fund Balance and re-examine the overarching level of Reserves that is required.

(Proposed by Cllr B G J Warren and seconded by Cllr A Wilce)
(Cllr D J Knowles abstained as he had left the room)

Additional recommendations arising from Full Council, 22 February 2023:

7. Cabinet are asked to agree the inclusion within the budget the implications of the recommendations from Full Council as outlined in Section 2.1;

8. Cabinet agree to temporarily reduce the minimum level of General Reserves by £610k from its existing level (c.£2.2m) in order to balance the 2023/24 Budget and agree to identify a plan to replenish back to the £2m recommended minimum balance, as referenced in Section 2.3.

(Proposed by Cllr B G J Warren and seconded by Cllr A Wilce)

A further recommendation made included:

9. That a further temporary reduction of circa £15k be made to the general reserve whilst the proposal to mothball the paddling pools in Crediton and Tiverton is urgently reviewed to explore sourcing the necessary funding to keep these facilities available during the summer months, be that through finding room in existing budgets and/or town council support and/or business sponsorship.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt and seconded by Cllr G Barnell)

Reason for Decision: As stated in the report

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

161. **NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS**

The Cabinet had before it, and **NOTED**, the notification of *Key Decisions

Note: *Key Decisions previously circulated and attached to the minutes

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(The meeting ended at 1.57 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **CABINET** held on 4 April 2023 at 10.00 am

Present Councillors B G J Warren (Leader), G Barnell, Mrs C P Daw, D J Knowles and Mrs N Woollatt

Also Present Councillor(s) B. Holdman, R. Dolley, S. Clist

Also Present Officer(s): Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance), Lisa Lewis (Corporate Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing) and Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager), Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

162. **APOLOGIES (0:03:30)**

No apologies were given.

163. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0:03:44)**

Ros Nichols
Good Morning, I'm Ros Nichols a local Tiverton resident, business owner and an accountant by profession. Accountancy and budgeting is all about double entry and balancing the books, I have 2 points to make relating to the increasing charges in the pay and display carparks and raising money.

Previous Cabinet Members and Councillors removed the half hour car parking charges in some of the most used car parks. These quick turnaround times encourage people to pop into town, grab what they need without having to pay £1.25 for an hours stay. Can the Cabinet consider amending the current proposals of the Economy Policy Development Group to reintroduce these at Tiverton Market and at Becks Square and at the Crediton and Cullompton equivalents?

For example, one of my friends recently needed to collect a prescription for an elderly relative from the Pharmacy. She drove around the town twice to try and get a free half an hour space on street. But to no avail, all the spaces were full. Williams Street Car Park that still has the half hour free stay was full of parents picking up their children from school. So she parked in the car park very close to the pharmacy and considered not paying the £1.25 minimum fee as she was literally going to be 3 minutes maybe 5 minutes at most.

Now if she considered that now, how many folk are going to do that when the minimum fee is £2 for an hour, because they only want to stay 5 minutes or because they can't afford to add £2 to their shopping bill. Not everyone wants to stay for an hour, if they just want to pop to the post office, one of our remaining banks or even to buy a dozen eggs in the market. The half hour on street parking in Bampton Street is constantly busy, with folk fighting for a space so that they don't have to pay in the car park.

William Street Car Park is also busy as it still offers half hour for 50p. Wouldn't it be better to charge a nominal 50p for half an hour and have all the car parks constantly busy rather than drive people to risk it and not pay at all? Please take on board the reasons why people use the car parks. Yes there are those that come to town who want to have a mooch in the shops, grab a coffee and that's fine for a reasonable hours charge but not to the detriment of people who want to grab and go.

Finally, an idea that was put forward at a previous meeting to fill the gap in the budget, why not offer members of Mid Devon District Council Staff and Councillors who use the multi-story carpark a discounted permit? Even if this was at 50% of the day rate, in my calculations 100 people at 50% would fill a £23,000 hole. Take it from their monthly pay and they are still getting a better deal than the members of the public. If they worked anywhere else in town they would have to pay full price for a permit. If you can't amend existing contracts make it clear for new members of staff that car parking is not a perk for working at the council, because like everyone else you as an employer as well as a local authority are trying to balance the books.

Nick Quinn
Firstly, concerning Item 5: Financial Monitoring, paragraph 1.2 states that "the purpose of this report is to provide a high level update on any material changes since the last report – Quarter 3 presented to February Cabinet. In the Q3 Report, it was stated that a £467,000 overspend on the Modular Housing development at Shapland Place was "largely due to additional planning requirements".

Since that report was issued it has become apparent, from written replies to Public Questions at the last Cabinet meeting regarding this development, that £332,000 of the overspend (70%) stems from Contract Inflation Rises – not from Additional Planning Requirements. It is clear that Cabinet were misinformed on the cause of this overspend, which is concerning, as the costs of other Modular Home developments may also be affected - but Cabinet have not been forewarned.

Q1. Why were Cabinet given incorrect information in this Q3 financial monitoring report?

Q2. Do other Modular Housing contracts have similar inflation bombs?

Secondly concerning Item 8: Car Parking and Permit Tariffs. The sole basis for the proposed increases in tariffs is given as a cumulative rise in inflation. There is nothing in the reports about the actual costs of the operation of the service or the appropriateness of the recharges being allocated to it. As the result of written replies to Public Questions, it is now apparent that the Premises cost set in the 2023/24 budget at £381,650 has increased greatly from the 2022/23 actual figure of only £221,115. An increase of 73%.

Q3: Why have the actual costs of the service, and the appropriateness of the recharges, not been considered and addressed in this report?

Q4: What is the basis for the very significant rise in the premises cost?

The Leader explained that questions 3 and 4 would be answered at the appropriate agenda item through the Cabinet's discussion.

The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation & Housing provided an answer to questions 1 and 2 and would be attached to the minutes.

The Corporate Manager for People, Governance & Waste responded to questions 3 and 4 by explaining that the cost of this service was considered when the inflationary uplift was calculated, with recharges regularly reviewed within the agreed budget. The Council had suffered from rising utility costs which was due to the cost of living climate. Electricity usage was high for this service as this included powering, for example, ticket machines and lighting as well as other provisions. This was also timed with the coming of a previous fixed price tariff and that maintenance costs would vary year to year. The maintenance schedule would be provided in writing.

Kate Clayton-White
Good morning. In February we faced a very real prospect of 115% rise in the cost of our allocated space rental. It has been encouraging to note that through representations at subsequent Council meetings, Councillors seemed to have listened to us and amended their fee proposals for allocated spaces for which we thank you. We appreciate that the current Cabinet membership seems to be more open and upfront about their proposals than previous incumbents who sought to hide their outrageous proposals in private part 2 minutes.

We were very pleased to hear the amendment the S151 officer put forward by the Economy PDG on the 16 March, which suggested an increase from £425 to £460 which is much fairer and in line with inflation. Your amendment kicked into touch the other totally unjustifiable suggestion of implementing a backdated increase over the last 7 years when the council had chosen not to increase our fees.

These amendments regarding the allocated spaces were unanimously agreed by the Economy PDG committee and we urge you to accept those. Car parking issues are very important to the people in Tiverton, a major problem at this time has been terrible communication and lack of engagement with the public. Many people don't read the gazette because it's so expensive and your website is not the easiest to navigate. So in future, please try to find a better way of communication and let us know where and when car parking increases are to be discussed.

You already use email to tell us when our fees are due, maybe start a Council car parking Facebook page and put up an old fashioned large public information board. Maybe on the wall next to the market toilets. Something for people who do not use social media, then give us time to respond. I'm sure you fulfilled some sort of minimum statutory obligation by posting a tiny little chart of fees in the local paper. But as has been said before, there is a difference between statutory obligation and best practice.

Affordable car parking fees are essential to Tiverton's economy, affecting everybody and should only ever increase in line with current inflation and no more. They should certainly never be used to raise money to subsidise holes from the budget from unrelated questionable activities. It was for this reason, in February I asked, what was so commercially sensitive about raising car parking charges that the decision making process had to take place under private part 2 rules, i.e. in secret. You did not actually answer my question, you replied that it was because fees and charges were considered by Cabinet, how does that explain the commercial sensitivity and the need for secrecy? We are, however, very pleased to hear that future reviews of the car parking fees will take place in normal part 1 sessions. So my question remains, what was so commercially sensitive about raising car parking charges that the decision making process had to take place in secret?

Sophia Beard
I am Chair of the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership representing the businesses in Town, I am a local resident also. Again, as Jo has said, I think that quite a lot of the points have been quite elegantly put out over the last few meetings and indeed today by the colleagues that have spoken before, but I do have 4 questions that I would like to just bring to the focus again, also this is obviously on a car parking issue.

In discussion over those previous meetings one of the things that was stated by the finance officer was that notification of the car park charge options had been sent out with the council tax bundle last year. My question is, why if you made these decisions, again these are comments pulled from the previous meeting, so if these decisions were made to balance the budget in October, why there was nothing in the pack that was sent out to all residents regarding the council tax this year and all this sort of advertising leaflets that come in that envelope. There was nothing about the car parking charges and the options that people have this year. So the previous comments about how that is being communicated to the wider public, I would really like some justification on that.

The second question, is that again due to comments made, by the finance officer in previous meetings. There is serious concern that whilst at the previous meeting of the Economy PDG said that they would pass across the responsibility of the annual review to the officers to make sure that it is going to be happening on that basis and the comment made said that it was going to be difficult to apply inflation increases on a fractional percentage basis and if that kind of maths is beyond the scope of the officers in charge of the budgeting for the Council. I would suggest that there are some really good primary schools around here that would be able to help them out with that extra learning.

Because that is not a justification for waiting until inflation rises at 10% or indeed waiting 7 years to actually look at the bottom line of what is coming in. That is unacceptable, So I would like some clarification in that if it is on an increased percentage base on each year if the officer are able to do that maths.

The third question, alludes largely to what has also been said here, the last minute statutory deadlines which is largely what has caused the issues and the furore around this, is not acceptable in terms of consultation with the public. Where there is a duty to deliver a clear customer service. Therefore, I want to ask that the Cabinet and the Council look to give more than the statutory minimum in terms of consultation.

And my final question is would the Cabinet agree today to take the recommendations of the Economy PDG as a starting point in their discussions today as it has addressed some of the immediate needs of residents, but has not addressed those of the businesses and visitors of the town centre as Tiverton still needs to be competitive compared to Taunton and Exeter. And for example, there are 30 minute wait times, from the Economy PDG that was put forward for the evening tariff and we do need that through the day to support the town businesses.

The Leader explained that the points raised by public questioners would be answered at the appropriate agenda item through the Cabinet's discussion.

164. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0:26:15)**

Cllr Mrs N Woollatt declared a personal interest in relation to item 6 as Cllr Mrs N Woollatt works for Exeter Community Energy.

Members were reminded to make declarations of interest where appropriate.

165. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0:26:50)**

The minutes of the previous meeting from 7 March 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

166. **FINANCIAL MONITORING (0:27:28)**

The Cabinet were presented with, and **NOTED** a report* which provided a financial update in respect of the income and expenditure so far in the year. The following was highlighted:

- There was a continued overspend towards circa £400k due to cost pressures.
- His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) had changed their stance on charging Councils VAT on leisure service income.
- Under the New Burdens guidance, the Council was due to receive circa £150k for the energy rebate works undertaken as well for the business relief rates provided by the Council, it was noted that this almost covered the total costs.
- There were new energy scheme payments due to residents.
- The Council was now able to keep "right to buy" receipts for the 2022/2023 financial year as well as the 2023/2024 financial year, which would benefit social housing development plans.

The following was discussed:

- Asked for an update on New Burdens Funding, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Council was still waiting for a final claim made during the Covid-19 Pandemic and that an energy rebate scheme had been received.
- Whether the Council could claim back further than 2011 in relation to the VAT charges on leisure service income. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Council would make claims prior to 2011 if the appropriate information was available.
- It was asked if Mid Devon District Council had the resources and could manage planning guarantees reduced from 26 weeks to 16 weeks. The

Deputy Chief Executive explained that this was at a consultation stage and there might be a need to add resources to fulfil this.

- Regarding energy schemes, it was asked whether the Government payback covered the incurred costs. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Council was circa 20% short, however, both the Local Government Association (LGA) and individual Councils had made strong representations about the delivery of these schemes and expected lobbying would continue.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

167. **PERFORMANCE UPDATE (0:42:55)**

The Cabinet received and **NOTED** a report* which provided Members with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for quarter 3 (2022/23). It was highlighted that the performance and risk update had been split into two separate updates because it allowed greater accessibility to the information presented and were structured to align with the Corporate Plan with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provided.

The following was discussed:

- There was a preference for numbers alongside Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) rather than percentages only. Officers reassured Members that the way KPIs were presented would be altered so that needs were met.
- Clarification was sought for why sickness rates had increased. The Corporate Manager for People, Governance, and Waste highlighted that this was the first winter without Covid-19 restrictions and was due to Covid-19 and other infections. The Council had offered free flu jabs and encouraged good hygiene practice. Compared to other authorities, this Council had been one of the first to track sickness.
- Regarding regular traders at Tiverton's Pannier Market, it was mentioned that this KPI would be renamed so that it highlighted the occupancy rate of stalls at the market.
- It was noted that the Council had failed to meet their tree planting targets, however an officer explained that Mid Devon District Council had planted circa 1,192 trees, which in fact exceeded targets. This was achieved at a recent tree planting event, but it was emphasised that with no budget for tree planting grants were heavily relied upon for this to be achieved.
- It was raised that the report had a lot of detail from the previous year, to which Officers confirmed that this would be reviewed.
- A hydro project update was due to take place.
- Whether staff turnover was expected to increase. The Corporate Manager for People, Governance, and Waste explained that the Council was in a challenging situation with public service wages, a high level of vacancies and organisations being able to be more competitive due to hybrid working.
- Regarding housing delivery, it was raised there was an absence of information, with no information for delivery of affordable homes and council homes. It was noted that priority should be given to these KPIs. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing explained that there was a housing strategy which sets ambitions for the next 4 years. Progress on strategy delivery had been provided to the Homes Policy Development Group (PDG) and a review was also scheduled in the forward plan for a future PDG

under the new administration. Several schemes were in progress with a number of further schemes also planned where even more council homes could be provided. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out budget proposals for around 500 council houses to be delivered over the next five-years. It was also highlighted by the Deputy Chief Executive that it had proven difficult to build council houses as it had been unaffordable for the Council, however, with recent changes it was now a more deliverable metric.

- Homelessness was raised and whether the Council could cope with the upward trend. It was explained by the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing that the cost of living was a factor but the team was now fully staffed. Also, the Government Rough Sleeper Initiative funding for homelessness prevention work is now in place so the team is in the best position it could be, but demand continued to grow and this will be under continued review.
- Clarification was sought over the percentages that related to the House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) investigations. The Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing explained the team did not have control over the number of properties requiring investigation and important consideration was that all required investigations were undertaken. Nonetheless, the Deputy Chief Executive reassured that the percentages for these targets could be supplemented with totals.
- It was raised that the Hydro-dam would be unlikely to be delivered due to the nature of the river.
- In relation to Tiverton's Pannier Market it was asked whether more support could be given to Tiverton's Pannier Market. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that support was given.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

168. **CORPORATE RISK UPDATE (1:22:58)**

Cabinet received and **NOTED** a report* which provided Members with an update on Corporate risk for quarter 3 (2022/23).

The following was discussed:

- Culm Garden Village was raised and it was asked whether the delivery of a relief road should be considered a risk. The Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager, explained that this would be raised with the risk owner.
- At risk that the net zero target would not be met and that there should be more focus on our climate change targets. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that it was likely that most Councils were struggling to meet targets, but the Council was working hard to meet those targets set.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

169. **CAR PARKING AND PERMIT TARIFFS: REVIEW AND WAY FORWARD (1:30:45)**

Cabinet received a report* which provided Members with Economy PDG recommendations for pay and display charges as well as permit tariffs for consideration. Cabinet to approve or reject these recommendations with awareness

of the assumed additional income included within the agreed 2023/24 budget and there is an implementation timetable of 21 calendar days from time of public advert.

The following was highlighted:

- The Leader acknowledged the petitions received that related to the rise in car parking charges from members of the pubic and noted that these had been considered. In addition, this report had been reviewed and recommended by the Economy PDG.
- The fees and charges had been more appropriately tailored and that future improvements would be applied. For example, a consultation group would be formed to be part of the consultation process.

The following was discussed:

- That Day Permits should be removed because it would have been more expensive than the day/night permit.
- That a 5 hour tariff should be aligned with other car parks at £4.
- That the 30 minutes free parking should be raised during a future consultation.
- There were additional challenges when adding new tariffs and this required a longer consultation period.
- The possibility of monthly payments.
- Whether there should be a 30 minute tariff and should be considered during a future consultation.
- An officer explained that monthly payments would mean a heavy administrative burden and the need for additional resources.
- That local businesses should also be consulted during a future consultation that related to fees and charges.

Cllr Mrs N Woollatt **PROPOSED** an **AMENDMENT,** seconded by Cllr A Wilce that:

That we remove completely the Rover permits.

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**

Cllr Mrs N Woollatt **PROPOSED** an **AMENDMENT,** seconded by Cllr Mrs C Daw that:

In addition to permits being available to purchase annually, half yearly at 55% of the annual cost, quarterly at 30% of the annual cost. That they should also be available to purchase an annual permit payable by monthly direct debit at a monthly cost of 10% of the annual tariff.

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**

Cllr Mrs N Woollatt **PROPOSED** an **AMENDMENT,** seconded by Cllr D J Knowles that:

That during a consultation we add a 5 hour tariff at £4 at Station Road Carpark and that consideration be given to reviewing half hour parking and the potential for introducing a half hour tariff at 50% of the hourly rate.

Upon a vote being taken the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agree the Economy PDG recommendations (16 March 2023) regarding pay and display and permit tariffs (Appendix 1) with the following amendments:

- That we remove completely the Rover permits.
- In addition to permits being available to purchase annually, half yearly at 55% of the annual cost, quarterly at 30% of the annual cost. That they should also be available to purchase an annual permit payable by monthly direct debit at a monthly cost of 10% of the annual tariff.
- That during a consultation we add a 5 hour tariff at £4 at Station Road Carpark and that consideration be given to reviewing half hour parking and the potential for introducing a half hour tariff at 50% of the hourly rate.

(Moved from the Chair)

Reason for Decision: There was a need for new fee and charges to be reviewed.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

170. **AIR QUALITY SPD (2:12:18)**

Cabinet received a report* which provided information on the air quality supplementary planning document (SPD).

The following was highlighted:

- The document outlined how air quality would be imposed for developers and those who wished to make planning applications. It adopted the local plan and provided direction on policies within the local plan on air quality procedures.
- 12 responses had been received during the consultation which had been considered, the Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG) were also consulted.

RESOLVED:

1) The Mid Devon Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1 to this report) is adopted and this is published on the Council's website together with its Strategic Environmental Assessment screening report (Appendix 2), Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening report (Appendix 3), Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document Summary Guide (Appendix 4) and Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Statement (Appendix 5) and its Adoption Statement (Appendix 6).

2) The existing Supplementary Planning Document on Air Quality and Development (May 2008) is revoked, removed from the Council's website and is no longer made publicly available, in accordance with the local planning regulations.

(Proposed by Cllr G Barnell, seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt)

Reason for Decision: So that the Air Quality SPD could be adopted and published on the Council's website.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

171. **COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (2:17:15)**

Cabinet received a report* which provided Members with the revised Communication and Engagement Strategy and accompanying Media and Social Media Policy.

The following was discussed:

- It was felt that more emphasis on public engagement was needed within the report and that the report could be improved with more information that covered rights and accountability. The Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement, Digital Services explained that the report was made deliberately light, however reassured the Cabinet that the report could be revisited.
- The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that communications had improved according to a recent survey however, there was still room for improvement.

RESOLVED:
That the Communication and Engagement Strategy be deferred.

(Proposed by Cllr D J Knowles, seconded by Cllr A Wilce)

Reason for Decision: So that a revised version of this report that considered the Cabinet's feedback could be presented back to Cabinet.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

172. **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (2:27:36)**

The Cabinet received and **NOTED** a verbal update from the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer who highlighted that no applications had been received under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.

173. **SINGLE EQUALITIES POLICY AND EQUALITY OBJECTIVES (2:28:26)**

Cabinet received a report* which provided Members with an update on action taken to help meet the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The following was highlighted:

- This policy outlined how the Council would work towards the implementation of equality duties placed on the Council.
- The documents had been reviewed and updated, this included a review conducted by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group.
- Section 3 of the policy had been updated which included the equality profile of Mid Devon.
- There were no proposed changes to the policy's objectives.

- Further work towards an action plan to meet objectives would be conducted by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group.

RESOLVED:

That the Single Equality Scheme together with the Equality Objectives for 2023/24 be approved.

(Moved from the Chair)

Reason for Decision: To comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

174. **NOTIFICATION OF KEY DECISIONS (2:31:14)**

The Cabinet had before it, and **NOTED**, the notification of *Key Decisions

It was raised that the Forward Plan template had not yet been updated, it was explained that the new version was under development and would be ready for the next Cabinet Meeting.

Note: *Key Decisions previously circulated and attached to the minutes

(The meeting ended at 12.42 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on 17 April 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present Councillors S J Clist (Chairman)
W Burke, L J Cruwys, Mrs S Griggs, F W Letch, S Pugh and R F Radford, Mrs E J Slade

Also Present Councillors Mrs C P Daw

Present Officers: Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), David Parker (Member Services & Policy Research Officer), Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager) and Angie Howell (Member Services Officer)

86 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS** (00:04:05)

No apologies were received. Cllr Mrs E Lloyd was in attendance via Zoom.

87 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT** (00:04:12)

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate.

88 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** (00:04:25)

There were no questions from members of the public.

89 **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET** (00:04:49)

No decisions of the Cabinet were called in.

90 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** (00:05:00)

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 February 2023 were approved as a correct record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

91 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS** (00:05:21)

This was the last of the Scrutiny meetings for this administration. The Chair thanked Officers and Members for their participation and noted that it had been a pleasure and an honour to Chair this Committee, he felt the Scrutiny Committee had become a critical friend of Committees, the Cabinet, Council Officers and external bodies.

The Chairman paid tribute to Hon. Alderman Paul Williams who had sadly passed away recently, he had been a very supportive Member of the Council and had achieved a great deal for the Council. Condolences were passed to his family.

92 **CHAIRMANS ANNUAL REPORT** (00:07:21)

The Chairman's Annual report was **NOTED**.

93 **REVIEW OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION** (00:07:50)

The Scrutiny Committee considered an external investigation into the Council's handling of 3 Rivers Developments Ltd of this matter, including the processes followed, from its inception to the current date. (Minute 76, Scrutiny Committee, 13 February 2023).

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) brought the Committee up to date since previous discussions.

The Committee had previously spoken about a review or external investigation but hadn't indicated what the scope of that investigation or review ought to be.
Full Council had agreed to investigate and look into 3 Rivers. This had gone back to Cabinet as a recommendation and Cabinet had since asked the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) to scope up the terms of reference of an external investigation and also to look into the kinds of bodies that could perform that piece of work for the Council. That work was in hand.

The format of that review was for future options for the company to be considered through an options appraisal investigation.

There were seven or eight large private sector companies that would be interested in that kind of work and the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) would go through a procurement process to secure that piece of work for the Council. In addition, the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) had commissioned a review by Devon Audit Partnership into some of the allegations of fraud and financial mismanagement by the company or the Council that had been put forward over the last few months. That commission would start by 27 April 2023.

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) advised that a third review without a clear scope would be excessive – but welcomed comments from the Scrutiny Committee on either review due to take place.

It was explained that one review focussed on what the Council could do with the company moving forward, and the other one was looking to either substantiate or not, some of the allegations that have been made about the company and its Officers moving forward. Those were already two quite substantial commissions, to go for a third review would need to be financially reviewed in terms of value for money and risk.

The following was discussed:

The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) advice was welcomed, that the Scrutiny Committee should wait to review the two incoming investigations prior to a third investigation. It was important that the Council had an external analysis from someone with no affiliation for the sake of transparency and openness. It would also

help to qualm the fears, allegations and stories that have been going around about (a) the company and (b) the Council.

Concerns were raised that the review was only looking forward and that a number of people would like to know what had gone on in the past. Any review needed to look at the whole 3 Rivers history.

In order to protect the budget, Councillors thought it best to go ahead with the two pieces of work the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) had outlined and see what comes back before commissioning a third report. Concerns were raised that the reports would not be commissioned by the end of this term, clearly the reports would not be back by then.

It was suggested that this matter be clearly marked on the new work programme for review by the new administration.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The Scrutiny Committee await the receipt of both reports and then it be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee to review the position further at that point.

(Proposed by Cllr F Letch, seconded by Cllr S Pugh)

94 **WORK PROGRAMME** (00:23:42)

The Committee had before it the *Forward Plan and the *Scrutiny Work Plan.
The following items were raised:

1. 3 Rivers – The Scrutiny Committee await the receipt of both reports and then it be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee to review the position further at that point.
2. Increases to Members Allowances. Examine how this was dealt with by the Council, it was felt that this was too close to elections. More work needed to be done on how we encourage greater diversity at local elections.
3. Review recommendations of the Planning Enforcement Working Group.
4. Participatory budgeting review, a lot of work had been done and needed to be carried forward.
5. Motion 583 - Protecting Rivers and Seas, make sure that planning on large development work with South West Water on planning infrastructure was working effectively relating to sewage and so on was appropriate, continues.
6. Motion 564 – Inclusivity and Community Engagement – does Local Government work for women? Work needs to be continued. Some recommendations had been approved by the Scrutiny Committee and Full Council but they still need to be finalised.
7. Ask a local GP to speak to the Committee, to give it an update and insight as to how the services locally were coping? A briefing first followed by a Scrutiny Committee meeting afterwards if necessary.

RESOLVED:
That the 6 items discussed at 1-6 be added to the Work Plan
(Proposed from the Chair)

Note:
*Forward Plan and Work Plan previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Elizabeth Lloyd, who was standing down at the forthcoming elections, for her work on the Scrutiny Committee.

(The meeting ended at 2.49 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **AUDIT COMMITTEE** held on 28 March 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present Councillors N V Davey (Chairman)
J Buczkowski, Mrs C Collis, R Evans, R F Radford, R L Stanley and A Wyer

Also Present Councillors S J Clist, Mrs C P Daw and B G J Warren

Also Present Officers Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance), Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Lisa Lewis (Corporate Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Brian Trebilcock (ICT Operations Manager, Infrastructure & Support), Paul Middlemass (Audit Manager) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

Also in Attendance Andrew Davies (Grant Thornton)

60. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence. It was noted however that Cllr J Buczkowski joined the meeting via Zoom.

61. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr Nick Quinn, a local resident, asked the following question:

Regarding Agenda Item 4: Minutes of the previous meeting.

At the January Audit Committee meeting, I asked whether a 'letter of continued support', requested by 3 Rivers, had been provided.

The draft minutes before you accurately show my questions, but do not accurately show the response.

The draft minutes state: *The Deputy Chief Executive (S151) confirmed that a 'letter of continued support' had not **YET** been provided, therefore the answers to questions 2 and 3 became redundant.*

However the recording of the meeting (at 5mins 36 seconds) shows that the Deputy Chief Executive actually said "*In answer to: Has the letter been provided? **No. One***

***has not been provided**. Therefore the sub-questions two and three fall away because, obviously, a letter has not been provided*".

The Deputy Chief Executive did not use the word "YET".

The word "YET" should be removed from the minutes. Leaving it there would suggest the Deputy Chief Executive was prejudging a Cabinet decision on 3 Rivers.

My question is:
When considering approval of the draft minutes of the previous meeting, will Members please remove the word "YET" from the Deputy Chief Executive's response to the pubic questions?

The Chairman stated that this would be discussed by the Committee when that item was reached on the agenda.

62. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Cllr R L Stanley stated that, should 3 Rivers be discussed during the course of the meeting, he had a pecuniary interest as he was a Director of the company.

63. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chairman asked whether anybody had listened to the audio recording of the previous meeting under agenda item 48, Public Question Time, in order to check for the use of the word 'yet' by the Deputy Chief Executive. It was confirmed that he had not used this word. Therefore, it was agreed that this word should be removed and accordingly the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2023, as amended, were confirmed as a true record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

64. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:11:00**

The Chairman had the following announcements to make:

- This was the last meeting under the present administration.
- Since Cllr A Wyer would not be standing in the upcoming election he thanked him for his service to the Committee as the Vice Chairman over the last 4 years.

65. **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT (00:13:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager and the Corporate Manager for People, Performance & Waste providing Members with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for quarter 3 (2022/2023).

It was explained that performance and risk reporting had now been separated out allowing for each area to receive greater focus.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The chargeable household waste measurement had out performed previous predictions.
- Levels of missed collections were very low.
- Customers using the electric car charging points paid using a smart card.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

66. **CORPORATE RISK REPORT (00:19:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager and the Corporate Manager for People, Performance & Waste providing Members with an update on Corporate Risk for quarter 3 (2022/2023).

The Committee were asked to review the Corporate Risk Register which was now presented in a new format highlighting significant risks.

Consideration was given to:

- How new risks might be incorporated into the Risk Register. It was explained that ultimately Leadership Team decided whether a risk should go into the register. However, to support that process the Corporate Management Team met every quarter to discuss new and emerging risks.
- All Members had an opportunity to feed into the financial decisions of the Council, not just the Cabinet. This was particularly the case during the budget setting process where draft budgets were presented to the Policy Development Groups for comment.
- It was confirmed that two financial bids had been made in relation to the Cullompton Relief Road but these had been unsuccessful. All sources of available funding were being explored.
- The challenges faced by the next administration.
- The revised report format, now with colour, was an improvement.
- Members should let senior officers know if they think a risk should be included within the register.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

67. **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY (00:32:00)**

The Committee had before it a report * from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager and the Corporate Manager for People, Performance & Waste presenting it with the updated Risk Management Policy.

Officers explained that this was the usual annual review of the Risk Management Policy which included recommendations from Internal Audit and input from Leadership Team. Training would be rolled out to staff in the near future.

RESOLVED that the update Risk Management Policy be approved.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision

As set out in the report

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

68. **INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT (00:35:00)**

The Committee received, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Devon Audit Partnership which highlighted the following:

The contents of the report were briefly outlined with particular reference to the following:

- The report included summaries in Appendix 1 of eight audits delivered since the last audit report; these included one Substantial, six Reasonable and one Limited Assurance report.
- The actual audit reports had been circulated to Committee members in advance of the meeting.
- The Repairs and Maintenance area needed some improvement to the systems and processes in place but these were in hand and being addressed.
- The new style of reporting Risk to members was in line with good practice.
- Some concerns were raised regarding business continuity planning.

Consideration was given to:

- Resource and software issues within the Repairs and Maintenance area. It was noted there were also difficulties in retaining and recruiting officers in this area.
- The opportunities available for income generation, for example, repairs and maintenance on private properties.
- The problem of addressing internal audit recommendations related to Business Continuity and Emergency Planning as resource has not been provided. A new Business Continuity and Emergency Planning role is proposed, however, this post would come at an additional cost to the authority. It was considered that risks in relation to the concerns raised should be flagged up as a risk area and given a greater emphasis.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

69. **INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER AND STRATEGY (00:54:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Devon Audit Partnership setting out the Internal Audit Charter and Strategy for 2023/2024.

A brief discussion took place regarding the benefits afforded to Mid Devon District Council as a result of being within the Devon Audit Partnership with a large number of qualified staff. The audit manager noted it was a priority of his to compare and contrast with other authorities within the partnership to help identify and communicate good practice.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Charter and Strategy for 2023 – 2024 be approved.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision:

As set out in the report.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

70. **DAP INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023 - 2024 (00:56:00)**

The Committee had before it a report * from the Devon Audit Partnership setting out the Internal Audit Plan for 2023 – 2024.

It was explained that the plan was a live document and audits could be brought into it as and when required.

Consideration was given to:

- A reduction in the number of available audit days compared to the previous plan. There was a financial implication to the Council if the number of days was increased. Reassurance was provided that the number of days stated would be enough to cover a good range of work and allow the required annual assurance opinion.
- The effort being taken to address issues identified in the Building Control area with a new manager in post.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Plan for 2023 – 2024 be approved.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision:

As set out in the report.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

71. **ACCESS TO INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (01:07:00)**

The Chairman indicated that discussion with regard to the following items, required the Committee to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision may be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee would need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That, in accordance with Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the item 13, for the reason set out below:

- Information under paragraph 3 (contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).

(Proposed by the Chairman)

72. **CYBER SECURITY REPORT 2022-2023 (01:08:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Devon Audit Partnership summarising a recent Cyber Security Internal Audit.

The Committee considered the information presented to it and had a brief discussion.

It was **AGREED** that officers would provide a progress update report to the next meeting.

The meeting returned to open session.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed.

73. **EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT (01:27:00)**

The Committee received a verbal update from Grant Thornton on the work of the external auditors since the last meeting.

This included the following update:

- The certification of the Housing Benefit claim was almost complete. Some issues had been identified but nothing of significance.
- Grant Thornton were waiting for the auditors opinion on 3 Rivers before they could complete their audit on the Financial Statements. The same was also true for their Value for Money opinion.

A brief discussion took place regarding the 3 Rivers audit, the outcome of which was expected next week. It was likely that the report would have some material implications for the authority. It was felt that the timing of the auditors report on 3 Rivers was crucial.

74. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/2023 (01: 36:00)**

It was **AGREED** that the Chairman's Annual Report for 2022/2023 be approved and be presented to full Council on 26 April.

75. **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:37:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, the items identified for the next meeting. It requested than an update on the Cyber Security audit also be brought to the next meeting.

(The meeting ended at 7.08 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 14 March 2023 at 5.40 pm

Present Councillors J Wright (Chairman)
W Burke, D R Coren, Miss J Norton, R F Radford, R L Stanley and L D Taylor

Present Officers: Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Andrew Busby (Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Jason Ball (Climate and Sustainability Specialist), Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer), Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager) and David Parker (Member Services & Policy Research Officer)

55 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0.02.19)**

None received

Cllr E J Berry attended via Zoom.

56 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0.02.24)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate.

57 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0.02.33)**

There were no members of the public present.

58 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0.02.37)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2023 were agreed as a true record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

59 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (0.03.02)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

60 **ENVIRONMENT ENFORCEMENT: QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE UPDATE (0.03.09)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a *report from the Environment and Enforcement Manager providing an update on the quarterly performance update for environment enforcement.

Consideration was given to:

- Operation “File Name” was a joint operation with Devon and Cornwall Police, DVLA, NHS and Mid Devon Housing to reach difficult community groups, in Q3 it focussed around the Two Sisters factory in relation to Environmental crime, it was noted that operation “File Name” would continue throughout the year.

- Quarter 3 performance revenue hitting the £65k mark for car parking.

- Abandoned Vehicles - During Q3 80 abandoned vehicles were reported of which 17 required action with 10 being moved by the owners and 7 vehicles removed by MDDC contractors. Four Fixed Penalty Notices were issued in Q3 relating to abandonment of vehicles.

- Littering and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) – During Q3, 80 Patrols lasting a day each have been conducted resulting in seven fixed penalty notices being issued four for PSPO breaches and three for littering, the patrols in known dog walking areas and in the towns had been a good opportunity to engage with the public.

- The Team had been focussed on Fly Tipping, 8 people were interviewed under caution resulting in two fixed penalty notices being issued. It was expected that the Council removed carcasses of deer from roadsides.

- The Team had carried out public engagement exercises with Primary Schools concentrating on specific towns and highlighting the impacts of littering, fly tipping and the benefits of recycling.

- Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) may be written off due to appeals. The reason that more PCN's were outstanding in Q3 2022 compared with previous years there had been less time to recover the PCN's as compared with previous years, the PCN's outstanding for Q3 in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were sat with the Council's debt collection agents.

- Parking Machine income usually dipped in the months of December to March.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

61 **CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE (0.15.28)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the *Climate and Sustainability update presented by the Climate and Sustainability Specialist which documented progress against the Climate Action Plan.

The Officer gave an overview of his report and highlighted:

- The leisure centre decarbonisation project was going well at Exe Valley and Lord's Meadow, ground source heat pumps, air source heat pumps and solar panels were planned to be added to the heating systems and linking to the biomass heating boiler at Lord's Meadow. LED lights had been installed in the floodlights on the all-weather pitches to save energy.

- Tree planting event had been planned which aimed for circa 1000 trees to be planted.

- The planning sustainability guidance was approved by cabinet on 7 March.

- The procurement strategy was also approved on 7th February which had environmental benefits.

Consideration was given to:

- How long it took before a tree started absorbing carbon.

- Planting trees was also aimed at helping particular species such as the hazel dormouse. The trees were broadleaf native species, selected as being suitable to forecast climate scenarios and UK grown. This should futureproof the habitat.

- Exmouth swimming pool was noted to be heated via a Data Processing Centre; officers were asked to look into this potential solution.

- Hydro-power plant proposal. It was asked how many days a year it would work. It was explained that the business case was based on a forecast output powering Council Offices and the power line would likely be routed along the road. This would be used to reduce or offset the energy bought. There was a request for MDDC to talk to Three Rivers Housing about e.g. noise impact on properties. (Note: Verbal answer provided October 2022 explained the evidence accepted by Planning showed no noise issue.)

- Working in partnership with farmers. Example – milk buyers had implemented contract terms with strict environmental performance standards and monitoring; it was asked if officers might find a way to work with farmers in a similar way.

- Planning - the environment PDG should be able to work closer with planning e.g. in relation to Anaerobic Digester plants and Solar Panels. Consultation was still active with the national planning policy framework, and was renewables positive.

- It was suggested Environment PDG could invite a farming and carbon expert.

Note: *update previously circulated and attached to the minutes

62 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/2023 (0.33.01)**

The chair was thanked for his chairmanship over the past 12 months and the PDG endorsed the reports. Committee members thanked the Environment and Enforcement Manager, the Climate and Sustainability Specialist and Corporate Manager for Property, Leisure and Climate Change for their work. The chairman thanked everyone for their work.

RESOLVED:
That the Environment PDG recommends this report to the next Full Council.

Note: *update previously circulated and attached to the minutes

63 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (0.37.48)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the items identified for the next meeting.

(The meeting ended at 6.17 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **HOMES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 21 March 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present Councillors	R J Dolley (Chairman) J Cairney, S J Clist, D R Coren, R Evans and R F Radford
Apologies Councillors	J Bartlett and P J Heal
Present Officers	Jill May (Director of Business Improvement and Operations), Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing), Sue Hanwell (Operations Manager for Housing) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

58 Apologies and Substitute Members

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr J Bartlett
- Cllr P J Heal

It was also noted that Cllr Barnell was no longer a member of the Group as he had become a Cabinet Member since the last meeting.

59 Public Question Time

No members of the public had registered to ask a question.

60 Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct

No interests were declared under this item.

61 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2023 were **AGREED** as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

62 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman had the following announcements to make:

He thanked his fellow Policy Development Group Members for their kind words regarding his Chairmanship.

He commented that he was somewhat ‘sad’ that it had not been possible to create more housing during the past 4 years but hoped that some of these ambitions could be progressed under the new administration.

63 **The use of Flexible Tenancies (00:07:00)**

The Group had before it a report * from the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.

The officer outlined the contents of the report and highlighted the following:

- There were challenges using the Flexible Tenancy scheme as it currently existed and officers were keen to undertake further research to determine the best way forwards. The arguments for and against the use of Flexible Tenancies, as set out in the report, were reiterated. An analysis needed to be undertaken as to whether the current scheme should continue in its current format, or whether a more blended approach would be helpful or whether to phase the scheme out completely and replace it with something more workable. More research was needed.
- A number of legislative changes had taken place over the past 10 years however the Council would continue to offer 1-year introductory tenancies and long-term secure tenancies if flexible tenure was removed.
- Many other registered providers were reviewing Flexible Tenancies such as other stock holding local authorities and a change of approach was seen to be developing across the sector.

Discussion took place regarding:

- A tenant’s income, savings and household budget being taken into account in relation to any decision about whether or not to renew a flexible tenancy.
- The number of private letting facilities available.
- Concerns regarding the workload in trying to manage lots of different tenants with different tenancy arrangements and durations.
- Tenants were involved at the heart of decision making and the Tenant Involvement resource had been strengthened.
- The critical stage was the first year where a lot could be understood about the ability of a new tenant to sustain a tenancy.
- There was no automatic transfer of tenancy should a tenant pass away.

The Group **AGREED** for the development of a project plan setting out proposals to consult tenants and other stakeholders on the continued use of flexible tenancies by Mid Devon Housing for discussion and agreement at a future meeting of the Homes Policy Development Group.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the minutes.

64 **Mid Devon Housing Service Delivery Report (00:30:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing providing the regular, quarterly update to Members on enforcement and other activity undertaken by Mid Devon Housing.

The officer outlined the contents of the report with particular reference to the following:

- Areas of improvement were referenced such as gas safety checks and fire risk assessments.
- The new regulatory regime was outlined and the tenant satisfaction measures explained.
- Future reporting on service delivery would be in a revised format and centred around the new regulations with a draft format coming forward at a future policy development group meeting for member consideration.

Consideration was given to:

- The cost of living crisis and the effect of this on tenants.
- Early engagement with tenants was key should rent arrears become an issue, circumstances were looked at as holistically as possible.

It was **AGREED** that the thanks of the Group be taken back to the Rent Recovery team who were working so hard and compassionately to engage with tenants at an early stage concerning outstanding rent arrears.

It was also **NOTED** that Mid Devon Housing had recently been nominated for the 'Resolve ASB 2022-2023 Team of the Year' award.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

65 **Chairman's Annual Report for 2022 - 2023 (00:41:00)**

The Group had before it and **AGREED** the Chairman's Annual Report for 2022 – 2023.

There being no comments this would now go forward to full Council for approval at its next meeting.

66 **Identification of items for the next meeting (00:45:00)**

Members **NOTED** the items listed in the work programme for the next meeting. In addition it was also requested that, following the election, the new membership of the Homes Policy Development Group receive an update on the current and planned housing programme and that the Group be brought fully up to speed.

(The meeting ended at 3.01 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 28 March 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present Councillors	Mrs M E Squires (Chairman) Mrs C Collis, W Burke, L J Cruwys, R J Dolley, B Holdman, S Pugh and Mrs E J Slade
Also Present Councillors	Cllr S J Clist
Present Officers:	Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Lisa Lewis (Corporate Manager for Business Transformation and Customer Engagement), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager), Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager), Angie Howell (Member Services Officer) and David Parker (Member Services & Policy Research Officer)

48 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0:03:19)**

There were no apologies or substitute Members.

49 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0:03:26)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate.

50 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0:03:38)**

There were no members of the public present.

51 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0:03:49)**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 January 2023 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

52 **CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS (0:04:05)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

53 **COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (0:04:17)**

The Group had before it a report* from the Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation which provided Members with the revised Communication and Engagement Strategy and accompanying Media and Social Media Policy.

The contents of the report were outlined with reference to the following:

- These policies were reviewed every 2 years.
- There were no substantive changes to the document or to the approach.

- Recently completed another customer survey with an aim to engage with customers on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in June 2023. An analysis of the results of this survey were ongoing.

The following was discussed by the Committee:

- The Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement would provide a written response regarding the amount of residents who had asked for more than 1 bin.
- The Committee were concerned for elderly people that don't have access to on-line facilities or those that are uncomfortable with payment for services over the telephone using their bank card. The Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement advised that residents could pay with their cards within Phoenix House, Tiverton.
- Whether the payment method for larger waste removals could be managed differently was raised by the Committee. It was advised by the Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement that the context of this question was more appropriate for the Waste Service.
- The possibility of staggered opening times for Reception was raised, to which the Chair noted that this would likely be for the new Administration to discuss.
- The reputation of the Council was raised and further clarification was sought on the Council's responses to news articles that made reference to Council decisions. The Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement advised that officers always remained politically neutral and would always liaise with the Cabinet Member or the Portfolio Holder where necessary.
- The Committee suggested that Members be reminded of the policies set out in the Social Media Guidelines outlined on pages 32/33 which included: Dignity at Work; Single Equality Scheme; Member Code of Conduct; Officer Code of Conduct and the MDDC Safeguarding Policy.
- The Committee were concerned about the level of communication and engagement. The Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation and Customer Engagement advised that better communication and engagement would be addressed as the Customer Service System was due to be replaced. This would bring a more efficient service as it would keep our customers up to date with tracking. It would also enable us to communicate with customers to keep them aware of progress. Attempts were also made to engage with customers by carrying out customer surveys.
- It was raised that on Page 18, paragraph 10.0 a typo needed to be corrected, from "plan" to "plain".
- A concern was raised by Committee regarding the CRM system as it would only be as good as the inputted data. In addition, there was a need to ensure that new Members and Officers were made clear when they come on board to avoid a duplication of work.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the Cabinet that the content of the revised Communication and Engagement Strategy and the Media and Social Media Policy be approved.

(Moved by the Chair).

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Notes: * Report previously circulated.

54 **SINGLE EQUALITIES POLICY AND EQUALITY OBJECTIVE (0:28:34)**

The Group had before it a report* from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager which provided Members with an update on action taken to help meet the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act (2010).

The contents of the report were outlined with reference to the following:

- This report was presented annually to the Community PDG.
- Mid Devon has a population of circa 83,000, with a growth of 6.5% since 2011.
- Mid Devon had an aging population.
- The percentage of residents who were economically active decreased.
- The number of residents reporting that they have no religion had increased.
- The percentage of residents with a level 3 qualification or above increased.
- There were no proposed changes to the Council's Equality Objectives.

The following was discussed by the Committee:

- That all protected characteristics must be considered including ethnicity.
- As an employer it needs to be representative of the community it serves.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the Cabinet that the content of the Single Equalities Policy and Equality Objective Policy be approved.

(Moved by the Chair).

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Notes: * Report previously circulated.

55 **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (0:36:19)**

The Committee received and **NOTED** verbal update form the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers. The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer explained that there had been no request for applications under these powers.

56 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT (0:37:39)**

The Committee received the Chairman's Annual Report for 2022/2023.

The Chair thanked officers for their hard work. Councillors also thanked the Chair for all her efforts over the past 4 years.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Chairman's Annual Report be noted at Full Council.

57 **WORK PROGRAMME (0:37:56)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, the "Community Policy Development Group Work Plan for 2022-2023.

(The meeting ended at 2.55 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ECONOMY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 16 March 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present
Councillors J M Downes (Chairman)
J Buczkowski, Mrs C Collis, N V Davey,
R J Dolley, R Evans and J Wright

Apologies
Councillors Mrs S Griggs and R F Radford

Also Present
Councillors S J Clist, B Holdman and B G J Warren

Also Present
Officers Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Adrian Welsh (Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Zoë Lentell (Economic Development Team Leader) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

48 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Mrs S Griggs
- Cllr R F Radford

49 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following members of the public asked questions in relation to agenda item 6: Car Parking and Permit Tariffs:

Bruce Evans

What plans are there for St Saviour Street and Market Place Car Parks in Crediton?

Crediton needs people to visit the town. It also needs workers to run local businesses.

Crediton is a jewel in the crown of the local area and any rises should be proportionate.

Nick Quinn (Local Resident)

The report proposes options to increase Car Parking and Permit charges but the “Way Forward” section contains errors and does not provide detailed justification.

The overnight permit charge was last reviewed, and changed, in 2019 – not 2016.

There are no detailed figures to 'j*ustify'* the very large increases, of 30% for General parking and 58% for Permits.

Even these percentages are not properly applied in the options given:

Appendix 3 – the Gross Income for Option 1 is 30%, for Option 2 it is 38%.

Appendix 4 – the Gross Income for Option 1 is 70%, for Option 2 it is 81%.

Stating '*others have raised parking charges*' is not a justification for this Council to increase their charges, as the MDDC Parking Services have consistently been in surplus.

The report suggests that the increases are supported, because a Residents survey had said the Council should protect services. But the report does not make it clear how *services will be protected* by the increased income from these proposed extra charges.

What is missing from this report is:
The actual costs of the service;
The potential surplus generated by each of the increase proposals and
The use to which the expected surplus would be put.

My questions are:

1. What is the current cost of the Parking Service?

2. What will the surplus (income over costs) be for each of the options?

3. What will the surplus, from each option, be used for?

Mrs Kate Clayton-White

Our comments relate to the increase in allocated spaces fees detailed in appendix 4 from the report compiled from Cllr Warren and Luke Howard. Our initial euphoria at the Council's decision to pause the proposed hike in car parking charges had wilted after reading the recent report by yourselves. In the first option you propose to increase the current charges of £425 by 50% to £637.50 with no explanation to justify this increase. You say that costs have risen sharply since Covid. What cost for our car sized piece of tarmac. The second option shows a 6.8% uplift applied to each of the past 7 years where fees stayed the same to generate the fee of £675. This whole idea of adding backdated increases seems decidedly dodgy.

The Council chose not to increase our rent during those years so the very idea of squeezing out additional income now by implementing backdated so called charges and seeking to ask current renters to pay for this deficiency in financial planning is grossly unfair. Why is this increase being applied to allocated space fees when pay

and display car park costs, dear to maintain, are included in the 6.8% calculation? £675 represents a whopping increase of 59% on current charges.

According to the ONS the average CPIH inflation figure for those 7 years was 3% and the RPI inflation figure was 4.45% giving figures of £506 and £550 respectively, far less than your proposed £675. Cash cow and milking are phrases that still seem to apply here. You seek to defend the uplift in charges by referring to a recent resident's survey where 50% of replies said that the Council should protect services but did this mean that 50% didn't agree? The flip side of statistics.

The feeling we got from the last Council meeting was that an increase in line with inflation would be more appropriate but that increase must be generated from our current fee not from hypothetical inflationary charges. Increases based on the current CPIH and RPI inflation rates would give £465 and £485 respectively rounded up to the nearest £5. These are much fairer and affordable increases than those proposed by yourselves.

Allocated spaces are rented by people facing a cost of living crisis, please do not try to sort out your financial woes by voting to implement the unjustifiable and stringent increases outlined in your report. Analysis of the 2022/2023 budget book suggests carparks will generate nearly £490k profit this year. So why do both options result in inflation busting increases yet again and how can you justify increases which include 7 years of questionable backdated charges?

Jo Webber

We need people to come to Mid Devon. We are being asked to 'shop local' but local businesses risk reduced footfall if charges are increased. Remember this! We should be proud of the three market towns and we should work together to promote tourism and the Mid Devon shopping experience. Everyone will be affected. How would you feel if you had to pay the increased charges? Are the proposed increases in line with inflation, if not, why not?

Stacey Gray

It has previously been noted, by myself, business owners and members of the public that the recently proposed parking charges, would be detrimental to businesses at best and for some financially untenable. It has also been noted that such high charges would act as a deterrent, not as a welcome, to visitors of the town and those that live on the outskirts. This is the opposite of the wider regeneration plan proposed by MDDC. It is my hope today that during this meeting a balanced and reasonable increase is proposed and that as part of that there are also wider considerations. Can I ask that MDDC consider free parking in the evening to encourage and revitalise our much-needed night-time economy? Can I ask that MDDC consider a 30 minute or 1-hour free parking offer to ensure the use of our much need amenities such as the Post Office and Banks remain uncostly to those that need them – including but not exhaustive of businesses and our older community?

I understand, that parking charges are seen as a way to bring in much needed revenue, but a vast increase in the long term is short sighted and is counter to encouraging footfall and dwell time to our town. Ultimately, I ask you, is the long-term prosperity of Tiverton a high priority? And if so, I ask that MDDC look at the long-term

impact that this could cause and the negative view of our town that would grow. People's opinions are formed in moment. Let's aim to make their first and lasting impression one of positivity. One that encourages them to stay longer and plan to return. I know that in itself this is not all that is needed, but it is a link in the chain towards ensuring economic prosperity.

So can I end with…. Is this committee and MDDC committed to thinking long term and for the benefit of the next generation? All of your decisions, big or small have a lasting impact. It may only seem like parking charges, but it has a bigger impact that will ripple. And at the moment this only appears to be for the negative. It is my hope that you are all thinking of our community as it stands today and also considering the impact of decisions to our town for the next generation.

The Chairman stated that each of the questioners would receive a written response.

(The answers to these questions is contained in the separate answer sheet which is being published as a supplement to the minutes).

50 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:15:00)**

No interests were declared under this item.

51 **MINUTES (00:16:00)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

52 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:17:00)**

The Chairman stated that this was the last meeting of the Group before the election in May.

53 **CAR PARKING AND PERMIT TARIFFS: REVIEW AND WAY FORWARDS (00:18:00)**

The Group had before it, a report * from the Environment and Enforcement Manager providing options for the Economy PDG to make recommendations to the Cabinet to determine and display and permit tariff increases for the financial year 2023 – 2024.

The Chairman commenced the discussion by stating that it had become evident was that the Cabinet were not approving the recommendations of this Group with regard to car parking. He requested that a working group be set up under the new administration, including Members of the Economy PDG, to oversee the strategic considerations relating to future car parking fees and charges, leaving the inflationary aspects to be delegated to the S151 Officer.

The contents of the report were outlined with particular reference to the following:

- The previous advanced notice of car parking charges had been pulled following the decision of full Council on 22nd February 2022. The recommendations of this Group would go to the Cabinet for a decision on 4th April 2023.

- In response to the question raised by Mr Nick Quinn, the cost of the parking charges is £782,652.53 up until the 14 March 2023. There was no surplus, the proposed increases were about trying to reduce the current losses. Further financial information relating to the different projections proposed (and requested by Mr Quinn) is contained in the separate answer sheet which is being distributed alongside these minutes. In response to the questions posed by Ms Stacey Gray, no one wants to raise fees and charges in the current cost of living crisis but good parking facilities needed to be provided and maintained with adequate security. Again further information is contained in the separate answer sheet which is being distributed alongside these minutes.
- The first option included inflationary increases on all elements associated with car parking from 2016 and 2019 (when the scheme was last reviewed). Considerable costs had been incurred as a result of resurfacing and maintenance, particularly in relation the multi storey car park (MSCP). Any surpluses generated would need to be ploughed back into car parking services. Doing nothing was not an option. Whatever was decided would likely take place after the election and 21 day's notice would need to be given.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The extent of the consultation that had taken place regarding proposed increases. Officers had been in touch with local businesses and did listen to public feedback but lessons had been learnt for the future.
- Changing the tariff only required 21 days notice.
- It was requested that in future inflationary increases be shown as a percentage and in a separate column.
- A proposal was made to freeze all current charges and a thorough review take place regarding future increases. The question was asked as to what effect this would have on the Council's budget? It was confirmed that a £250k shortfall would result with the Cabinet needing to find this somewhere else in order to plug the gap. This would be a significant loss of income.
- Members were in a difficult position, if increases didn't come into force then there would be a knock on effect to other services. Decisions made did not always make councillors popular but they had a responsibility to balance the budget. Dipping into reserves would already need to take place as a result of shortfalls in other areas, not implementing any sort of increase would just make that hole bigger.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that it approves:

To adopt Appendix 3, option 2 in relation to Parking Fees with the below amendments;

a) An increase on the 24 hour vend at the MSCP in Tiverton to £15.
b) The removal of the free 15 minute vend at Phoenix House and the introduction of a 50p charge for a 30 minute vend at Phoenix House.
c) The retention of the free 30 minute night time stay in all three towns.
d) Overnight Parking, Sunday and Bank Holiday Parking should have a flat £2 rate for all sites.

To adopt Appendix 4, Option 1 in relation to Permit Fees with the below amendments;

e) An increase of the annual Allocated Space charge to £460.
f) An increase of the annual day/night permit to £460.

(Proposed by Cllr B Evans and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Collis)

Reason for the decision

As set out within the report.

Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

54 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE (01:25:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Director of Place updating Members on activities undertaken by the Economic Development Team during the last quarter.

The contents of the report were summarised with particular reference to:

- The Shared Prosperity Fund
- Shop Front Enhancement schemes in Tiverton and Crediton
- Forthcoming digital skills workshops
- The expansion of new work hubs
- Two new members of staff would be joining the Economic Development Team shortly

- Note: * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

55 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/2023 (01:27:00)

The Group had before it a draft report * from the Chairman summarising the work of the Group and the Economic Development Team over the past 12 months.

The following was suggested, and **AGREED**, to be included within the Chairman's report as well as sending a letter from the Chairman to the Cabinet setting out the Groups wishes regarding 3R as follows bearing in mind the effect of decisions made in relation to 3R as they may or may not affect the economy in Mid Devon.

"This Group wishes to leave a small but vital legacy that will be used to positively help the next committee and possible wider membership in its financial decision making. It essentially wishes to know what the economic advantages and disadvantages have been to Mid Devon?

The Cabinet had been asked that a report be sought that seeks to understand the way that 3R has been run and how the company's current situation has been arrived at. The narrative of this report will be influenced by the wording and instructions given to the author of the report and it is this "brief" that will determine the reports areas of interest and commentary. It is the imperative that the author is specifically asked to look at "all" aspects of how the company has arrived at the place it finds itself today.

The Economy PDG therefore ask the Cabinet to ensure the author is required to create a balanced and wide reaching report that gives commentary on as many aspects of this journey as possible, specifically asking for commentary on the effects that decisions made externally to its own board by the original Cabinet back in 2019/20 resulting in a raft of external reports resulted in shareholder restrictions and demands being placed upon the company.

The Group request that opinion is given on the effects of the most recent decision of Members to refuse it latest business plan.

Finally the Group asks that the report gives a clear and unbiased opinion on the immediate and medium term financial impact to itself and this authority of how those decisions have effected current and short term predicted financial performance of the company and its ability to move forward.

Given this report is seen as the primary document that will seek to enable informed decision making on 3R and our wider economic ambitions by the next administration, it is our duty to ensure they are given as much information as possible.

The Group very much hope that the Cabinet will agree the inclusion of this information is vital to inform the decisions required by the next administration."

A copy of the final report would be submitted to full Council at their meeting on 26 April 2023.

Notes: (i) * Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

(ii) Cllr J Buczkowski requested that his abstention from voting in favour of the additional submission in relation to 3R be recorded.

56 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:47:00)**

The items identified for the next meeting were **NOTED**.

(The meeting ended at 7.18 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held on 1 March 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present Councillors	P J Heal (Chairman) S J Clist, Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, R J Dolley, B Holdman and F W Letch
Apologies Councillors	D J Knowles, R F Radford and B G J Warren
Also Present Councillors	Mrs M E Squires and Mrs E Lloyd
Also Present Officers	Richard Marsh (Director of Place), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Angharad Williams (Development Management Manager), James Clements (Principal Planning Officer), Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)
Also in Attendance	Brian Hensley and Michelle Woodgates (DCC)

109 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr D J Knowles who was substituted by Cllr Mrs C Daw
- Cllr R F Radford
- Cllr B Warren who was substituted by Cllr R J Dolley

110 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following members of the public attended the meeting to ask questions in relation to the Creedy Bridge application:

Liz Goodman stated that Crediton RFC is one of the largest Community Clubs in Devon, 500 members and 18 teams including Walking Rugby along with a school holiday Club and a preschool Saturday morning Club.

We want and need to relocate. Our outgrown current site is allocated for housing.

An ageing Clubhouse with insufficient changing rooms for the safeguarding safety of our young people. A small Club car park means road parking, a dangerous hazard and a welfare concern, for children crossing.

Training nearly every night of the week and matches Saturday's and Sunday's for up to 18 teams and opposition teams along with spectators. Our season ends in April/May and pre-season starts in July. Hence a ball strike assessment is necessary.

Although we are grateful for our inclusion in the new Lidl store site deal, formally our leased pitch, we have not received any of the Section 106 funding. We are struggling for playing & training spaces and rely on hiring match day pitches without changing & toilet facilities.

The reserve matters application is being discussed today for Bellway, who now own our relocation land.

We requested that our allocated land be offered to us on Grant of Consent, this was ignored. We provided Bellway with a RICS valuation and the Council confirmed to them, we were the Nominee. For over 12 months we have tried but Bellway and the still involved previous landowner's agent have refused to negotiate outside of the Section 106. This lack of Community spirit and willingness to engage is alarming. Do they have another agenda?

The relocation of the Club is within the Councils own adopted Playing Pitch Strategy and Local Plan. We would love to be the Nominee but are concerned if the Reserved Matters are approved as proposed, the details in it won't enable a satisfactory relocation site to be provided. That would mean CRFC can't vacate their current site, and the current Development Plan for Crediton will, in part, fail.

Other concerns for our members' safety, will there be a pedestrian crossing to access our training pitch opposite the relocation site? Will the 30 MPH limit be extended to the end of the relocation site?

The rugby Club could not afford to pay into any management or maintenance company set up by the developer for the upkeep of the housing estate.

All the money that Crediton Rugby Club produces goes immediately back into the local economy. It enhances community spirit and cohesion, promotes widespread physical & mental health.

We really do need and want to move but we feel we have not been consulted throughout this entire process. Many of our members and members of our local Community supported the outline application for the housing development back in 2008. We expected the promised workable relocation site to be presented to the Rugby Club, not one that has since been changed by the developers, now they have achieved their ends.

How can this application be approved when there are several matters, those I mention here, along with questions my colleagues will raise shortly. Sport England, the RFU and Crediton Rugby Club have all raised responses to planning matters that have not been sufficiently addressed and the negative outcomes of them considered.

All I ask is that our Crediton Community and Crediton Rugby Club, one of your largest Community groups in Devon, gets what it needs and so deserves. We must support the young people of Crediton and the wider Community we serve.

Edward Trick, also from Crediton Rugby Club, stated that MDDC Policy and the outlined consent is to "Safeguard 8.6 hectares for the relocation of Crediton Rugby Club". By introducing the maintenance corridor, increasing and enhancing the size of the ditch and adding the footpaths, have they failed to safeguard the land and therefore, are they in breach of their own policy and outlined consent?

The surface water run off for 257 houses and roads will run directly into an attenuation pond positioned three meters away from one of our pitches and then right through the middle of our site in a drainage ditch. How will we keep our pitches dry? Flood risk reports use lots of complicated calculations, but its a fact - water runs downhill! Why not run a new ditch directly to the river avoiding the Rugby Club? Where will the overflow from the pond go? Who will maintain the ditch? Leaving a maintenance corridor large enough for a digger will mean the pitch layout won't fit therefore the whole scheme is no longer Policy Compliant. Health & Safety for children collecting balls from the ditch will be an issue, will it need to be fenced? Who will pay for this? The club highlighted this as an objection during this application and the previous outline application but once again we have been ignored.

The drainage system to be compliant with Sport England and the RFU's standards will be very expensive. Sport England and us have officially objected to the application on the grounds of the flood risk strategy. We give notice and please minute this, that we will seek compensation for any damage to the pitches and our infrastructure from excess water in the future.

Does the applicant's drainage scheme jeopardize the PSD report that demonstrated 4 pitches could be sufficiently constructed at the site? The PSD report helped inform the RFU and Sport England's comments to the previous application. If the drainage scheme does jeopardize the PSD report and thus the viability of constructing 4 pitches at the site Sport England and the RFU would find it hard to support a further application. Does the above in turn also jeopardize this site as the intended location to construct the LIDL replacement pitch as per the condition to planning application the Council are yet to deliver?

The proposed location of the public footpath poses health risks of dog fouling on playing pitches, promotes trespassing of the public onto playing pitches resulting in a large and expensive fence to erect to keep our players and the public safe and to maintain the vital gate income on match days.

The proposed location of paths would be against the dead ball area of the rugby pitch. The rugby pitch configuration and dimensions are as per World Rugby Law 1, adopted by the RFU, which states the need for a minimum 5m run off around the full perimeter of the pitch. These dimensions are fundamentally based on player and spectator safety, any scheme of works delivered less than this would seriously jeopardize safety at the site. The footpath needs to be re-sited.

No ball strike assessment has been completed as per the original Sport England objection. Due to the proximity of the dwellings to the playing pitches the RFU and Sport England recommended a ball strike assessment be undertaken by the

applicant to understand if any safety mitigation is required. Without an assessment how can the applicant be confident the dwellings to the West of the site will be sufficiently protected from stray balls from the rugby pitches and how can the public using the proposed footpath that runs next to the pitch be protected from ball strikes? You have already heard how often we train and play matches. The Rugby Club would accept no liability for any such damage caused and would insist any retrospective mitigation is paid for and maintained by the applicant.

Nick Hasted stated that his question was associated with the aim of reducing the carbon footprint of the estate and reducing energy costs:

How many solar panels are being installed for each home?
What direction will they be facing?
What is their capacity?
What is their estimated reduction in the energy running cost of a home?

John Craythorne asked 'In relation to the Creedy Bridge application. As far as I can ascertain from your website, there is currently provision for 31 'affordable' rented homes and 21 shared ownership dwellings. Does the council have any powers to require a greater provision than this and if so will it use all its efforts or secure a greater number of affordable homes?
Does the council recognise that what is described as 'affordable' is actually not affordable for many people on lower incomes and that for people in those circumstances, a secure tenancy in the social housing sector is often the only means of having a secure, decent and affordable home?
Further, in its review of the local plan will the council ensure that the provision of more social housing to rent will be given absolute priority?'

Caroline Romijn stated….I note that the percentage of "affordable" houses within this development is set at a very low level, disappointing within the context of Mid-Devon's relatively low-wage economy. It is also extremely concerning that the development does not meet high standards of sustainability. In view of this I would like to ask Mid Devon Council to consider asking the developers to release a further number of "affordable plots" (say 15) for sale as self-builds. Providing 15 plots for Self-Builds would have two significant advantages: firstly it would meet a significant local social and economic need, and secondly it would ensure that at least that number of houses would need to be built to higher, up-to-date standards of sustainability.

Natalia Letch asked the following questions:

1. Would there be a regular bus connection to the Crediton High Street and railway station and to Exeter?

2. Would the developers commit themselves to aligning the majority of dwellings on a North-South axis? The East-West orientation cuts the solar panels' efficiency by 50% and denies the home owners the possibility to make their homes carbon neutral basically forever.

Laura Conyngham stated that COP 26 group recently learned that, in spite of Mid Devon District Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030, Section 106 money for this development went on other things. There seems no hope of a FLAT

route to Crediton across the A3072, around existing new housing to join the Public Footpath by the Leisure Centre to Morrisons, schools and town. Without this, very few residents will use their legs up and over the hill to reach town within 15 minutes.

In view of this serious failure, will the developer include either air source heat pumps or ground source heat pumps for heating? Along with photo voltaic panels and solar boost, residents could be enjoying free hot water for over half the year. I speak from experience.

Dave Harris informed the Committee that In November 2021 a community event was held in Crediton to discuss and come up with ideas of what Crediton could do in relation to the climate and nature emergencies we face. Some of the ideas the community came up with were, and I quote,:
Public transport – more frequent, reliable, and affordable
How does this development enhance the delivery of more and cheaper public transport?

Cycle paths
Where are they in the plans?

Prioritise pedestrians
Where is the safe pedestrian access to the high street, leisure centre etc?
Planning – not one size fits all

According to the Office for National Statistics in 2021 80% of households had 3 people or less living in them. Why does this development average over 3 bedrooms per property?

Homes are affordable, sustainable, carbon neutral and with proper gardens
This was one of the most wanted items. Is any of this being addressed by the developer?

These items are what the community of Crediton wants and yet this development provides almost none of this. What is democracy for if it is not for listening to the local community and following their clear instructions? This is the acid test of how the democracy in our local area works, for the people, or for the money. Councillors you decide.

Alan Murray asked what is the maximum quantity on the South West Water Environment Agency permit to discharge and the current throughput capacity at Lords Meadow Sewage Works? How many more houses can Lords Meadow Sewage Works cope with without overloading the system? If there is insufficient capacity then what is the plan and timetable from the developer to contribute to an upgrade to improve capacity?

What monitoring is currently being undertaken on discharges from the sewage works into the River Creedy, and at what intervals? Has that been breached and self-reported to the Environment Agency already? In 2021 there were 66 sewage dumps over 431 hours.

Can the developer confirm that a suitable SuDS (Sustainable Drainage

System) will be employed to relieve pressure on the local sewage treatment works and run off into the close by River Creedy? And is there a detailed planting plan and absolutely clear maintenance plan which complies with CIRIA (Construction Industry Research & Information
Association) standards?

Can the developer confirm that rain water storage systems will be included as part of the house design so that stored water can be used for watering gardens, cleaning cars and flushing toilets etc.

With consideration to the objection from the Crediton Rugby Club regarding flooding of the site (Objection filed 03/11/2022) what guarantees can the developer make to ensure that rain water run-off from the site does not drain directly into the adjacent River Creedy polluting the river with toxic pollutants and particulates associated with domestic habitation, car use etc.? And is permeable paving being used to reduce run-off?

As this site is very close to the River Creedy can the developer prove that the buildings will be 'Nutrient Neutral' which is a legal requirement from Natural England?

Gerald Conyngham stated that….I am speaking as a member of COP26 group in Crediton and District. A key aim of our group is to help MDDC to achieve its target of becoming carbon neutral by the year 2030. This has particular implications for new developments which should seek to minimise their carbon footprint both during construction and in use by producing a carbon reduction plan. This plan would include such things as:
materials used, construction methods/design/energy facilities within the houses/water and waste management. At present despite producing a sustainability statement, the application does not have sufficient evidence to show that these issues have been given enough weight. For instance houses will be fitted with gas boilers which will be phased out by 2025. Gas boilers emit about 2.2 tonnes of CO2 per year which is equivalent to taking 7 transatlantic flights annually between London and New York, why install them now when there are alternatives such as heat pumps? If heat pumps were installed, and the houses were designed to passivhaus standard, this would reduce carbon emissions and save money in energy bills for the house owner.

In the view of our group all new developments should be obliged to produce such a carbon reduction plan. (as other councils such as Teignbridge have done) Failing that, will the council refuse planning permission until there is more evidence of carbon reduction as suggested above?

Giles Fawsett informed the Committee that…..last week MDDC approved my planning application.

I quote "The erection of a 2 storey side extension at … (my property) is considered to be acceptable in policy terms. On balance, the overall scale and design of the proposal is acceptable following minor amendments to the design and it will not result in an overdevelopment of the site. The extension is considered to work in context with the existing dwelling, using materials to match existing. Solar panels are proposed to the roof of the extension and these comply with local policy. It is considered that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the amenity of

residents of nearby properties and the development will not harm the setting of nearby heritage assets including the Conservation Area. As such, the scheme is considered to comply with policies S1, S9, S12, DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM25 of the Mid Devon District Council Local Plan (2013-2033), the Crediton Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2033 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework." End quote.

I am on mains gas but use no gas. I know that when my solar panels are fixed to my new south facing roof I will be energy self-sufficient.

Are any of you embarrassed by the Bellway development?

The Chairman informed those present that the questions would be answered when the application was discussed.

111 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:02:00)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate.

112 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00:03:00)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th January 2023 were agreed as a true record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

113 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:04:00)**

The Chairman reminded Members of a Special Committee meeting to be held on 15th March 2023 at 2.15pm.

114 **WITHDRAWALS FROM THE AGENDA (00:04:00)**

There were no withdrawals from the agenda.

115 **THE PLANS LIST (00:05:00)**

The Committee considered the applications in the *Plans List.

Note: *List previously circulated and attached to the minutes

RESOLVED that the following applications be determined or otherwise dealt with in accordance with the various recommendations contained in the list namely:

a) **Application 22/02321/TPO - Application to fell one Common Beech tree (T001) protected by Tree Preservation Order 96/00015/TPO close to ground level at All Saints Church, Fore Street, Culmstock.**
Consent be granted and delegated authority be given to the Development Management Manager to discuss the trees used for the replacement with the relevant parties.

(Proposed by Cllr S Clist and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Daw)

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Note: Cllr L Cruwys requested that his abstention from voting be recorded.

b) Application 22/02120/FULL - Creation of 2 car parking spaces at Land at NGR 301997 107506, St Andrews Estate, Cullompton.
Planning permission be granted.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Note: Cllr R J Dolley made a declaration in accordance with protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as he had connections with Cullompton Cricket Club.

c) Application 22/00063/MARM - Reserved matter for the erection of 257 dwellings and up to 5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches; associated works in connection with 8.6ha of land to facilitate future Crediton Rugby Club and up to 1.1ha of land for future primary school; details of landscaping, public open space and other associated infrastructure and engineering operations and access and highway work following outline approval 17/00348/MOUT at Land at NGR 284185 101165 (Creedy Bridge), Crediton, Devon.

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the application by way of presentation which highlighted:

- The fact that the application did not include the rugby club land or school land.
- The principles of permission had been agreed at the Outline application stage. Reserve Matters needed to focus on layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.
- A number of photographs showing the location of the site and the topography of the land.
- The original scheme had been revised by the developer following advice from the Local Planning Authority which included providing a range of house types and the need to be sensitive to local distinctiveness.
- The revised scheme was landscape led and was accessible by foot and cycle paths.
- Different roof heights were proposed bearing in mind the topography of the landscape.
- There would be a hierarchy of streets providing better treatment of traffic.
- Larger dwellings would have chimney stacks.
- The area allocated for a Gypsy and Traveller site was shown.

In response to public questions asked he stated:

- Land had been secured through a S106 agreement.
- Footpaths did form part of the application, Rugby Club land did not.
- The Rugby Club would need to address issues of concern relating to dog fouling and fencing.

- Issues relating to drainage concerns on Bellway land had been conditioned for.
- Concerns regarding ballstrike, Risk Assessments and Sports England would need to be addressed by the Rugby Club when they submitted their application. This could not be addressed as part of the Reserve Matters being discussed today.
- The Council was restricted by what it could do in terms of policy when it came to considerations around the 'green' agenda, however, negotiations had been undertaken with the developer and would continue to be. A new Statutory Interim Climate Change Statement was in the pipeline, however, in itself it would not be able to provide targets.
- Solar panels would be erected on every dwelling and each property would have electric charging points. An energy plan also existed.
- A financial contribution towards a bus service had been stipulated at the Outline stage but was still a work in progress.
- A flat access route to Crediton could be provided across Rugby Club land but they would need to consider this as part of their application.
- Concerns regarding volumes of sewerage had been dealt with at Outline stage and was not relevant to Reserve Matters considerations.
- The application site was not in a 'neutrality' area.

Consideration was given to:

- The size of the proposed garages and whether those marked as double could actually accommodate two cars.
- Financial contributions towards education facilities.
- An increase in the number of proposed dwellings being larger than the number quoted in the Local Plan.
- The protection of trees was conditioned for.
- The scheme proposed a number of parkland areas.
- The plan showed all the locations for bin storage, the majority of which were in the back gardens.
- It was confirmed that the vast majority of chimneys would be cosmetic, however, some would be functioning. A condition requested that chimney stacks were located in key locations.
- The importance of the Rugby Club as a valuable community asset needed to be recognised.
- Highways considerations would address disability issues as would Building Regulations with the properties themselves.
- There was provision within the legal agreement that a management company would oversee, maintain and manage the green open spaces.
- It was confirmed that there was a lighting plan.
- the type of stone to be used in the building of the dwellings had been conditioned for so that it was locally sensitive.
- No concerns had been flagged up regarding street lighting at the Outline stage.
- It was the officer's opinion that this was a very good scheme of high quality.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that approval be given for Reserve Matters subject to conditions as recommended by the Development Management Manager.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs F J Colthorpe and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Collis)

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Notes:

- Cllrs P J Heal, S J Clist, Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, L J Cruwys, Mrs C Daw, R J Dolley, B Holdman, F W Letch, all made declarations in accordance with protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as they had received correspondence.
- Cllr F W Letch made a declaration in accordance with protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as he knew some of the public asking questions at the meeting and was married to one of them.
- Mr Andrew Ross spoke as the agent.
- Cllrs E Lloyd and Mrs M E Squires spoke as Ward Members.
- Cllrs R J Dolley and F W Letch requested that their abstention from voting be recorded.

116 **MAJOR APPLICATIONS WITH NO DECISION (02:43:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a *list of major applications with no decision.

The Committee agreed that:

1. 23/00208/MFUL – remain delegated
2. 23/00073/MFUL – To Committee if officer was minded to approve – No site visit required
3. 23/00101/MARM – remain delegated
4. 23/00043/MARM – remain delegated
5. 23/00040/MFUL – remain delegated
6. 22/02374/MFUL – To Committee
7. 22/02386/MARM – To Committee if minded to approve

Note: *list previously circulated and attached to the minutes

117 **APPEAL DECISIONS (02:53:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a *list of appeal decisions.

Note: *list previously circulated and attached to the minutes

118 **PLANNING PERFORMANCE REPORT (02:55:00)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Development Management Manager providing the Committee with information updating it on the performance of aspects of the planning function of the Council.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was a good news story with improved performance data.

- The presentation of information within the report had been revised to show all quarters as well as data with targets and without.
- The speed with which officers and applicants had worked to progress major applications had improved.
- Figures in relation to non-major applications also demonstrated how hard the officers had worked.
- By the end of March 2022, Mid Devon was the top Local Planning Authority for the South West.
- The quality of decision making had also improved.
- Vacancies were and had been advertised and recruitment was progressing well.

The Chairman requested that the Committee's thanks and appreciation of the officer's hard work be reported back to them.

Note: *report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

(The meeting ended at 5.17 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held on 15 March 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present Councillors	P J Heal (Chairman) Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, J M Downes, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch and B G J Warren
Apologies Councillor(s)	S J Clist, L J Cruwys and R F Radford
Also Present Councillor(s)	Mrs E J Lloyd
Present Officers:	Richard Marsh (Director of Place), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Angharad Williams (Development Management Manager), Adrian Devereaux (Area Team Leader) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer)

119 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr S Clist who was substituted by Cllr J Downes
- Cllr L J Cruwys (who was not able to attend the meeting in person by joined via Zoom)
- Cllr R F Radford

120 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Public questions were received from:

Elizabeth Dalton

22/02220/MFUL Land at NGR 283084 102432 (Fanny's Lane) Sandford Devon.

I wish to register my strong objection to the revised planning permission for the above site, on the following basis:-

Application for Removal or Variation of a Condition following Grant of Planning Permission submitted on behalf of Belfield Developments states incorrectly that the works have not been started but the site works have been in progress for many months: Why the discrepancy?

‘Following the late receipt of the External Levels Plan from the Civil Engineers, the following drawing amendments have been revised and substituted on the following drawings:
1445-P04 (Rev A)
1445-P201 (Rev A) *Section A-A behind No. 3 Creedy View* shows levels on site but does not include Plot 3 Creedy View ground level. Why was the difference in levels not shown?

1445-P202 (Rev A) *Section B -B behind between Nos 4 and 3 Creedy View* shows levels on site but not the adjacent dwellings. Why was the difference in levels not shown?

In the absence of the sections through the existing surrounding properties together with the adjoining new site the Committee cannot fully appreciate the extent of loss of amenity Bellfield’s construction has on the Creedy View residents. What effect will this omission have on the Committee’s decision?

The proximity of (Now) number 7 Weaver’s Way to Plot No. 2 Creedy View ensures that the garden of No. 2 CV will be completely overshadowed and dark. How can this be ameliorated?

1445-P203 (Rev A) *Section C - C behind* No. 1 Creedy View *shows* levels on site and not the adjacent dwellings – specifically does not show the level of No. 1 Creedy View’s garden that has had the ground cut away around two external edges of the garden, leaving No. 1’s garden with an unsupported sheer drop of several metres. Why has the original proposed supporting structure been omitted?

Plots 1 and 2 Creedy View have been substantially affected by the Weaver’s Way excavations that undermine the stability of their ground so what stabilisation works would the committee recommend?

1445-P204 (Rev A) Shows the fence line that now goes right up to the public right of way. Will these gardens be fenced to delineate the land ownership?

Dwg. No:32002 Rev.1 dated 13.06.22 Rev: F shows retaining walls removed and earth bank added, thereby creating instability of the garden of No. 1 Creedy View and the area supporting the communal LPG tank for Creedy View residents. Has the stability of the Garden and gas tank been assessed by a professional structural engineer?

32001-BPC-XX-XX-DR-C-0001 (Rev I) Engineer's drawing has a scale 1:200 and refers to sheets 1 - 3 and to the steep banking being to 'contractor's design' but only sheet 1 appears. Where are sheets 2-3 and have they been submitted to MDDC Planners? Does the contractor have sufficient professional expertise?

- Dwg No: PO3 refers to the Existing Public Right of Way path to remain unsurfaced and unaffected by the development - however an intention to raise the level of the footpath has been promulgated so that the developer can spread the spoil from his excavations. Although the Footpaths Officer has vetoed this proposal will it be monitored to ensure footpath integrity?

- Dwg No: PO3 also shows plot numbering from 1 – 13 as the site is entered. The revised proposal shows house numbering from 13 – 1 instead. Why was this necessary?
- Dwg No: PO4 shows banking along the southern edge of the building site but also where the soil is obviously proposed to be spread over the proposed public open space. Will this soil be spread out to ensure that there is no likelihood of slippage onto the houses below in Meadowside road?
- Are MDDC satisfied that Belfield have fully complied with Clause 15 of the Decision Notice, i.e.,
  the design of the attenuation ponds.
- Are there any cross-section drawings available through the Attenuation Pond from the Furlongs footpath and the houses in Meadowside that show the relationship between the pond and houses below? (Have MDDC planners assessed the risk of flooding to the houses should the existing soil give way and checked the design calculations for the pond?)?

I strongly object to proposal to 'regularise' the now built site with retrospective planning permission rather than enforcing the originally approved permission.

The Chairman informed those present that the questions would be dealt with when the application was reached on the agenda.

121 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate.

122 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2023 were **AGREED** as a true record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

123 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:09:00)**

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the next meeting would be held on 5th April 2023.

124 **WITHDRAWALS FROM THE AGENDA (00:10:00)**

The Chairman announced that application 22/00067/MFUL had been withdrawn from the agenda.

125 **THE PLANS LIST (00:10:00)**

The Committee considered the applications in the *Plans List.

Note: * List previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

a) 22/02220/MFUL - Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 21/00276/MFUL - Erection of 13 dwellings to include associated landscaping, public open space and infrastructure - Substitution of agreed drawings to incorporate revised site drawings at Land at NGR 283084 102432 (Fanny's Lane), Sandford, Devon.

The Area Team Leader explained that the Legal Team had dealt with the matter of h the signing of a Deed of Variation for the S106 agreement therefore the Recommendation had been amended to read 'Grant permission subject to conditions'. In addition, the drawing number for the Landscaping scheme to be secured under condition 4 was now 2437 01 C (rather than B).

The officer outlined the application by way of a presentation which highlighted the site location plan, aerial views showing the access points, the affordable housing units, the surrounding residential properties, public open spaces, refuse and parking areas. The Committee were also shown images of the stepped access to the south, the drainage plans and terraced gardens.

The changes between the original planning application and the revised application were also summarised including changes to boundary treatments, gradient levels, which were designed to improve disability access, pedestrian access points and the provision of banks rather than retaining walls to the site area. Proposed changes also included a change to the use of certain materials such as render replacing stone, slates tiles proposed for the roofs, the provision of air source heat pumps and electric car charging points. The officer summarised the particular proposed changes to each plot where they existed.

In response to the public questions asked he stated that:

- The original application had been approved, implemented and development had started.
- The revised application had come about as a result of local concerns and an investigation hence the proposed changes to the stepped nature of the site and the change in materials.
- Professional officers had no concerns about the site levels and were content that hedgerows were being proposed to improve the appearance of boundary edges.
- Information had been provided only where there were proposed changes.
- Devon County Council had not raised any concerns regarding the Public Right of Way following confirmation that levels to the PROW remain unchanged.
- The spoil would be removed from the site.
- Drainage and flooding issues had been dealt with at the original application stage.

Consideration was given to:

- Materials had been chosen so as to be in keeping with the surrounding area.
- Concerns regarding giving permission originally based on a number of conditions (such as retention of the Right of Way and fitting in with the Conservation area) and now receiving a revised application with additional proposed changes to the stepped nature of the site, boundary treatments and materials used. What purpose had the original approval therefore served and what was the point of approving conditions if they could then be altered at a later stage? It was explained that applicants were within their rights under S73 to bring a revised application forwards and the proposed changes were acceptable from a planning policy point of view. The Government had set the planning laws and until they changed them, applicants were legally able to act in this way.

- Revised conditions addressed first floor window concerns.
- The applicant had listened to the concerns of the local residents during the investigation but had also had to reconsider the rising costs of materials hence the revised application.
- Conditions 4 and 5 ensured that any tree, shrub, hedge, plant or grassed area which died, was damaged or removed would be replaced to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- Significant concerns from the owners of a neighbouring property concerning windows placements, the loss of privacy, the position of proposed patio doors, wall facades and what was felt to be insufficient hedge treatments to prevent noise and significant loss of amenity.
- Significant concerns from the local Parish Council who were keen to point out to the Committee that the revisions being sought were already in place. Concerns remained regarding the gradual terracing of the various garden plots being filled in with spoil from the rest of the site creating imposing banking above the public right of way. The overbearing nature of the development remained a chief concern despite negotiations with the developer. Additional conditions had been requested to address the height of the banking, the spoil to be taken off site, gabions used where appropriate and the concerns from the neighbouring property regarding loss of privacy and outlook.
- Concerns of the Ward Member regarding the proximity of properties seeming much closer than the stated 12 metres, the stability of the land, air quality, the safety of proposed pathways into Crediton and frustrations experienced by the existing planning process.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Notes:

- Cllrs Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, J Downes, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch and B Warren made declarations in accordance with Protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as they had received correspondence regarding this application.
- Cllr F W Letch declared a personal interest as some of his brother in law's relatives lived in Fanny's Lane.
- Naomi Cooper spoke as an objector.
- Justin Denno spoke as the applicant.
- Cllr Brian Ffye spoke as Chairman of Sandford Parish Council.
- Cllr E Lloyd spoke as Ward Member.
- Cllrs J Downes, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch and B Warren requested that their abstention from voting be recorded.

(The meeting ended at 3.48 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held on 5 April 2023 at 2.15 pm

Present
Councillors P J Heal (Chairman)
S J Clist, Mrs C Collis, Mrs F J Colthorpe, L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, B Holdman, D J Knowles and F W Letch

Apologies
Councillor(s) R F Radford and B G J Warren

Also Present
Councillor(s) Mrs M E Squires

Also Present
Officer(s): Richard Marsh (Director of Place), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Adrian Devereaux (Area Team Leader), John Millar (Area Team Leader) and Sarah Lees (Member Services Officer), David Parker (Member Services and Policy Research Officer) and Angie Howell (Member Services Officer).

126 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor B Warren who was substituted by Cllr Mrs C Daw
- Councillor R F Radford

127 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0:00:00)

The following members of the public attended the meeting to ask questions in relation to the Staple Cross Farm and Crofts Estate Applications.

John Neave referring to No. 3 on the Plans List asked the following:-

Question 1) - While it was widely recognised that there was a need for more affordable Social housing within the Mid Devon District, has any consideration been given to an alternative site for this proposed development, for example the recently approved site within Sandford Parish known locally as Peddlars Pool/Libbets Grange for which approval has been granted for some 257 dwellings and other amenities. This development would likely be far more suitable for the proposed dwellings in Sandford and a fairly straight forward Amendment or Variation to the Peddlars pool development would resolve the current proposal.

Question 2) - Given the proposed development at Crofts Estate by the applicant, were any tenders submitted by a competitive provider or potential shared ownership provider. If not, why not?

Question 3) - If this proposed development were to be given approval, it was likely that there would be a substantial increase in revenue back to MDDC from that received currently from garage rentals, (EG rental income, council tax etc). Has any consideration been given to allocating some of this revenue back into Sandford Community in order to benefit the whole community?

Question 4) - A Field survey was undertaken by Merry Andersen, Arbtech Consulting, on 13/12/2022 to include Bat roosting, foraging habitat and flight line. This survey also considered other species such as hedgehogs etc. This survey, by their own admission, was incomplete as they could not gain access to any of the garages, and cannot be complete to any right-thinking individual, given that the primary species, (bats and hedgehogs), would have been in hibernation at this time. Would this Committee consider requesting that a full and proper survey was undertaken not only at the appropriate time of year, (usually April to October) but also the appropriate time of day (usually dusk/early evening)?

It may be worth noting that under The Conservation Regulations, including Habitat Regulations and the Wildlife and Countryside Act, as well as the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, there may be strong legal argument for the protection of bat foraging, commuting habitat and flight lines, which a full and proper survey should highlight. Public authorities, while conducting their functions, should be mindful of regarding the conservation of biodiversity.

Taking the above into account should be a merit of good practice rather than solely being reliant on the developers or applicant.

Question 5) - Finally I would just like to respectfully request that this Committee throw out this application in its entirety given the level of feeling within the Sandford community and the number of objections submitted.
Had the Applicant consulted with the local community in the first instance instead of showing a reckless disregard towards it, then we may not have been in the position that we find ourselves today. Thank you.

Paula Kovacs referring to No. 3 on the Plans List stated that she appreciated this opportunity to share my thoughts on this proposed development, not only because I have been a resident of Crofts Estate for nearly twenty three years and would, obviously, be directly affected by any planned changes, but also because I feel strongly that we need to maintain a democratic process. I agree with Cllr Elizabeth Lloyd who commented in her article entitled ‘Placemaking matters” in the March 9 issue of The Crediton Courier – and I quote: “I’m only frustrated that I and others, often feel powerless in the face of developers that do things TO a place rather than work WITH a place”

As I stated in the letter of objection I sent to Council’s Development management, whilst I acknowledge that more affordable housing was very much needed, I feel very strongly that placing a new development in the middle of this small housing estate, was totally inappropriate. As many of my fellow residents have also stated in the comments they have submitted, the lack of parking at Crofts has reached a critical point. The meeting with MDDC officers organised some years ago, to discuss the parking situation, didn’t produce any results.

And the situation has deteriorated further since then, so we desperately need more parking, not only for the residents of Crofts Estate but also for St Swithins Garden and the village of Sandford generally.

If, as one resident has suggested in his submission, the current garages were demolished and replaced with parking to include electric charging points as well as some disabled parking spaces that, in my opinion, would be the very best use of this land. In an email Development Manager Angharad Williams sent to me she stated, and I quote “The Planning Officer’s role was to query whether this proposal represents, in planning terms, a good use of the land”. I would like to suggest that the aforementioned parking proposal, rather than the zedpod development, would indeed, be best use of the land at Crofts. If the Council does decide to approve the zedpod application, may I suggest that, at the very least, 1) the Council considers painting some white lines on the current Crofts car park, so that what little parking there was, apportioned appropriately and that 2) some extra parking space in Crofts is created by transforming a couple of grassed areas into concrete hard standing. Thank you.

Robert Gray referring to item 1 and 2 on the Plans List asked the following:-

Question 1) - We would like to know has a site visit been done by the Planning Committee as requested by the Borden Gate Parish Council from the meeting in January as no feedback has been received. What was the feedback from the visit? If no visit then why was this delicate case with multiple issues not been visually looked at?

Question 2) - The RAC paper contains no assessment of the business plan, noting that it was a confidential document. That need does not however extend to silence exhibited by RAC on the content of the plan. There was no expression of opinion on:

- Whether the business would be profitable and if so at what point.
- Whether the business would attain viability or indeed the measure of viability.
- Any opinion of the resale values of the livestock.
- Any opinion on how the livestock would be sourced and sold.
- Any opinion on the need for marketing (this was particularly relevant for the geese).
- The nature of the fixed and variable costs identified in the business plan.
- How the applicant intends to reduce his current of site work to transition to the full time labour requirement on site.

We would like the answers to the above:-

Question 3) - Was the Committee aware that there are three dwelling being built opposite the entrance to Staple Cross Farm as this wasn’t mentioned in the applications and has been shown as a poultry shed on the map in the agent’s submission?

Question 4) - On the planning applications submitted for Staple Cross Farm, the facts do not seem to be correct. I am the owner of the site opposite Staple Cross Farm. As of the 9th June 2020 planning was granted ref no 20/00570/full, stating the erection of 3 residential dwellings, following demolition of 2 agricultural buildings which I own.

On the applicants planning application for Staple Cross Farm it doesn't state the fact there has been planning permission granted for residential occupancy opposite. On the 11/05/2022 work commenced on my development for the three dwellings.
From the date of commencement there has been a temporary bungalow that has been lived in by the applicant. It was a scar on the landscape. So my question is – were the Planning Committee aware of this and if so how has this been allowed because as a developer it would not be acceptable that a residence can just happen regardless of the rules and it's been nearly a year?

Question 5) - Following on from my previous question, I am the owner of the site opposite Staple Cross Farm, building three properties all within my planning consent. When I bought the site I was aware of the storage barn. Since then we have started work on my site and an illegal farm popped up with immense geese noise and has turned in to an eyesore in the beautiful countryside. If this farm and geese are allowed to continue it would depreciate my site, business and make it difficult to sell these properties with the mess, eyesore and noise opposite. My question is – Why was this allowed to happen with no planning consent, and the applicant continues regardless with no thought to myself acting within my planning and rules and disregard to planning regulations?

Question 6) - My question to you all is 'what were the applicants bringing to the community of Staple Cross'. Myself and other resident here today are bringing people to the area and supporting the local community and surrounding areas.

Louise Webb referring to Item 3 on the Plans List asked has the long overdue assessment of existing properties' parking allocation been conducted yet and resolution agreed?

Mellissa Tobin referring to Item 3 on the Plans List asked:-

Question 1) - It has only just come to light that CCTV is to be installed with these pods. Can someone please advise as to why that was exactly?

Question 2) - I feel this meeting was just paying 'lip service' now to the extremely ill-informed residents and that the plan would go ahead anyway.

Question 3) - How was the asbestos going to be removed when there was a watercourse 5 metres, not 10, away from the garages?

Question 4) - A legally binding agreement states that the Council must provide provision of suitable relocation to the current occupiers of the garages. Can MDDC tell us exactly where that would be?

Question 5) - As our Public Servants, the planning department must ensure that ALL residents are kept informed by LETTER. Many residents here are elderly or infirm and do not have access to a computer or email. Some still have no idea about what was proposed where many have had their homes for decades.

Question 6) - As Government was meant to be providing service to the public, and the public here strenuously object to this development, what assurances do we have that our voices would actually be heard?

The Chairman informed those present that the questions would be answered when the application was discussed.

128 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00:11:17)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations where appropriate.

129 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00:13:30)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2023 were **AGREED** as a true record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman

130 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00:14:09)**

The Chair informed the Committee of the sad loss of Honorary Alderman Paul Williams who was a member of the Committee for many years and was a very committed Councillor.

He also thanked Councillor Dennis Knowles as it was his last meeting of the Committee after 25 years' service. His input had been valued and much appreciated and the Committee wished him a very happy retirement.

131 **WITHDRAWALS FROM THE AGENDA (00:16:27)**

The Chairman announced that application 22/00067/MFUL had been withdrawn from the agenda.

132 **THE PLANS LIST (00:16:40)**

The Committee considered the applications in the *Plans List.

Note: * List previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

a) 22/02301/FULL - Retention and regularisation of changes made to an agricultural storage building to mixed use of agricultural storage and livestock at Staple Cross Farm, Hockworthy, Devon.

In response to the public questions asked the Area Team Leader stated that:

- No formal site visit had been carried out. The Case Officer had visited the site twice before and photos taken which formed part of the presentation.

The Area Team Leader outlined the application by way of a presentation which highlighted:-

- The site was approximately 250m NW on the edge of Staple Cross.
- It related to an agricultural building that had been on site for a while and was unauthorised in its current state.

The application was to regularise the building and allow it to be used for occupation of livestock as well as storage for agricultural machinery and hay etc.

- It was previously permitted under prior notification but built slightly differently as it was now 1.5m taller than permitted.
- As part of the original prior notification it wasn't permitted for use by livestock due to it being within 400m of the nearest protected building.
- Several objections had been received relating to issues such as impact on heritage matters, general impact on the countryside and neighbouring amenity. Issues had been raised with Environmental Health in relation to the temporary housing of geese following the need to house them during aviation flu and the impact of flood risk, parking and ecology matters.
- There was already a building permitted in the location of the same footprint and size.
- It differed only in that it was 1.5m higher and that it was proposed to house livestock.
- The Conservation Officer had raised no issues regarding general visual impact affecting heritage and flood risk.
- Environmental Health Officers didn't believe the level of agricultural use of livestock would raise significant issues.
- To the south there were 2 large buildings parallel to the road which were former poultry buildings which had been granted permission for demolition and rebuild for 3 residential units. They were approximately 150m south of the building.
- The nearest residential dwellings were approximately 100m from the site. The Environmental Health Officer had raised no objections.
- The nearest heritage assets were to the east of the property with a number of listed buildings to the north of the property. The application didn't represent any additional harm or impact to the listed buildings.
- Taking into account existing building it was not considered to be a problem in terms of livestock. If there were any particular issues with noise/smells there was scope for Environmental Health to investigate, however they didn't have any concerns regarding impact on nearby residents.

Consideration was given to:-

- Whether the Local Planning Authority was adhering to its own policies.
- The height of the proposed building and whether it was policy compliant.
- The existing building and it being used to house geese during the Avian Flu epidemic.
- That farmers should be allowed to farm their land as the countryside isn't just for tourism.
- Landscaping and additional screening to construct a hedgerow to plant native species trees.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that planning permission be granted subject to conditions contained within the report with delegated authority given to the Director of Place to add a further condition with regard to the agreement of a scheme of landscaping, details of which should be provided within three months of the decision date and thereafter implemented in the next available planting season.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs P Colthorpe and seconded by Cllr Mrs M Collis)

***Reason for the decision**:* As set out in the report.

Notes:-

- Cllr P J Heal, Cllr L Cruwys, Cllr M Collis, Cllr S Clist, Cllr P Colthorpe, Cllr Ben Holdman, Cllr D Knowles, Cllr F Letch, Cllr C Daw all made declarations in accordance with the protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as they had received correspondence.
- Amanda Burden spoke as Agent for the Applicant.
- Peter Stratton spoke as the Objector.
- Councillor Collis spoke as the Ward Member.

b) 22/02127/FULL - Retention of a temporary agricultural workers dwelling at Staple Cross Farm, Hockworthy, Devon.

The Area Team Leader outlined the application by way of a presentation which highlighted the following:-

- This was the same site which was an application for a temporary dwelling which would be tied to this site for 3 years in order for the applicant to fully establish their business with the keeping of the geese for Christmas market and a number of cows for sale.
  For also primarily meeting the essential needs for bucket rear calves – the owners currently have 41 with a projection at the end of 3 years for 130 forming the herd.
- The applicant had to support their proposals with an independent appraisal of their business to demonstrate the need for one or more worker to be present on the site.
- There had to be a firm intention of developing the enterprise.
- Reading Agricultural Consultants (RAC) are an established agricultural consultancy and they had been instructed by the Council to appraise the information submitted.
- This was the second appraisal carried out at the applicant's expense.
- The intention was for the applicant to develop the business to enable them to meet the needs of the policy within a 3 year period. They had 3 years to build the business. A permanent dwelling wouldn't normally be granted if business didn't develop within that time frame. This would have to be considered at the time if that were to happen.
- RAC had confirmed there was sufficient justification as there was a firm intention to develop the enterprise and sound financial planning.
- It had been seen by an Agricultural consultant and it shows a profitable business within 3 years.
- There was relevant case for approving the application.

In response to the public questions asked the Area Team Leader stated that:

- In terms of whether the Committee were aware of the 3 dwellings – yes the Committee were aware and the Environmental Protection Team had considered the application regarding geese noise and the visual impact on the open countryside and confirm there should not be any impact on the neighbouring dwellings and businesses.
- The temporary mobile home was not considered to have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.
- If this were granted they would have the 3 years to establish this – the officer's recommendation and the independent appraiser was that there was sufficient information to recommend approval.

Consideration was given to:

- Whether the temporary mobile home fitted in with design quality and the visual impact it has.
- The external finish of the mobile home ie timber cladding or repainting the outside.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that approval be given for the retention of a temporary agricultural workers dwelling subject to conditions in the report with delegated authority given to the Director of Place to add a further two conditions with regard to the final material finish of the retained temporary dwelling and agreement of a scheme of landscaping, details of which should be provided within three months of the decision date and thereafter implemented in the next available planting season.

(Proposed by Cllr P Colthorpe and seconded by Cllr B Holdman)

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Notes:

- Cllr P J Heal, Cllr L Cruwys, Cllr M Collis, Cllr S Clist, Cllr P Colthorpe, Cllr Ben Holdman, Cllr D Knowles, Cllr F Letch, Cllr C Daw all made declarations in accordance with the protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as they had received correspondence.
- Amanda Burden spoke as Agent for the Applicant.
- Peter Stratton spoke as the Objector.
- Councillor Collis spoke as the Ward Member.

c) 23/00119/FULL - Erection of 5 affordable dwellings following demolition of existing garages with associated parking, landscaping and works at Land and Garages at NGR 282671 102585, Crofts Estate, Sandford.

The Area Team Leader informed the Committee of 2 updates:-

- The Lead Local Floor Authority had determined the application as a “minor” planning application and confirmed that they would not be providing a consultation response so no formal objection was raised on the drainage matter.
- An objection letter had been received from a local resident.

The Area Team Leader outlined the application by way of a presentation which highlighted:-

- The application was for the erection of 5 affordable dwellings made up of 4 x 1 bed room units. 2 at ground floor level and 2 at first floor level
- 1 x 2 story 1 bed unit
- All housed within a single 2 story block on site.
- All intended for social rent as part of the Housing Revenue Account portfolio.
- The application site Croft Estate in Sandford - located to the north west of Sandford within a settlement limit of Crofts Esate and outside of the conservation area.
- The site was bounded to the south by the access road for 6 dwellings located in Church Parks to the west.
- Private sewerage treatment plant was to the west.
- In the north and west lies 2 storey residential properties in the Croft Estate with those to the north standing at an elevated level.
- There were 11 garages and space to park 4 vehicles
- Currently 5 void garages were on the site. The Housing Team commented that only 1 garage was being used to park a vehicle.
- Any garage tenant would be offerered a different garage if theirs were to be demolished.
- The garages were not just for residents of Sandford – they were available for anyone to rent regardless of where they live.
- Only 4 were rented out to Sandford residents.
- 10 parking spaces were proposed, 5 spaces will have direct access from Church Parks and the other 5 spaces would have direct access from Croft’s Estate.
- Additonal landscaping had been proposed in the south east corner of the site.
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan – the ground floor units would be accessed to the south of the site. With bin stores to the front of the properties.
- The right hand side unit would be accessed from the north with a bin store area.
- An access enclosed staircase on the north side elevation would provide access to the 2 first floor apartments.
- All units were 1 bed.
- The 2 first floor apartments would be served by first floor balconies, which would provide a minimum of 5m2 of private outdoor amenity.

- The ground floor units had a similar area underneath the staircase.
- The apartment blocks would be set 18.1m south and at a lower level in relation to 1-4 Crofts Estate. The block would follow the same dual pitch roof orientation of the existing houses.
- There was at least a 15.6m side elevation to the corner of the block with the nearest Bungalow in St Swithins Gardens.
- 16.1m corner of the new block to the façade distance to the nearby neighbours to the south.
- Distance of the block would be 15.1m from the Conservation Area Boundary
- Solar panels could be seen on the roof. These would be installed to the south facing roof slope.
- Negative carbon emissions were possible across the site which would therefore be supported by Policy DM2 of the Local Planning Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
- Regarding the sustaninability credentials of the zed pods – the modules would be super insulated, airtight and triple glassed windows and doors and mechanically ventilated to further reduce enegy losses combined with on-site renewable generation of hot water.
- The materials used would be a cream render which will pick up the render properties within the Croft Estate
- The ridge of the zed pod development would be 3.9m lower than the ridge point of 1-4 Crofts Esate.
- The ridge development will be 2.7m higher than the bunglow.
- The Flood Risk Assessment confirmed that flow control would be used and attenuation provided on site to accommodate storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 45% climate change event.
- To minimise flood risk, finished floor levels were proposed to be set 300m above surrounding existing ground levels.
- Mature trees would form a boundary for the Conservation area.

The Area Team Leader also addressed the questions raised during Public Question Time:

The application was indeed seeking to provide much needed affordable housing. The level of provision (5 units) was designed to meet specific local needs at an appropriate sustainable, central location within the village to a high standard. The application was being made on behalf of MDDC on land within its control and the proposed housing will be vested long-term on our Council housing stock. The Council had no access to/control over the Libbets Grange development however we would expect the private developer(s) of that site to meet policy requirements in terms of market affordable housing provision separately to this Zed Pods development.

Tenders were not a planning matter. The Housing Team had commented that they were not sure what was meant by a competitive provider? The chosen contractor to take forward the development (should Planning Permission be granted) would be subject to a separate procurement decision by the Council which was unrelated to the planning decision. As Council housing for long-term secure social rent tenure then shared ownership was not relevant. Nonetheless, beyond formalising use of the proposed dwellings as affordable housing (in this case the most, at the most affordable social rent level), then the exact nature of the tenure was not a material consideration for the planning committee.

Regarding revenue this was not a planning consideration. However the Housing Team note that housing would create additional revenue into the Council housing account, however this was essential to meet the development cost (including associated long-term borrowing) as well as the ongoing maintenance of the properties. Without this rent the application would not be viable and no affordable housing would be completed.

In terms of Ecology, the applicant was aware of the need to comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1991, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. As noted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment was submitted with this application noting that there was an external inspection of the garage buildings with the conclusions of the ecologist being that bats were very unlikely to be roosting within these buildings due to a lack of access and the identification of inaccessible roost value habitat, However a precautionary working method during and post-development had been set out and mitigation and biodiversity enhancements were proposed.

Para. 5.8 of the report sets out the findings of an ecological survey, in particular "…No further survey effort was required to evaluate the site if the recommendations and enhancements outlined were provided. Biodiversity enhancements for bat roosting and bird nesting were outlined to result in biodiversity gains. A condition was, therefore, recommended requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the recommendations within the ecological appraisal and for confirmation of the biodiversity enhancement measures installed throughout the development to be provided prior to occupation of the dwellings."

As a Council, we had consulted directly with residents, ward members and as with any application we had also fully complied fully with the public notice and consultation requirements. This window before the planning committee decision and at the committee itself was of course part of that consultation period. Its effectiveness was demonstrated in these questions being raised.

The proposal in front of Members was that outlined within the report for the provision of five affordable units with associated parking and landscaping and it was considered that this would be an appropriate use for the site.

The plans submitted show one CCTV camera located adjacent the security gate at the north east corner of the site, shown on plans as rear staircase. There is no wider CCTV system planned for this development.

This development had been assessed against its planning merits taking into consideration policies to the Mid Devon Local Plan and material planning considerations. It was also within the necessary timeframe.

In terms of asbestos management, the requirement for demolition was that it should be carried out in such a manner as to minimise the potential for airborne nuisance, additional land contamination and/or the creation of additional contamination pathways either on the site or at adjacent properties/other sensitive receptors. It will need to be done in line with Health and Safety Executive requirements, whereby all potentially hazardous materials should be assessed, a works plan and risk assessment. This was separate from planning.

The relocation of the garages was not a planning matter but as noted previously, the Housing Team advised that current garage tenants would be offered an alternative garage in the surrounding area as per their tenancy agreement. Though this was a matter of personal choice for current garage tenants and as you know the existing garages were either fully utilised or particularly used for parking.

Neighbour notification letters were sent out to adjoining properties, a site notice posted and a press advert placed were 27 representatives who have been informed of this application.

The comments were from those who have made representations have been noted in the report and have had the opportunity to address this Planning Committee through public questions and on the item itself.

Fundamentally, it should be noted that the proposal provides parking at a level slightly exceeding policy requirements under DM5 and that the new parking spaces around the development will not be allocated to any resident or be marked as such. An assessment of the existing properties' parking allocation was a planning requirement and the Housing team note that one hasn't been conducted on any of our estates within the district.

However in summary:

- A lot of the garages were empty
- Poor suitability of existing garages for modern vehicles
- Predominance of use for storage not parking
- Opportunity to regenerate poor asset/remove asbestos for wider housing and planning gain
- Availability of other MDDC garages locally or more widely for existing garage tenants with choice
- Policy exceedance on new parking provision – available to residents and visitors with no allocation, permit or restriction
- Although not directly relevant; the Housing Team were reviewing resident only restrictions at the adjacent, under-utilised St Swithan's parking

Consideration was given to:-

- The angle of the solar panels.
- DM3 and DM5 and whether this was cast iron.
- Concerns regarding meeting parking requirements and garages.
- The delivery of the Zed Pods.
- Flooding issues.

It was therefore RESOLVED that Planning permission be granted subject to the conditions.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision: As set out in the report.

Notes:-

- Cllr P J Heal, Cllr L Cruwys, Cllr M Collis, Cllr S Clist, Cllr P Colthorpe, Cllr Ben Holdman, Cllr D Knowles, Cllr F Letch, Cllr C Daw all made declarations in accordance with the protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as they had received correspondence.
- Councillor Letch declared that he knew some of the protesters.
- Laura Eimermann spoke as Agent for the Applicant.
- Chris Hetherington spoke at the Objector.
- Cllr E Lloyd (comments read out by the Chair) and Councillor M Squires spoke as Ward Members.

133 **MAJOR APPLICATIONS WITH NO DECISION (02:30:05)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a list * of major applications with no decision.

The Committee agreed that:

1. 23/00394/MARM – To Committee
2. 23/00152/MFUL - To Committee if minded to refuse.
3. 22/00857/MFUL – remain delegated
4. 23/00227/MFUL – remain delegated
5. 23/00252/MFUL – remain delegated

Note: * list previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

134 **APPEAL DECISIONS (02:33:58)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a list * list of appeal decisions.

Note: * list previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

(The meeting ended at 5.20 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

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MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held on 8 February 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present Councillors C R Slade, Mrs E J Slade, Mrs M E Squires, A Wyer, S J Clist and B G J Warren

Apologies Councillor(s) R M Deed, L D Taylor and Mrs N Woollatt

Present Officer(s): Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Maria De Leiburne (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer) and Andrew Seaman (Member Services Manager)

12 Apologies and Substitute Members

Apologies were received form Councillors RM Deed, LD Taylor (substituted by Councillor S J Clist) and Mrs N Woollatt (substituted by Councillor B G J Warren).

13 Public Question Time

Public questions were received from Ms Coffin:

1. Item 8 – motion 582, Why can't all public meetings be audio recorded and of course this one. To enable the working public and those unable to attend or zoom the opportunity to understand and progress, how local governance decisions are made.

2. Appendix A Document 2, Councillor Barnell. I strongly support all five points for following reasons:

a) I have been refused permission to ask a question because subject not on the agenda; even though it did relate to an ongoing scrutiny sub-committee investigation. Therefore, was unable to progress proposal November 2021 from Cllr Barnell into anaerobic digesters. I still have no clarity as to whether it's still ongoing or whether there was a conclusion.
b) Councillors on committees are not obligated to raise matters on behalf of non ward constituents.

Appendix A Document 3, Planning committee – 1,2 and 3 I support all italics in red fully, all committees – 1,2,3,4,5 support italics in red.

Specifically and absolutely: Number 3, it has been obvious at planning meetings that members have not understood complicated applications. Developers and officers obviously failing to present sufficient evidence and clarity to enable balanced decision making. Not all speakers are objectors or vexatious many are often requiring clarification and assurance that the council has identified all potential detriment and imposed all necessary and enforceable mitigating conditions.

Absolutely 5, I have attended other LPAs in other districts and counties where more consideration is given to members of the public. So, if this council wishes to hold any credibility as to democracy, then the public must be allowed to speak without any additional restrictions.

Item 9 on the agenda, public complaints. I understand that this is not actually relevant on this agenda but I would like to make my comments anyway.

a) Given this council's insistence that it takes all complaints – I'm talking about public ones now – and enforcement matters very seriously – is the present procedure sufficiently robust and effective?
b) How can public access and progress registered complaints? This need not require sensitive info only identify number, initial date and classification whether commercial or anti-social noise/odour.
c) How does the Council monitor and assess the effectiveness of present complaints system and against what standards.
d) What are projected timelines for progress from complaint to abatement notice and then to enforcement, if required?
e) Standards committee minutes 19 October page 7 item 9 complaints. Monitoring Officer refers to three complaints requiring review by independent person. Does one of these three cases refer to crossparks.

The District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer responded to question 1 and explained that the Council recorded the audio of its public meetings. In addition, in answer to question 2 it was explained that as part of the constitution, there was a requirement for public questions to relate to an agenda item. Finally in response to a question on Complaints, it was explained that the Standards Committee reviewed code of conduct complaints as opposed to public complaints.

The District Solicitor & Monitor Officer acknowledged comments on the complaints process and noted that someone would be contact in order for the process to be explained.

14 **Minutes (0:9.25)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

15 **Declarations of Interest Under the Code of Conduct (0:9.48)**

Members were reminded of the need to make declarations of interest when necessary.

16 **Chairman's Annoucments (0:10.33)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

17 **Task and Finish Group (Council Procedure Rules Review) (0:10.52)**

The Committee were presented a report* which outlined a task and finish group's recommendations on changes to the constitution with tracked changes provided. The Chair opened the floor to Members who raised the following points/questions:

The following was discussed:

- Under time, place and notice of meetings (4.3) it was suggested that the word approved be removed, to read "the Chief Executive will send a summons"

- Regarding recommendation G, rules regarding Substitute Members were discussed and how this might impact a committee politically, specifically the Planning Committee. It was clarified that an individual member could choose their substitute as per 3.1 under substitutes. It was noted that training was an important factor, particularly for planning which should not be political and ensured good attendance on committees.

- Quorum was highlighted and the conciseness of 6.1 was discussed. It was noted that there was an error in the wording under 6.1 and that it should not be a quarter of Members present but a quarter of the whole number of Members.

- Paragraph 9 (single issue debate) was discussed and clarification was sought as to why this had been removed. The District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer explained that it was unknown as to why this was the case and that this should be investigated.

- A typo was highlighted under 11.1.6 (b) as it read "within in" and discussion took place as to how this section should be worded.

- Regarding 12.1 it was sought as to why this had been removed. The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer explained that it was uncertain as to why this was removed.

- Regarding 15, voting was discussed whether section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 should be included within the constitution. This section outlined the legal requirement that any Member who was 2 month or more in arrears with Council Tax payments must declare the fact and not vote at any meeting at which the budget or council tax matters would be discussed.

  The Chief Executive reassured Members that officers conducted checks months prior to the vote on the budget in order to be compliant with this legislation.

RESOLVED to **RECOMMEND:** To Council that

a) The Council Procedure Rule 25.2 be suspended to allow the following amendments to be made to the Constitution at its next meeting.

b) Subject to any further changes to recommendations (c), (d) and (g) below, the Council Procedure Rules be amended as outlined in Appendix B to this report subject to the following:

i. Under 4.3word approved be removed, to read “the Chief Executive will send a summons”.

ii. With the removal of “present at the meeting where physical presence is required (or in attendance including remotely where such physical presence is not required)” from 6.1.

iii. That point 9 to 9.2, single issue debate be kept, pending an investigation by the Monitoring Officer as to whether it could be removed.

iv. That 11.1.6 (b) be kept unchanged, but with proposition changed to motion.

v. That 12.1 (b) (rules of debate) and the paragraph below, not be removed, pending an investigation by the Monitoring Officer as to whether it could be removed.

vi. That section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be added to the constitution under section 15.7, voting.

c) The Council Procedure Rules regarding Member Questions be amended as set out in Appendix B Rule 10.

d) The Council Procedure Rules regarding Public Questions be amended as set out in Appendix B Rule 8.

e) Members’ Business remain on full Council but Members be asked to take account of the guidance on its use set out in this report at paragraph 4.4.

f) The requirement for the Planning Committee to consider an Implications Report (if it proposes to determine an application contrary to policy and officer recommendation) before decision confirmed, be removed.

g) The rules on Substitute Members be amended so that trained substitutes may come from any group where there is no other trained Member in the permanent Members’ political group.

h) The practice at full Council for Chairs to have to read out minutes of each committee (including PDGs and Cabinet) be stopped.

(Proposed by Cllr C Slade, seconded by Cllr B G J Warren)

The meeting continued and the Committee considered the task and finish group's recommendation that motion 577 not be supported.

It was also **RECOMMENDED** to Council that Motion 577 not be supported.

(Proposed by Cllr C Slade, seconded by Cllr Mrs M Squires)
(Cllr B G J Warren voted against)

18 **Update from the District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer (1:06.25)**

The Committee noted an update from the District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer which highlighted to Members that the Constitution was due to be updated with changes to the following: That the number of Audit Committee seat read nine instead of seven as well as the relevant amendment following motion 580.

19 **Motion 582 (Councillor A Wilce - 10 October 2022) (1:07.48)**

The Committee had before it a motion that has been passed to this Committee from Council for consideration.

The District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer advised that the Motion was in 2 parts, firstly whether the hybrid meeting protocol should be part of the constitution. It was explained that Council already had a hybrid meeting protocol which had last been updated in January 2022.

Consideration was given to whether it should be part of the Constitution.

It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the Hybrid Meeting Protocol should not be included in the constitution.

(Moved from the Chair)

The Committee then considered the second part of Motion 582, which asked the Standards Committee to consider whether any formal proceedings of the Council should be held online: that are required to be 'open to the public' or 'held in public; or, where Members are required to attend or be 'present'; or, where any notice that is required to be given that must specify the 'place' where those proceedings are to be conducted.

The District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer explained that the only meetings that were permitted by law to proceed remotely were licensing act hearings and that other meetings could not legally be held remotely.

Consideration was given to:

- It was felt that if a place had been referenced for a meeting it should not be held remotely and that this should be made clear.

It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** to Council that no changes be made in relation to Motion 582.

(Proposed by Cllr A Wyre, seconded by Cllr C J Clist)

20 **Complaints (1:17.34)**

The Committee noted the District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer's verbal update which highlighted that there were 2 district complaints that had been closed, 3 Town and Parish Council complaints had been completed, and 6 complaints that were under review.

A Committee Member asked if this was a normal volume of complaints, to which the District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer confirmed that this was an average amount of complaints.

21 **Identification of items for the next meeting (1:19.15)**

Noted that the Annual report of the Monitoring Officer would be on the next Agenda.

(The meeting ended at 7.22 pm) **CHAIRMAN**

Mid Devon District Council
STANDARDS TASK & FINISH GROUP
(Council Procedure Rules Review)

Findings and Recommendations Report

Executive Summary

1. The Task & Finish Group recommends to the Standards Committee (for recommendation onto full Council) that the following amendments be made to the Constitution:

   (a) The Council Procedure Rule 25.2 be suspended to allow the following amendments to be made to the Constitution at its next meeting.
   (b) Subject to any further changes to recommendations (c), (d) and (g) below, the Council Procedure Rules be amended as outlined in Appendix B to this report.
   (c) The Council Procedure Rules regarding Member Questions be amended as set out in Appendix B Rule 10.
   (d) The Council Procedure Rules regarding Public Questions be amended as set out in Appendix B Rule 8.
   (e) Members' Business remain on full Council but Members be asked to take account of the guidance on its use set out in this report at paragraph 4.4.
   (f) The requirement for the Planning Committee to consider an Implications Report (if it proposes to determine an application contrary to policy and officer recommendation) before decision confirmed, be removed.
   (g) The rules on Substitute Members be amended so that trained substitutes may come from any group where there is no other trained Member in the permanent Members' political group.
   (h) The practice at full Council for Chairs to have to read out minutes of each committee (including PDGs and Cabinet) be stopped.

2. The Task & Finish Group recommends to the Standards Committee (for its resolution) that Motion 577 not be supported.

Report Detail

1. Introduction

1.1 The Task and Finish Group ("**T&FG"**) was set up by its parent Standards Committee on 9 February 2022 to review the Council's Procedure Rules ("**CPRs**"). All group leaders[1] and a Standards Committee representative were appointed to the T&FG. The Group has been chaired by Cllr Eginton.

1 Cllr Eginton (Conservative) April to May 2022 and Chair of T&FG; Cllr Deed (Independents Group); Cllr Evans (Conservative) Feb to April 2022; Cllr Clist, Deputy Leader (Lib Dems); Cllr Lloyd (Greens); Cllr Warren (Non Aligned Group)

1.2 The CPRs are set out in the Constitution Part 4, Section 1[2]. Although the CPRs were the focus, the Panel noted that there are various other procedure rules covering different meetings and processes for the Council's member decision making and also that some matters raised for consideration did not form part of the CPRs. Consequently it has commented on procedural matters beyond the CPRs where it considered appropriate to do so without detracting from its terms of reference[3].

1.3 The group also sought the views of other Members. The Chair of the Planning participated in the discussion on proposed changes to the Planning Committee. His investigations into the manner in which other councils' planning committees operated was welcome. In undertaking its review the Group also sought clarification on Motion 577[4] from the mover of the motion[5]. Following on from the T&FG's preliminary findings on 1 April 2021, the T&FG requested that each group leader[6] consult their own groups, to seek their group's views of the T&FG's proposed recommendations and identify any other issues for consideration. No other issues or objections were identified beyond those included in Appendix A.

1.4 The T&FG has considered all representations made to it before reaching its final recommendations which are set out in this report. The recommendations are supported by the Members of the T&FG unanimously with the exception of Recommendation 2 (Motion 577) which the Non-Aligned Group Leader considered should be accepted.

2. Current Council Procedure Rules

2.1 The T&FG noted that the CPRs cover the procedures applicable to full Council meetings but also some elements of the other committees and Policy Development Groups. Where other rules apply (being ones specific to specified committees or PDGs) these are listed below for information.

Full Council	All Council Procedure (Rules 1 to 27)
Cabinet	Council Procedure Rules 5-8, 11, 16.1 (other than 16.4 and 16.5) , 19, 20.1, 21 - 25 All Cabinet Procedure Rules (Rules 1 – 3)
Scrutiny	Council Procedure Rules 4 – 8, 11, 16.1 (other than 16.4 and 16.5), 19, 20.1, 21 - 25 Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Standards Committee and Policy Development Group Procedure Rules (1 - 3, 5 – 7, 10 - 21, 23 – 26)
PDGs	Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Standards Committee and Policy Development Group Procedure Rules (1 - 2, 4 - 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 - 15, 18, 22, 23)
Audit	Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Standards Committee and Policy Development Group Procedure Rules (1 – 2, 5 – 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 26)
Standards	Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Standards Committee and Policy Development Group Procedure Rules (1 - 2, 5 - 6, 9 – 10)
Planning	Council Procedure Rules 5-8, 11, 16.1 (other than 16.4 and 16.5) , 19, 20.1, 21 – 25

2 See Constitution - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK
3 Agenda for Standards Committee on Wednesday, 9th February, 2022, 6.00 pm - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK
4 A Motion "to improve public accountability and to address the inequality of rights of Members of the Council, when compared to members of the public. This Council resolves that: When an enquiry is made by a Member at any formal meeting (verbally, or in writing) and a substantive answer is not given at that meeting, a written response shall be sent to the enquiring member within 10 days. Wherever possible, any written questions submitted in the absence of the Member shall be submitted in advance of the meeting, but a failure to do so will not invalidate that enquiry. A copy of the question(s) and answer(s) will be circulated to members of the committee (or Full Council) and will also attached to the minutes".
5 See Appendix A
6 This includes the Deputy Group Leader for the Liberal Democrats.

2.2 The T&FG recognised that as a whole the CPRs were not always easy to follow and that in itself had created some confusion in the rules as was apparent in the Scrutiny Committee in February 2022. The rules have developed overtime and in response to for example ad hoc amendments having been made overtime whether by individual motions or organisational or legislative changes which did not take account of other rules, some inconsistencies and gaps have crept into the CPRS. Consequently, on considering all the rules, the T&FG concluded the rules should be redrafted in their entirety as set out in Appendix B. With the exceptions set out below, the amendments do not materially change the existing rules. It is considered that the redraft serves to make the rules easier to follow by for example use of sub-headings, more consistency in wording and grouping of issues.

2.3 As indicated above, the T&FG also considered in detailed parts of the rules which have raised particular concerns in recent times. Amendments to these rules were highlighted to the political groups. Should any of these recommendations of the T&FG not be resolved, the Monitoring Officer will make appropriate amendments to Appendix B.

2.4 For completeness, the T&FG is aware that the Council's current Procedures Rules do not allow amendments to be made without such having been moved and stood adjourned (without discussion) to the next ordinary meeting of the Council[7]. This rule seeks to avoid ad hoc amendments being made 'on the hoof' to the CPRs. However, in instances where the changes have been fully considered in advance (as in the current case), this rules simply delays the Council's decision making. To avoid this unnecessary delay, it is therefore recommended that the relevant CPR be suspended for the meeting of full Council. As this technical requirement is an example of where the rules serve no useful purpose, the redraft of the CPRs in Appendix B accommodates an amendment to the relevant rule to ensure that future proposed CPR amendments which have been the subject of detailed consideration by the Standards Committee (as the committee responsible for overseeing the Constitution) there is requirement for the moved amendment to stand adjourned[8].

Recommendation 1(a): The Council Procedure Rule 25.2 be suspended to allow the following amendments to be made to the Constitution at its next meeting.

Recommendation 1(b): the Council Procedure Rules be re-drafted as outlined in Appendix B.

3. Members' Questions

3.1 The T&FG reflected on the current rules in response to some, albeit limited, concerns about Members' ability to raise questions in Cabinet and / or that the public had more rights than Members to ask questions of a committee or the Cabinet. It also considered the specific representations by the mover of

[7] Existing CPR 25.2

[8] See Appendix B at Rule 20.2

Motion 577 which Council had referred to the Standards Committee for consideration.[9]

3.2 The group appreciated from the detailed advice sent to all Members[10] in February 2022 that all Members are entitled to speak at full Council; all Members may at full Council ask questions in line with the existing CPR 13; and that councillors who were not members of a particular body did not have any general rights to speak (or therefore ask questions) but could seek the Chair's agreement to do so. It was noted that in addition, Cabinet members could attend Scrutiny Committee meetings where their decisions were 'called in', for the purpose of explaining the decisions under review (but could be asked by the committee to leave[11]); and when a PDG is considering policy development and review matters, again given their role, relevant Cabinet members were (and should be) allowed to speak[12].

3.3 It was also noted that the provisions regarding non-member requests of chairpersons to "speak" proceed on the basis that the questioner is present at the meeting. It was recognised that the public had a right to ask questions only if they were present (remotely or in person) at meetings. Similar to Members' position, in their absence, the public could ask the Chair to read out their question, but the Chair was not required to do so.

3.4 The group appreciated that as Members are appointed by their groups to committees (or in the case of ungrouped members direct), as a result of a resolution of full Council, it followed that they only had rights to speak (and vote) if they were appointed to that particular body. If that were not the case, potentially all Members would be able to participate in all committees, potentially creating full Council style participation but for the absence of a right to vote.

3.5 After considering the various views on the matter, the T&FG concluded that the existing provisions were largely appropriate. The T&FG were satisfied that non-members' involvement in meetings should remain a matter for Chair's discretion. In response to concerns in the Motion about Member Questions not always being answered in public at meetings, the group considered that it would be helpful to extend the advance notice requirement by one working day – this is currently included in the relevant redrafted rule.

Recommendation 2: Motion 577 regarding Member Questions not be accepted.

Recommendation 1(c): Council Procedure Rules regarding Public Questions be amended as set out in Appendix B Rule 10.

4. Public Questions

4.1 The T&FG considered that the right of the public to ask questions (as was the case at full Council) should not be extended to all meetings as proposed. This view was formed because (with the exception of Planning

[9] See Appendix A Document 1
[10] Letter from MO to all Members dated 11 Feb 2022
[11] Existing Committee Procedure Rule 19(h)
[12] Existing Committee Procedure Rule 18(a)

Committee) the excluded committees were limited to those performing a quasi-judicial function (i.e. licensing and standards subcommittee hearings).

4.2 The group noted from research undertaken by the Planning Chair and experience across the country, that it was not common place to have public questions at Planning Committee. Instead, as was most often the case for planning committees, interested parties had a specific right to speak. It was noted that the additional 'public question time' right potentially prejudiced planning applicants and prolonged meetings. The rights were only available to residents or businesses based in the district, thereby not open to applicants who were looking to develop in the district for the first time. Further the rights were mainly used by objectors to make lengthy representations where questions were simply added at the end of speeches, thereby prolonging meetings; with 'questioners' using the opportunity to cover points that should have (or had already) been made by them in the course of the statutory consultation period. In support of retaining public questions for Planning Committee, the group noted that on occasion new points were raised by members of the public, but the main advantage of retaining public questions was that the committee was seen to listen to the public and take account of their views on policy and material planning considerations before planning applications were determined.

4.3 More generally, it was also recognised that it was often impossible for the Chair (to whom questions were in fact directed and should respond) and difficult for officers (who often answered for the Chair) to answer public questions in committee if advance notice had not been given of the questions.

4.4 After considerable debate (and a change from its preliminary view) the group considers that the Council should retain public questions at Planning Committee, with some changes to help address the understandable concerns and improve the use of public questions in the decision making process as well as to effectively engage the public in council work. The proposed redraft of the rule (see Appendix B Rule 8) seeks to improve the general understanding of the rules in the interests of transparency and openness. Further, to help ensure questions can more likely be satisfactorily answered in public at meetings, it recommends that the informal requirement for advance notice of questions from the public be formalised. In response to concerns about how questions have been used in Planning Committee, although it first concluded that there should be a limit to the number of words to 100, to avoid questions becoming lost in a lengthy submission as is currently prevalent in Planning Committee particularly by objectors to planning applications, on reflection it didn't consider such would assist.

Recommendation 1(d): Council Procedure Rule regarding Public Questions be amended as set out in Appendix B Rule 8.

5. Members' Business

5.1 Some concerns had been expressed about the use of Members' Business (a standard item on full Council agendas) to make comments which were for example, misleading at others' expense nor matters over which the Council had powers, knowing that there was no right to discuss or respond to the points made at the meeting. It was also noted that overtime such a standard agenda item at full council meetings had become less common place amongst councils.

5.2 In terms of considering why the item should remain, the group recognised that the item provided an opportunity for Members to raise good news and points of general public interest; and further that the provisos (e.g. time limits, number of questions, exclusion of matters already covered at the same meeting) were there to ensure that this standard agenda item was manageable.

5.3 The group concluded that with some informal guidance for Members from the Monitoring Officer and 'firm and fair' chairmanship, concerns raised about the potential misuse of Members' Business would be sufficient but the matter would be kept under review.

5.4 In considering what to include in that guidance the following points are considered relevant, particularly given that there is no right to respond at the time to comments even ones which may inadvertently or otherwise amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct (e.g. by bringing the office or Council into disrepute).

(a) The ambit of Members' Business is set out in the Council's Procedure Rules.

(b) Members may together use the time permitted, to each make (only) one statement or raise one question, lasting no more than two minutes each.

(c) Members' Business can only be included on the full Council agenda for up to 15 minutes in total and so no-one group of Members should seek to monopolise that time – the Chair may for example use his discretion to select which Members may speak in that time or stop Members who misuse the agenda item.

(d) Each statement / question may only concern a matter over which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District; and has not been otherwise before the Council for consideration at the same meeting.

(e) The topics which may be covered in the relevant statement or question is wide. However the key thing to note is that the matter concerns council business not personal or political group business.

(f) The use of Members' Business must be compatible with other parts of the Constitution in particular the high standards of conduct expected of elected members. Members must not for example bring the Council into disrepute or be disrespectful to others.

(g) Whilst ensuring that the item doesn't turn into a debate in itself, the Chair may exercise his discretion to rule that inappropriate

comments be withdrawn by the relevant member, an apology given to the Council, or for a short point of correction or clarification to be made in response.

Recommendation 1(e): Members' Business should remain on full Council agendas but Members be asked to take account of the guidance on its use in paragraph 4.4.

6. Planning Committee Procedures

6.1 The following procedural matters specific to the Planning Committee whilst outside of the CPRs were identified for consideration during the T&FG's meetings:

(a) Value of public questions with separate public rights to speak in committee given quasi-judicial role of Planning Committee;
(b) Value of implication reports;
(c) Potential conflict between ward member vs committee planning interests;
(d) Concerns about length of meetings and how meetings might be more concise without adversely affecting quality of decision making.

6.2 Item (a) was raised due to concerns about the procedures applicable to planning committee meetings. As noted in Section 4 above, the appropriateness of retaining Public Questions (given the specific public speaking rights at committee) were considered in detail.

6.3 Turning to item (b) the group had experience of the use of Implications Report in Planning Committee, which sought to provide a cooling off period for the committee to reflect on the grounds for determining an application contrary to policy and officer recommendation before a decision was confirmed. It did not form part of the CPRs but was a well-established process at the Council. It was reported that in practice particularly in the last 12 months or so, the reports had only delayed decision making and the committee had not changed its view, it being considered as a result by the senior planning officers and committee that there was no value in continuing with the practice. The members of the group noted with appropriate advice that it was reasonable to expect the costs implications to be advised upon and considered reasons to be identified by the advising officers and the committee at the meeting when applications are debated. Furthermore the group noted that in the event that it emerged subsequently that there is no reasonable prospect of the appeal being successfully defended, a further timely committee report may still be requested by the committee to help minimise the costs' risks.

6.4 Regarding (c) it was highlighted that members of the Planning Committee were undertaking a quasi-judicial role, rather than a ward representation role. There would often be conflicts between those roles (e.g. where planning policy supported a development but local residents who the member was duty bound to represent, objected). This had been evident on

several occasions at the Council. In response to such, it was noted that some authorities discouraged or prevented such Members from voting in planning committees. Such Members instead spoke as ward members, having a specific time allocated to them to do so before the committee debated the application and did not participate as a committee member. Concern had also been raised that ward members who were not members of the committee were prejudiced by not being a member of the committee, as they had less rights (to speak) on an application than committee members, therefore prejudicing their residents in comparison to those residents whose member was on the committee.

6.5 Although the T&FG recognised the clear case for changing the rules, it considered that Members fully appreciated the potential for conflict and the requirement in the Code not to use their position to improperly advantage or disadvantage another. Consequently, it was considered that such was sufficient to ensure that all members of the committee upheld their overriding responsibility to promote district planning interests above their local ward interests when sitting on the Planning Committee. In conclusion the group did not consider any change was needed.

6.6 The group touched upon a variety of other changes that might help cut down on the length of meetings where such did not prejudice the quality of the debate in Planning Committee. These included use of 'call in powers' of Members and the number of deferrals arising from the view that substantive information was not provided in sufficient time for Members to consider such or new information was needed to address concerns raised in committee. These matters were ones which concerned the operation of planning process and have not as such been considered by the T&FG. Whilst noting some issues with the current delegation to the Development Management Manager and Director of Place, it considers that Members would welcome a briefing by the Development Management Manager / Head of Place on the use of ward member call in of applications to committee.

Recommendation 1(f): The requirement for the Planning Committee to consider an Implications Report (if it proposes to determine an application contrary to policy and officer recommendation) before decision confirmed, be removed.

7. Miscellaneous Amendments to the CPRs

7.1 In considering the rules on Committee Substitutes, the group recognised that it was not always possible for members of small groups to identify a replacement where training was a requirement particularly in planning, but also other quasi-judicial committees. Consequently, the group proposes that in such instances substitutes may come from other political groups.

7.2 It was noted that the historic practice to present Committee and Cabinet minutes to full Council was not a specific requirement for full Council agendas. The group considered that agendas should still include all the minutes. This will ensure that questions may continue to be raised of the Chairs by Members without notice.

Recommendation 1(g): The rules on Substitute Members be amended so that trained substitutes may come from any group where there is no other trained Member in the permanent Members' political group.[13]

Recommendation 1(h): The practice of full Council for Chairs to have to read out minutes of each committee (including PDGs and Cabinet) be stopped.

10 June 2022

District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
on behalf of the Task & Finish Group

[13] See Appendix B Rule 3.1(b)

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Document 1

From: Cllr Ashley Wilce <awilce@middevon.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 March 2022 09:29
To: Karen Trickey <ktrickey@middevon.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Questions re your Motion 577 to be returned by 27 March

Good Morning Ms Trickey

Please see insertions
Regards,
Cllr Ashley Wilce
TOTALLY Independent Member for Cullompton North

From: Karen Trickey
Sent: 13 March 2022 08:48
To: Cllr Ashley Wilce
Subject: Questions re your Motion 577 to be returned by 27 March

Dear Cllr Wilce

I refer to your motion "*to improve public accountability and to address the inequality of rights of Members of the Council, when compared to members of the public"* for which you requested that the Council resolve*:*

1. *When an enquiry is made by a Member at any formal meeting (verbally, or in writing) and a substantive answer is not given at that meeting, a written response shall be sent to the enquiring member within 10 days.*
2. *Wherever possible, any written questions submitted in the absence of the Member shall be submitted in advance of the meeting, but a failure to do so will not invalidate that enquiry.*
3. *A copy of the question(s) and answer(s) will be circulated to members of the committee (or Full Council) and will also attached to the minutes."*

The Task & Finish Group (Council Procedure Rules) has considered your motion regarding changes to Member Questions within the context of the relevant Council Procedure Rule which of course only applies to full Council. The only point covered in your motion which has yet to be accommodated in some form within that context is the attachment of the question and answer to the minutes of full Council. The group has asked that I contact you to request that you clarify what you intended in your motion, it being recognised of course that your motion goes further than member questions at full Council given the references to "*any formal meeting"* and also *"members of the committee (or Full Council)*".

I have set out some specific questions which might help you to explain what you intended and which will in any event assist the group's final consideration of your motion particularly

within the context of Cabinet, PDG and committee meeting rules. Please would you let me have your response (whether to the specific queries below or otherwise) asap but no later than 27th March, so that I can consider them and relay them to the group at its next meeting on 1st April.

Questions: Regarding the application of your motion to "*any formal meeting*" it is understood that you are referring to public Cabinet, PDGs and committee meetings (for which unlike full Council meetings, there aren't specific rights for any / all members to ask questions). With that in mind:

i. *Were you primarily seeking to ensure that answers to <u>any</u> member questions (not substantively answered at the meeting) are attached to the minutes within 10 days (or even 10 working days)?*

Yes

ii. *Referring to the second numbered point above in your motion, it is understood you were only referring to a question from a member who is <u>not</u> at the meeting. You refer understandably to (i) the question being in writing and (ii) that written question being submitted in advance of the meeting. However, you pre-fix it with only "whenever possible". Could you explain the situations you had / have in mind where any written questions submitted by an absent member would not be submitted in advance to the Chair? If you meant something else, please explain.*

I did not want the fact that there was no 'notice' (or short notice) of the written question, to prevent that question being put, provided that it related to an Agenda item. See Q below.

iii. *Did you intend that the member question and answer (when a substantive answer is not given at the meeting), would be attached to the minutes in all cases i.e. when a verbal question (regardless of its content) which is not on notice is raised in the meeting, rather than for example simply for written questions on notice?*

Yes, i.e. <u>any question asked publicly, will be answered publicly, however it was put.</u>

iv. *Would the following wording which could be added to the existing rules which apply to Cabinet, PDGs and committee cover what you intended (noting that the group has already considered full Council rules): "when a question on an agenda matter is raised by a Member at a public meeting which cannot be substantively answered at the meeting, a written response shall be provided to the Member (and copied to all members of that committee / PDG or the Cabinet) within 10 working days by the Chairman (or such other person as he shall refer the matter) and attached to the minutes of the meeting" ?*

No - a response is not necessarily a substantive answer - a dodge that has been frequently used in the past.

If not, is there any other variation to your motion wording which you consider taking account of the points of clarification above, would better cover what you intended?

The constitution is unclear - do members have an absolute right to submit written questions in advance, or are there restrictions; if so, what are the restrictions, please?

Document 2

From: Cllr Graeme Barnell <gbarnell@middevon.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 March 2022 17:15…

Subject: Proposed rules of procedure

…. As part of the deliberations of the short life on committee procedures I'm concerned we have rules to ensure:-

1. All members have the right to speak and ask questions at all MDDC meetings at which they have right to attend including Cabinet and all policy and advisory committees.

2. Members of the public have the right to ask questions at all MDDC meetings at which they have right to attend.

3. Answers to members questions at all Committees are published either with the minutes of subsequently on the MDDC website.

4. Access of all members to place an item on the agenda of Scrutiny Committee is not diminished.

5. Rules are established that allow all members to request agenda items on any meeting to which they are entitled to attend. Ditto members of the public.

Document 3

Current rule	Proposal	Reason(s)
Planning Committee: Requirement for planning committee to consider an Implications Report (if it proposes to refuse an application contrary to policy and officer recommendation) before decision confirmed.	To remove the requirement *Agreed*	1. Such reports only serve to delay the determination of the matter as in practice the committee never / very rarely changes its decision when considering the Implications Report; 2. With appropriate advice, it is reasonable to expect the costs implications to be advised upon and considered reasons to be identified at the meeting when the application is debated; or otherwise the application's determination should be deferred by the committee for further consideration and information. *[May need to defer to have sound wording for 'reasons for refusal.']* 3. In the event that it emerges subsequently that there is no reasonable prospect of the appeal being successfully defended, a further committee report may still be considered when needed e.g. as happened recently. *[But done correctly and more openly and transparently.]*
All committees (with some exceptions e.g. licensing, standards hearings): Right of public to ask questions on agenda items.	Retain as is, subject to: (i) redraft for public's clarity / ease of under-standing and (ii) to formally confirm need for notice *See notes from NAG in red italics.*	The T&FG considered that the right should not be extended to all meetings as proposed, given that the only excluded committees were limited and appropriately so (e.g. licensing and standards subcommittee hearings etc.). Particular consideration was given to removing the right from Planning Committee particularly as: 1. the questions are used to make representations, which have / or could have been made in the course of the public consultation; *The public consultation responses could have been made many months before and this could be the opportunity for members of public to update their views.* 2. it often difficult to answer or understand public questions when no notice has been provided of them in advance;

		3. the questions (which often took the form of long statements of personal opinion) unduly prolonged the meetings, without significant benefit to the committee's consideration, complaints having been made by members about the lengthy of some meetings; *This is not what has prolonged the meetings as there is a 30 minute time frame for public questions. What has prolonged meetings are too many applications or complicated applications on one agenda. NAG members have put forward the view that 'Public Questions' should be renamed 'Questions and Statements by the public.' There could still be the 3 minute limit per speaker and the 30 minutes overall. The East Devon DC Constitution Para 8 is suggested as a particular preferable substitute.* 4. on occasion some questions were clearly inappropriate, including defamatory or offensive comments and in the absence of notice, it was difficult for the chair to stop the questioner early enough; *This is considered an acceptable risk in the interests of public involvement. It does not happen that often.* 5. the use of public questions at planning committee was not common place for LPAs dealing with development control applications. *MDDC should retain Public Questions/Statements.* However, it was recognised that the planning committee was the most well attended public meeting and the public valued that right which at times provided the committee with additional information pertinent to its consideration of the application. In order to address the legitimate concerns it is proposed to require advance written notice of the question (in line with informal requests for such since Covid restrictions and to limit each question to 100 words per question.[i] *The majority of NAG members do not agree with a requirement to submit questions in advance on agenda items although it could be 'advice' and encouraged. The 3 minute rule is considered sufficient restriction and there is no support for the 100 word limit.*
Council Procedure Rule summary	**[T&FG proposed change of CPRs as at 1 April 2020]**	**Response from Non-Aligned Group as at 18 April (in italics)**

Full Council: Right of members to speak and ask questions at meetings they attend	Retain as it is subject amends for clarity / ease of understanding *See notes under relevant section below.*	The T&FG concluded with some redrafting and additions for clarity/ ease of understanding of the current right at full council, the rule should be retained[ii]; and in the case of all other meetings, non-members' involvement in meetings should remain a matter for chair's discretion subject to ward members being able to speak in person at planning committee. *Agreed in principal by most but some do feel that any Member should be allowed to speak if they wish to contribute at most meetings [Planning excluded except for Ward Members.]*

[i] Public Questions

0.1 **Questions from the Public:** Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District shall be entitled to ask questions at a meeting provided that:

(a) the question(s) are relevant to an item on the Agenda for that meeting;

(b) all the questions from one ~~body~~ *person* do not exceed three minutes when read out, ~~nor 100 words for each question~~;*[No support for the word number restriction.]*

(c) at least two clear days' *[Is this meant to be two clear **working** days? Practicalities – two clear days for Environment PDG on a Tuesday means questions would be sent on a Saturday etc. etc.!!!]* written notice has been given to the Member Services Manager (via email) of the question(s) to be asked; and

(d) the questions have not been rejected in accordance with Rule 0.5.

0.2 **Time for Public Questions:** Any public questions shall be dealt with at the beginning of the Agenda and limited to 30 minutes provided that the Chairman may extend the time, or proceed to the next agenda item within such shorter period if there are no questions or all permitted questions are answered.

0.3 **Attendance:** Persons submitting questions must be present (remotely or in person) at the meeting unless the Chairman agrees to address the question in the questioner's absence.

0.4 **Order of Questions:** Questions will be asked in the order they have been received.

0.5 **Scope:** The Chairman may, following advice from either the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Member Services Manager, *[Why the advice from Officers?]* reject a question giving reasons to the questioner for its rejection if it:

(a) Is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the District;

(b) Is in his/her opinion scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable (e.g. spurious, vexatious);

(c) Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting to which these rules apply in the past six months;
(d) Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

0.6 **Supplementary question:** At the discretion of the Chairman questioners may ask one supplementary question.

0.7 **Answers to questions**

(a) The Chairman of the meeting (or at meetings of the Council the appropriate committee chairman), shall respond to all valid questions.
(b) Replies to questions may be verbal, in writing or by reference to a published document.
(c) Replies which are not provided at the meeting shall be reported to the next relevant meeting and published alongside the draft minutes when available and circulated to all Members.

[ii] Members' Questions

0.1 **Questions without notice:** At a meeting of the Council, other than the Annual Meeting, a Member of the Council may ask the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of a committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of the Cabinet or a committee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council. *Agreed.*

0.2 **Questions on notice:** A Member may ask the Chairman of the Council, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of any committee any question which:

(a) concerns the Council's powers / duties or which otherwise affects the District;
(b) relates to matters on which the Council has or may determine a policy; *This is felt to be too restrictive as there may be legitimate questions members wish to raise which might not be a matter of policy.*
(c) the Member has provided written notice of the question to the Chief Executive no later than noon, two clear days preceding the meeting; *[Practically does this mean noon on the Sunday before a Full Council meeting on the Wednesday?]*
(d) the question has first been discussed at a meeting of the Cabinet or committee and the Member is not satisfied with the adequacy of the answer contained in the relevant Minutes; *Considered to be too restrictive and could prevent legitimate questions and issues being raised. Most Councils give members the right to ask questions as at (a) above without any restriction that it has previously been discussed.*

and

(e) the question is not (in the opinion of the Chairman of Council taking account of the advice on the matter from the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Member Services Manager):
    (i) scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable (e.g. spurious, vexatious);
    (ii) substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months;
    (iii) one which requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information and the question is not to be raised in closed session;
    (iv) one which contains expressions of opinion; *[Are members not entitled to express an opinion as the reason for the question?]* or
    (v) one which relates to questions of fact.

0.3 **Questions relating to urgent business:** A Member of the Council may, with the advance permission of the Chairman, put to him, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of any committee any urgent question on notice under paragraph 0.2 without complying with sub paragraph 0.2(c) above, provided that:

(a) the Chairman in his absolute discretion is satisfied that the matter raised in the question is of such urgency that compliance with sub paragraph 0.2(c) is precluded nor should its consideration be delayed until the next meeting of the Cabinet or appropriate committee; and

(b) a copy of the question has been delivered to the Chief Executive no later than 9am the day before the Council meeting.

0.4 Order of Questions on notice

(a) Questions under Rules 0.2 and 0.3 shall be taken at the appropriate point in the relevant committee report or in the absence of such, at the Members' Questions agenda item.

(b) Questions and written answers shall be printed in order of receipt and circulated amongst the Members at the commencement of the Council meeting. *[How or when do the public become aware that their representative has raised such a question?]*

(c) No discussion shall be allowed upon questions or answers save as is permitted under Rules 0.5 - 0.8 below.

0.5 Form of Response

(a) The Chief Executive shall arrange for copies of on notice questions and answers to be sent to Members not present at the Meeting of the Council.

(b) An answer may take the form of:

- a direct oral answer at the meeting;
- where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated within 10 working days to the questioner. *[Where do other members or the public see the answers please?]*

0.6 Supplementary question: One relevant supplementary question to an answer to a question on notice shall be allowed to the original questioner but may be disallowed or not answered if the Chairman of the Council considers it in breach of paragraph 0.2(e). *[Should we include that the Chairman should give reasons?]*

0.7 Length of Speeches: A Member asking a question under Rules 0.1 - 0.3 and a Member answering such a question may speak for no longer than three minutes unless the Chairman consents to a longer period.

0.8 Time Allowed for Questions

(a) The time allowed for consideration of all questions at full Council under Members' Questions agenda item which are submitted under this Rule 0 *[Do we have a typo?]* shall not, without the consent of the Council exceed 30 minutes.

(b) At the conclusion of the answer to the question under consideration at the expiry of 30 minutes (or such longer period to which the Council has consented) from the time when the first questioner started to speak, the Chairman shall continue with the meeting unless the Council resolves otherwise at the meeting.

(c) Any remaining questions shall be responded to in writing before the next ordinary meeting of the Council with written answers to be forwarded to all Members *[What about the public? Will the questions and answers be published alongside the minutes?]*

Council Procedure Rules

Introduction:

There are currently 20 procedure rules. They apply to all meetings of full Council (i.e. when all Members of the Council attend as voting members). Subject to the exceptions set out below in Rule 1 or where the rules provides or the context otherwise makes clear, they also apply to Cabinet and **Committees** (which latter term for the purposes of these rules, includes their sub-committees and Policy Development Groups).

1. Exceptions of Rules to Committees Meetings
2. Full Council
3. Substitute Members
4. Time Place and Notice of Meetings
5. Chairman of the Meeting
6. Quorum
7. Members' Business at full Council
8. Questions by the Public
9. Petitions from the Public
10. Questions from Members at full Council
11. Motions
12. Rules of Debate
13. State of District Debate
14. Previous Decisions and Motions
15. Voting
16. Minutes
17. Exclusion of the Public
18. Members' Conduct
19. Disturbance by the Public
20. Suspension and Amendment of Council Procedure Rules

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1. Exceptions of Rules to Committee Meetings

Committee	Rules which don't apply
Audit	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Cabinet	No appointment of Substitutes (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Electoral Review	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Policy Development Groups (**PDGs**)	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Licensing	No appointment of Substitutes for sub-committees (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) Public Questions for sub-committees (Rule 8) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Planning	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Regulatory	No appointment of Substitutes for sub-committees (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) Public Questions for sub-committees (Rule 8) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Scrutiny	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Standards	No appointment of Substitutes for sub-committees (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) Public Questions for sub-committees (Rule 8) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)

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2. Full Council

2.1 Annual Meeting

2.1.1 Timing and business: In a year when there is an ordinary election of councillors, the annual meeting will take place within 21 days of the retirement (four days after the election) of the outgoing councillors. In any other year, the annual meeting will take place in March, April or May.

2.1.2 Business: The annual meeting will:

(a) elect a person to preside if the outgoing Chairman of Council or Vice Chairman of the Council is not present;
(b) elect the Chairman of the Council (subject to the statutory provisions in that behalf, a Councillor who is the present Chairman of the Council and has completed two consecutive years in such office shall not be eligible for re-election as Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year);
(c) elect the Vice Chairman of the Council;
(d) approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
(e) receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or the Chief Executive;
(f) elect the Leader (following the ordinary election of councillors);
(g) elect the Scrutiny Committee Chairman;
(h) approve a programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year; and
(i) consider any *other* business set out in the notice convening the meeting.

2.1.3 Appointment of Committees: At the Annual Meeting, the Council meeting will:

(a) decide which Committees to establish for the municipal year;
(b) decide the size and terms of reference for those Committees;
(c) decide the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;
(d) receive nominations of (any) ungrouped councillors to serve on each Committee and vote on each appointment
(e) make appointments to outside bodies except where appointment to those bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Cabinet (in respect of Executive functions);

2.2 Ordinary Meetings

2.2.1 Business: The order of business at ordinary meetings will be as follows:

(a) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice Chairman are not present;
(b) approve the minutes of the last meeting (whether the annual meeting or otherwise);
(c) receive any declarations of interest from Members;
(d) receive any announcements from the Chairman;
(e) receive Public Questions (as set out in Rule 8);

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(f) receive a report from the Leader and receive questions and answers on the report;
(g) deal with any business remaining from the last Council meeting;
(h) receive petitions from members of the public;
(i) debate single issues;
(j) consider Motions;
(k) consider recommendations from the Cabinet;
(l) consider any recommendations submitted by the Council's Committees;
(m) receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations;
(n) receive Members' Business (as set out in Rule 7);
(o) consider any urgent items of business brought forward at the discretion of the Chairman and the reason for urgency must be announced at the meeting and recorded in the minutes;

and

(p) consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting.

2.2.2 Variation of Order of Business: Business falling under items 2.2.1 shall not be displaced, but subject thereto the order of business may be varied:

(a) by the Chairman at his/her discretion; or
(b) by a resolution passed on a Motion (which need not be in writing) duly moved and seconded, which shall be moved and put without discussion.

2.3 Extraordinary Meetings

2.3.1 Those listed below may request the Proper Officer to call Council meetings in addition to Ordinary Meetings:

(a) the Council by resolution;
(b) the Chairman of the Council;
(c) the Monitoring Officer; or
(d) any five Members of the Council if they have signed a requisition presented to the Chairman of the Council and he has refused to call a meeting or has failed to call a meeting within seven days of the presentation of the requisition.

2.3.2 The business to be conducted at an extraordinary meeting shall be restricted to the item of business contained in the request for the extraordinary meeting and there shall be no consideration of previous minutes or reports from Cabinet or Committees etc. except that the Chairman may at his absolute discretion permit other items of business to be conducted for the efficient discharge of the Council's business.

3. <u>Substitute Members</u>

3.1 Appointment

Where a member is appointed to a Committee or any committee / sub-committee of another council on which the District Council is represented, the member may appoint a substitute member to attend the meeting subject to the following qualification requirements:

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(a) In the case of the Audit, Licensing, Planning, Regulatory and Standards committees, all substitute members must have received training on the relevant committee's area of work.
(b) Where the Member appointing a substitute is a Member of a Political Group the substitute Member shall only be from the membership of that same group unless there are no such trained members in that group.

3.2 Extent of the Substitution

3.2.1 Any such substitution shall have effect for the entirety of the meeting in respect of which the Notice has been given.

3.2.2 No more than two Members of the same Political Group shall be substituted at any meeting and no Member shall be substituted at more than two consecutive meetings of the same Committee.

3.2.3 Substitute Members may only attend meetings in that capacity where:

(a) the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting;
(b) the ordinary Member has notified the Member Services Manager by email of the intended substitution at least one hour before the start of the relevant meeting; and
(c) in the case of area committees the substitution does not alter the balance on that committee between Members from the area and Members from the rest of the District.

4. <u>Time, Place and Notice of Meetings</u>

4.1 The time and place of meetings will be determined by the Chief Executive and notified in the summons.

4.2 The Chief Executive will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

4.3 At least five clear working days before a meeting, the Chief Executive approved will send a summons approved by him/her to every Member of the Council. The summons will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such reports as are available.

5. <u>Chairman of the Meeting</u>

5.1 The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chairman.

5.2 The Chairman of the Council, by virtue of office, is not eligible to hold office as a Chairman of any other committee during his/her term.

5.3 The ruling of the Chairman as to the construction or application of any of these Procedure Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Council, shall not be challenged at any meeting.

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5.4 When the Chairman stands during a debate, any member speaking at the time must stop and sit down. The meeting must be silent.

6. Quorum

6.1 The quorum of a full Council meeting will be one quarter of the whole number of Members (rounded up) present at the meeting where physical presence is required (or in attendance including remotely where such physical presence is not required).

6.2 The quorum for a meeting of the Cabinet and any Committees will be one half of the number of members appointed to that body (rounded up) subject to a minimum of three in each case.

6.3 During any meeting if the Chairman counts the number of Members present and declares there is not a quorum present the meeting will adjourn and remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman or failing such, at the next ordinary meeting.

7. Members' Business

7.1 At each ordinary meeting of the full Council, a period not exceeding 15 minutes shall be allowed during which any Member may make a statement or give preliminary verbal notice of a question provided that:

(a) such statement or question must be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the District and has not been otherwise before the Council for consideration at the same meeting;
(b) no Member may make more than one statement or give notice of more than one question;
(c) no Member shall speak pursuant to this Procedure Rule for longer than two minutes;
(c) the statement or notice of question shall not be the subject of discussion or reply at that meeting;
(d) after the expiry of the said period of 15 minutes the Council shall proceed to the next business; and
(e) such statement or question is not (in the opinion of the Chairman) scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable.

8. Questions from the Public

8.1 Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District shall be entitled to ask questions at a meeting provided that:

(a) the question(s) are relevant to an item on the Agenda for that meeting;
(b) all the questions from one body shall not exceed three minutes when read out;
(c) written notice has been given to the Member Services Manager by noon plus one clear working day before the meeting (via email or otherwise as he / she agrees) of the question(s) to be asked; and
(d) the questions have not been rejected in accordance with Rule 8.5.

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8.2 **Time for Public Questions**

Any public question shall be dealt with at the beginning of the Agenda and limited to 30 minutes provided that the Chairman may extend the time, or proceed to the next agenda time within the shortened period if there are no questions or all permitted questions are answered.

8.3 **Attendance**

Persons submitting questions must be present (remotely or in person) at the meeting unless the Chairman agrees to address the questions in the questioner's absence.

8.4 **Order of Questions**

Questions will be asked in the order they have been received.

8.5 **Scope**

The Chairman may, following advice from either the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Member Services Manager, reject a question giving reasons for that rejection, if it:

(a) Is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the District;
(b) Is in his/her opinion scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable;
(c) Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting to which these rules apply in the past six months; or
(d) Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

8.6 Supplementary question

At the discretion of the Chairman questioners may ask one supplementary question.

8.7 Answers to questions

8.7.1 The Chairman or at meetings of the Council the appropriate Committee chairman, shall respond to all valid questions.

8.7.2 Replies to questions may be verbal in writing or by reference to a published document.

8.7.3 Replies which are not provided at the meeting shall be reported to the next relevant meeting by publishing them alongside the draft minutes when available and by circulating them to all Members.

9. <u>Petitions from the Public to full Council</u>

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9.1 Notice of Petition

9.1.1 If a citizen wishes to present a petition to a Council meeting, notice must be given at least 10 working days before the meeting.

9.1.2 Petitions to be debated at the Council Meeting will have been selected according to the Petitions Scheme (which is attached as Appendix D to the Constitution).

9.2 Presentation of Petitions

9.2.1 The petition organiser will be allowed 5 minutes to present the petition at the meeting.

9.2.2 Only one person may speak to present a petition.

9.2.3 The Council will debate a single petition for a maximum of 15 minutes (if the petition has 1500 signatures or more).

9.2.4 The Council's response to the petition may include one or more of the following:

(a) taking the action requested in the petition;
(b) not taking the action requested in the petition;
(c) considering the petition at a council meeting;
(d) holding an inquiry into the matter;
(e) undertaking research into the matter;
(f) holding a public meeting;
(g) holding a consultation;
(h) holding a meeting with the petitioners;
(i) calling a referendum;
(j) referring the petition for consideration by other committees such as the Scrutiny Committee;
(k) where the issue is one on which the Cabinet is required to make the final decision, the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision;
(l) the petition organiser will receive a written acknowledgement of receipt of their petition, details as to when and where their petition will be considered and a letter giving the outcome which will also be published on the Council website.

9.3 Scope of Petitions

9.3.1 The Member Services Manager may reject a petition if it:

(a) does not qualify under the scheme;
(b) does not follow the Council's guidelines for submitting a petition;
(b) it is vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate;
(c) it is a petition qualifying under another enactment;
(d) it relates to a planning, licensing or other regulatory decision;

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(e) it relates to any other matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment.

10. Questions from Members at full Council

10.1 Question without notice on reports of the Cabinet and Committees

At an Ordinary meeting of the full Council a Member of the Council may ask the Leader, Cabinet Members or the Chairman of a Committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of the Cabinet or a Committee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council.

10.2 Questions on notice at full Council

A Member of the Council may, ask the Chairman of the Council, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of any Committee any question which:

(a) concerns the Council's powers / duties or which otherwise affects the District;
(b) relates to matters on which the Council has or may determine a policy;
(c) the Member has provided written notice of the question to the Chief Executive no later than noon, two clear days preceding the Council meeting;
(d) the question has first been discussed at a meeting of the Cabinet or Committee and the Member is not satisfied with the adequacy of the answer contained in the relevant Minutes;

and

(e) the question is not (in the opinion of the Chairman taking account of the advice on the matter from the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Member Services Manager) one which:
    (i) is scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable
    (ii) is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council (or other meeting to which these rules apply) in the past six months;
    (iii) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information unless the question is raised in closed session;
    (iv) contains expressions of opinion; or
    (v) relates to questions of fact.

10.3 Questions relating to urgent business

A Member of the Council may, with the advance permission of the Chairman, put to him, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of any Committee any question relating to urgent business of which notice has not been given in accordance with paragraph 10.2(c) above, provided that:

(a) the Chairman in his absolute discretion is satisfied that the matter being raised is of such urgency that compliance with paragraph 10.2(c) is precluded nor should its consideration be delayed until the next meeting of the Cabinet tor the Committee; and
(b) a copy of any such question has been delivered to the Chief Executive no later than 9am the day before the Council meeting.

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10.4 Order of Questions

10.4.1 Questions under 10.2 and 10.3 shall be taken at the appropriate point in the relevant Committee report or in the absence of such, at the Members' Questions agenda item.

10.4.2 Questions and written answers shall be printed in order of receipt and circulated amongst the Members at the commencement of the Council meeting.

10.4.3 No discussion shall be allowed upon questions or answers save as is permitted under Rules 10.5 to 10.8 below.

10.5 Form of Response

10.5.1 The Chief Executive shall arrange for copies of questions and answers to be sent to Members not present at the Meeting of the Council.

10.5.2 An answer may take the form of:

(a) a direct oral answer at the meeting;
(b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
(c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated within 10 working days to the questioner and all Members.

10.6 Supplementary question

One relevant supplementary question to an answer to a question on notice shall be allowed to the original questioner but may be disallowed or not answered if the Chairman of the Council considers it in breach of paragraph 10.2(e).

10.7 Length of Speeches

A Member asking a question under Rules 10.1 to 10.3 and a Member answering such a question may speak for no longer than three minutes unless the Chairman consents to a longer period.

10.8 Time Allowed for Questions

10.8.1 The time allowed for consideration of all questions at full Council which are submitted under Rule 10 shall not, without the consent of the Council, exceed 30 minutes.

10.8.2 At the conclusion of the answer to the question under consideration at the expiry of 30 minutes (or such longer period to which the Council has consented) from the time when the first questioner started to speak, the Chairman shall continue with the meeting unless the Council resolves otherwise at the meeting.

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10.8.3 Any remaining questions shall be responded to in writing before the next ordinary meeting of the Council with written answers to be forwarded to all Members.

11. Motions

11.1 Motions on Notice

11.1.1 **Notice:** Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Rule 11.7, written notice of every motion, must be delivered to the Chief Executive via Member Services at least eight clear working days before the Council meeting at which it is to be considered.

11.1.2 **Record of Motions:** Motions received will be entered in a record, in the order they are received, which is open to public inspection. Where a motion is rejected, the record need only comprise a summary giving reason(s) why it was rejected.

11.1.3 **Motion set out in Summons:** The Chief Executive shall set out in the Summons for every meeting of the Council all Motions of which notice has been duly given in the order in which they have been received, unless:

(a) The motion is rejected in accordance with Rule 11.5; or
(b) The Member giving such a notice intimated in writing, when giving it, that he/she proposed to move it at some later meeting or has since withdrawn it in writing.

11.1.4 **Motion not moved:** Subject to 11.1.7 if a Motion set out in the Summons is not moved either by a Member who gave notice or by some other Member on his behalf it shall, unless postponed by resolution of the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

11.1.5 **Speaking on the Motion:** Those moving and seconding the Motion at the Council meeting shall be invited to speak on the Motion. In the event that the Motion stands referred to another body as provided for in 11.1.6 the mover (or in his absence, the seconder) of the Motion shall be invited to the relevant meeting to amplify the Motion, but without any right to vote except as a member of the Cabinet or relevant Committee.

11.1.6 **Reference to Committee:** If the subject matter of any Motion, of which notice has been duly given comes within the province of the Cabinet or a Committee, it shall, after being formally moved and seconded (with those moving and seconding the motion having been given the opportunity to speak on the Motion), either:

(a) stand referred to the Cabinet or the most relevant Committee as the Chairman may determine for consideration and report; or
(b) on an alternative motion being put forward and accepted, be dealt within in accordance with that alternative motion.

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11.1.7 **Consideration by full Council:** The Chairman of Council may if he considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of business allow the Motion to be dealt with at the meeting, at which it is brought forward.

11.1.8 **Scope of Motions on Notice:** Motions must:

(a) be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the District; and
(b) not, in the opinion of the Chief Executive be out of order, illegal, irregular or improper.

11.1.9 If a motion is not within scope, the Chief Executive shall as soon as is practicable, submit the notice of motion to the Chairman of the Council and the motion shall not be accepted nor placed on the agenda without the Chairman's sanction.

11.1.10 In the event of non-acceptance, the Chief Executive shall inform the member giving notice as soon as reasonably possible of the reason(s) for the rejection.

11.2 Motion on Notice to Remove the Leader

In order for such a motion to be carried it must have the support of the majority of those members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

11.3 Motions without Notice

11.3.1 The following motions may be moved without notice:

(a) to appoint a Chairman of the meeting at which the motion is moved;
(b) in relation to the accuracy of the minutes;
(c) to change the order of business in the agenda;
(d) to adopt a recommendation on some other course of action arising from a report to the meeting or as a result of a petition submitted to the meeting or recommendation arising from single issue debate
(e) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;
(f) to appoint a committee or member arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;
(g) to receive reports or adoption of recommendations of Committees or officers and any resolutions following from them;
(h) to withdraw a motion which may be moved in accordance with this procedure rule;
(i) to amend a motion which may be moved in accordance with this procedure rule, subject to the provisions of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in relation to amendment of the Cabinet's proposals for the Council's Budget and Policy Framework;
(j) to proceed to the next business (such Motion may only be moved by a Councillor who has not spoken in the debate)
(k) that the question be now put (such Motion may only be moved by a Councillor who has not spoken in the debate)

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(l) to adjourn a debate;
(m) to adjourn a meeting;
(n) to suspend a particular Council Procedure Rule;
(o) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules;
(p) not to hear further a Member named under Rule 18.2 or excluded from the meeting under Rule 18.3; and
(q) to give the consent of the Council where its consent is required by this Constitution.

12. Rules of Debate

12.1 No speeches may be made unless the appropriate Notice has been given and until the Motion is seconded; or the appropriate Notice has been given and is moved by the Chairman of the meeting.

12.2 When seconding a motion or amendment, a member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

12.3 Content and length of speeches

12.3.1 Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order.

12.3.2 No speech shall exceed:

(a) Five minutes in the case of the mover of a Motion;
(b) Three minutes in the case of the seconder;
(c) Five minutes in the case of the Leader, the relevant Cabinet Member or the Chairman of a Committee dealing with the matters arising from committee reports except with the consent of the Chairman who shall have discretion to extend that time if it appears prudent in his judgement to do so;
(d) Three minutes in all other cases except by consent of the Council; and
(e) When the Council's annual budget is under discussion, the leader of each political group on the Council may speak for up to five minutes or such longer period as the Chairman shall allow.

12.4 When a Member may speak again

A member who has spoken on a motion may not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

(a) to speak once on an amendment moved by another member;
(b) to move a further amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
(c) if his/her first speech was on an amendment moved by another member, to speak on the main issue (whether or not the amendment on which he/she spoke was carried);
(d) in exercise of a right of reply;
(e) on a point of order; and
(f) by way of personal explanation.

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12.5 Amendments to motions

An amendment to a motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:

(a) to refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual for consideration or reconsideration;
  (i) to leave out words;
  (ii) to leave out words and insert or add others; or
  (iii) to insert or add words
  (iv) as long as the effect of (i) to (iii) is not to negate the motion.

(b) Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of provided that the Chairman may permit two or more amendments to be discussed (but not voted on) together if circumstances suggest that this course of action would facilitate the proper conduct of the Council's business.

(c) If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.

(d) If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion. This becomes the substantive motion to which any further amendments are moved.

(e) After an amendment has been carried, the Chairman will read out the amended motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none, put it to the vote.

12.6 Alteration of motion

12.6.1 A Member may alter a motion of which he/she has given notice with the consent of the meeting. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

12.6.2 A Member may alter a motion which he/she has moved without notice with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

12.6.3 Only alterations which could be made as an amendment may be made.

12.7 Withdrawal of motion

12.7.1 A Member may withdraw a motion which he/she has moved with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder.

12.7.2 The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

12.7.3 No member may speak on the motion after the mover has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused.

12.8 Right of reply

12.8.1 The mover of a motion has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.

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12.8.2 If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion has the right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment, but may not otherwise speak on it.

12.8.3 The mover of the amendment has no right of reply to the debate on his/her amendment.

12.9 Motions which may be moved during debate

When a motion is under debate, no other motion may be moved except the following procedural motions:

(a) to withdraw a motion;
(b) to amend a motion;
(c) to proceed to the next business;
(d) that the question be now put;
(e) to adjourn a debate;
(f) to adjourn a meeting;
(g) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules; and
(h) Not to hear further a Member named under Rule 18.2 or excluded from the meeting under Rule 18.3.

12.10 Closure motions

12.10.1 A Member may move, without comment, the following motions at the end of a speech of another Member:
(a) to proceed to the next business;
(b) that the question be now put;
(c) to adjourn a debate; or
(d) to adjourn a meeting.

12.10.2 If a motion to proceed to next business is seconded and the Chairman considers the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will give the mover of the original motion (if there is one) a right of reply and then put the procedural motion to the vote.

12.10.3 If a motion that the question be now put is seconded and the Chairman considers the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote. If it is passed he/she will give the mover of the original motion (if there is one) a right of reply before putting his/her motion to the vote.

12.10.4 If a motion to adjourn the debate or to adjourn the meeting is seconded and the Chairman considers the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be so discussed on that occasion, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply.

12.11 Point of Order

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A point of order is a request from a member to the Chairman to rule on an alleged irregularity in the procedure of the meeting. A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Chairman will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of procedure set out in these Council Rules of Procedure or the law. The member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken. The ruling of the Chairman on the matter will be final.

12.12 Personal explanation

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate. The ruling of the Chairman on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

13 State of the District Debate

13.1 Calling of the debate

The Leader may call a state of the District debate annually on a date to be agreed with the Chairman.

13.2 Form of the debate

The Leader will decide the form of the debate with the aim of enabling the widest possible public involvement and publicity. This may include holding workshops and other events prior to or during the state of the District debate.

13.3 Chairing of the debate

The debate will be chaired by the Chairman.

13.4 Results of the debate

13.4.1 The results of the debate will be:

(a) disseminated as widely as possible within the community and to agencies and organisations in the area; and
(b) considered by the Leader in proposing the Budget and Policy Framework to the Council for the coming year.

13.4.2 If the Leader fails to call a debate within nine months in any municipal year, it may be called by notice in writing to the Chief Executive signed by any 10 Members of the Council and that the debate shall be heard on the subject and form specified by those 10 Members.

14. Previous Decisions and Motions

14.1 Motion to rescind a previous decision

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A motion or amendment to rescind a decision made at a meeting of Council within the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion is signed by at least 10 Members.

14.2 Motion similar to one previously rejected

14.2.1 This Procedure Rule 14.2 shall not apply to Motions moved in pursuance of a recommendation of a Committee.

14.2.2 A motion or amendment in similar terms to one that has been rejected at a meeting of Council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least ten members.

14.2.3 Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no one can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months.

15. <u>Voting</u>

15.1 Majority

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members voting and present in the room at the time the question is put.

15.2 Chairman's casting vote

If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chairman chooses to exercise a casting vote.

15.3 Method of Voting

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rule 15.4 the Chairman will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

15.4 Recorded vote

If 10 Members present at the meeting demand it, the names for and against *the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in* writing and entered into the minutes.

15.5 Right to require individual vote to be recorded

Where any Member requests it immediately after the vote is taken, their vote will be recorded in the minutes to show whether they voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

15.6 Voting on appointments

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15.6.1 If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken.

15.6.2 The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

15.7 Voting on the Budget and Council Tax

At a Budget meeting, the vote on any motion or amendment relating to the setting of the Budget (revenue and capital budget) and Council Tax or precept shall be by roll call and the names of Members who voted as for, against or in abstention to any such motion or amendment shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

16. Minutes

16.1 Signing the minutes

16.1.1 The Chairman will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting.
16.1.2 The Chairman will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record.
16.1.3 The only part of the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.

16.2 No requirement to sign minutes of previous meeting at an Extra-ordinary meeting

Where in relation to any meeting, the next meeting for the purpose of signing the minutes is a meeting called under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 (an extraordinary meeting), then the next following meeting (being a meeting called otherwise than under that paragraph) will be treated as a suitable meeting for the purposes of paragraph 41(1) and (2) of Schedule 12 relating to signing of minutes.

16.3 Form of minutes

Minutes will contain all motions and amendments in the exact form and order the Chairman put them.

17. Exclusion of Public

Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution or Rule 19 (Disturbance by Public) or otherwise permissible in law.

18. Members' Conduct

18.1 Speaking at meetings

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18.1.1 When a Member speaks at full Council he/she must address the meeting through the Chairman.
18.1.2 If more than one Member signifies their intention to speak, the Chairman will ask one to speak.
18.1.3 Other Members must remain silent whilst a Member is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.

18.2 Member not to be heard further

18.2.1 If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chairman by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chairman may move that the member not be heard further.
18.2.2 If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

18.3 Member to leave the meeting

18.3.1 If the Member continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the Chairman may move that either the Member leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period.
18.3.2 If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

18.4 General disturbance

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

19. <u>Disturbance by the Public</u>

19.1 Removal of member of the public

19.1.1 If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned.
19.1.2 If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room.

19.2 Clearance of part of meeting room

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

20. <u>Suspension and Amendment of Council Procedure Rules</u>

20.1 Suspension

All of these Council Rules of Procedure except Rules 5.3, 15.5, 16.3 may be suspended by motion on notice or without notice if at least one half of the whole number of members of the Council are present. Suspension can only be for the duration of the meeting.

20.2 Amendment

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Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Council Rules of Procedure will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council unless the amendment is the subject of a report from the Standards Committee.

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SECTION 1 - Council Procedure Rules

Introduction:

There are currently 20 procedure rules. They apply to all meetings of full Council (i.e. when all Members of the Council attend as voting members). Subject to the exceptions set out below in Rule 1 or where the rules provides or the context otherwise makes clear, they also apply to Cabinet **and Committees** (which latter term for the purposes of these rules, includes their sub-committees and Policy Development Groups).

1. Exceptions of Rules to Committees Meetings

2. Full Council

3. Substitute Members

4. Time Place and Notice of Meetings

5. Chairman of the Meeting

6. Quorum

7. Members' Business at full Council

8. Questions by the Public

9. Petitions from the Public

10. Questions from Members at full Council

11. Motions

12. Rules of Debate

13. State of District Debate

14. Previous Decisions and Motions

15. Voting

16. Minutes

17. Exclusion of the Public

18. Members' Conduct

19. Disturbance by the Public

20. Suspension and Amendment of Council Procedure Rules

~~1~~1. Exceptions of Rules to Committee Meetings

Committee	Rules which don't apply
Audit	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Cabinet	No appointment of Substitutes (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Electoral Review	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Policy Development Groups (**PDG's**)	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Licensing	No appointment of Substitutes for sub-committees (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) Public Questions for sub-committees (Rule 8) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Planning	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Regulatory	No appointment of Substitutes for sub-committees (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) Public Questions for sub-committees (Rule 8) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)

Scrutiny	Members' Business (Rule 7) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)
Standards	No appointment of Substitutes for sub-committees (Rule 3) Members' Business (Rule 7) Public Questions for sub-committees (Rule 8) No motions other than those referred by full Council (Rule 11) No restriction on the number of times a member can speak during debate (Rule 12)

2. ~~Annual Meeting of the~~ Full Council

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2.1 Annual Meeting

2.1.1 **Timing and business:**

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In a year when there is an ordinary election of councillors, the annual meeting will take place within 21 days of the retirement (four days after the election) of the outgoing councillors. In any other year, the annual meeting will take place in March, April or May.

2.1.2 **Business:** The annual meeting will:

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(a) elect a person to preside if the outgoing Chairman of Council or Vice Chairman of the Council is not present;

(b) elect the Chairman of the Council (subject to the statutory provisions in that behalf, a Councillor who is the present Chairman of the Council and has completed two consecutive years in such office shall not be eligible for re-election as Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year);

(c) elect the Vice Chairman of the Council;

(d) approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;

(e) receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or the ~~Head of Paid Service~~Chief Executive;

(f) elect the Leader (following the ordinary election of councillors);

(g) elect the Scrutiny Committee Chairman;

(h) ~~agree the scheme of delegations as set out in Part 3 of this Constitution~~ approve a programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year; and

(i) consider any *other* business set out in the notice convening the meeting.

~~1.2~~2.1.3 **Appointment of Committees:** ~~and Selection of Councillors on Outside Bodies~~

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At the ~~a~~Annual ~~m~~Meeting, the Council meeting will:

(a) decide which committees to establish for the municipal year;

(b) decide the size and terms of reference for those ~~c~~Committees;

(c) decide the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;

(d) receive nominations of (any) ungrouped Councillors to serve on each ~~c~~Committee and vote on each appointment

(e) make appointments to outside bodies except where appointment to those bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Cabinet (in respect of ~~e~~Executive functions);

2.2 Ordinary Meetings

2.2.1 **Business:** ~~Ordinary meetings of the Council will take place in accordance with a programme decided at the Council's annual meeting.~~ The order of business at ordinary meetings will be as follows:

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(a) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice Chairman are not present;

(b) approve the minutes of the last meeting (whether the annual meeting or otherwise);

(c) receive any declarations of interest from Members;

(d) receive any announcements from the Chairman;

(e) receive ~~questions from, and provide answers to, the public in relation to matters which in the opinion of the Chairman are relevant to the Council's functions or business of the meeting~~Public Questions (as set out in Rule 8);

(f) receive a report from the Leader and receive questions and answers on the report;

(g) deal with any business remaining from the last Council meeting;

(h) receive petitions from members of the public;

(i) debate single issues;

(j) consider Motions;

(k) consider ~~reports~~ recommendations from the Cabinet ;

(l) consider any ~~reports~~ recommendations submitted by the ~~Scrutiny Committee and the other~~ Council's ~~c~~Committees;

(m) receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations;

(n) receive ~~statement made and notices of future questions given by~~ Members' Business (as set out in Rule 7);

(o) consider any urgent items of business brought forward at the discretion of the Chairman and ~~. In respect of any such urgent items of business, the Chairman must be satisfied that the item of business is urgent~~

~~enough to justify its inclusion on the agenda. T~~the reason for urgency must be announced at the meeting and recorded in the minutes~~. The discretion as to urgency is entirely with the Chairman~~; and

(p) consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting~~. and reports of the Scrutiny Committee for debate;~~

2.2.2 **Variation of Order of Business:**

Business falling under items 2.2.1 ~~and 2.2~~ shall not be displaced, but subject thereto the ~~foregoing~~ order of business may be varied:

(a) by the Chairman at his/her discretion; or

(b) by a resolution passed on a Motion (which need not be in writing) duly moved and seconded, which shall be moved and put without discussion.

2.3. Extraordinary Meetings

2.3.1 ~~Calling extraordinary meetings~~

Those listed below may request the ~~p~~Proper ~~o~~Officer to call Council meetings in addition to ~~o~~Ordinary ~~m~~Meetings:

(a) the Council by resolution;

(b) the Chairman of the Council;

(c) the Monitoring Officer; or

(d) any five Members of the Council if they have signed a requisition presented to the Chairman of the Council and he has refused to call a meeting or has failed to call a meeting within seven days of the presentation of the requisition.

2.3.2 ~~Business~~

The business to be conducted at an extraordinary meeting shall be restricted to the item of business contained in the request for the extraordinary meeting and there shall be no consideration of previous minutes or reports from Cabinet or ~~c~~Committees etc. except that the Chairman may at his absolute discretion permit other items of business to be conducted for the efficient discharge of the Council's business.

34. ~~Appointment of s~~Substitute ~~m~~Members

43.1 **Appointment**

Where a member is appointed to a Committee or any committee/sub-committee of another council on which the District Council is represented, the member may appoint a substitute member to attend the meeting subject to the following qualification requirements:

a) In the case of the Audit, Licensing, Planning, Regulatory and Standards committees, all substitute members must have received training on the relevant committee's area of work.

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b) Where the Member appointing a substitute is a Member of a Political Group the substitute Member shall only be from the membership of that same group unless there are no such trained members in that group.

~~Cabinet~~

~~This rule does not apply to the Cabinet as they are not able to use substitutes~~

~~4.2 Scrutiny Committee and Policy Development Groups (PDGs)~~

~~Where a member is appointed to the Scrutiny Committee, Policy Development Groups or to serve on any committee or sub-committee of another council on which this council is represented, provided that council's constitution so permits, that member may appoint a substitute member to attend the meeting~~

~~4.3 Planning, Licencing, Licensing Regulatory, Audit and Standards Committee~~

~~In respect of the Licensing, Licensing Regulatory, Audit and Standards Committees, each Committee will have a pool of five suitably trained members shall be established and substitutes may only be nominated from that pool. Planning Committee has a pool of 7).~~

~~4.4 Licencing, Licensing Regulatory and standards sub committees~~

~~Substitutes cannot be used in the case of a Licencing, Regulatory or Standards sub committee.~~

~~4.5~~

~~Where the Member appointing a substitute is a Member of a Political Group the substitute Member shall be from the membership of that same Group.~~

3.2 **Extent of the Substitution**

3.2.1Any such substitution shall have effect for the entirety of the meeting in respect of which the Notice has been given.

~~A substitute Member shall be entitled to vote and shall assume all the responsibilities and rights of a Member of the Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Policy Development Group, Committee, Sub-Committee or other body.~~

~~Notice in writing of a substitute shall be given to the Chief Executive (and recorded by him in the order in which they are received) by the Member appointing the substitute before the commencement of the meeting. Notification by a Member purporting to be a substitute Member will not be accepted.~~

3.2.2. No more than two Members of the same Political Group shall be substituted at any meeting, and no Member shall be substituted at more than two consecutive meetings of the same ~~Scrutiny~~ Committee~~., Audit Committee, Policy Development Group, Committee, Sub-Committee etc.~~

~~The Monitoring Officer may consider a request from a Member of a Council Body to appoint a substitute Member (for one meeting only), providing that substitute Member is from the same political group.~~

~~In order to be eligible to sit as substitutes on regulatory or quasi-judicial committees or panels or staff appointments or disciplinary bodies~~

~~established by the Council, Members must have received formal training in relevant procedures and the law~~

~~Substitute Members will have all the powers and duties of any ordinary Member of the committee but will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person they are substituting.~~

3.2.3 Substitute Members may only attend meetings in that capacity ~~only~~where:

~~(a) to take the place of the ordinary Member for whom they are designated substitute;~~

~~(b)~~(a) ~~where~~ the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting;

~~(c)~~(b) ~~where~~ the ordinary Member has notified the Member Services ~~Officer~~ Manager by email of the intended substitution at least one hour before the start of the relevant meeting; and

~~(d)~~(c) ~~provided,~~ in the case of area committees~~, that~~ the substitution does not alter the balance on that committee between Members from the area and Members from the rest of the District.

~~5~~4. Time, Place and ~~Duration~~ Notice of Meetings

~~5~~4.1 The time and place of meetings will be determined by the Chief Executive and notified in the summons.

~~6. Notice of and Summons to Meetings~~

~~6.1~~4.2 The Chief Executive will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

4.3 At least five clear working days before a meeting, the Chief Executive approved will send a summons ~~signed~~ approved by him/her to every Member of the Council. The summons will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such reports as are available.

~~7~~5. Chairman of the Meeting

~~7~~5.1 The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chairman. ~~Where these rules apply to committee and sub-committee meetings, references to the Chairman also include the Chairmen of committees and sub-committees.~~

~~7~~5.2 The Chairman of the Council, by virtue of office, is not eligible to hold office as a Chairman of any other Committee during his/her term.

5.3 The ruling of the Chairman as to the construction or application of any of these Procedure Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Council, shall not be challenged at any meeting.

5.4 When the Chairman stands during a debate, any member speaking at the time must stop and sit down. The meeting must be silent.

~~8~~6. Quorum

~~8~~6.1 The quorum of a Full Council meeting will be one quarter of the whole number of Members (~~11 members~~rounded up) present at the meeting where physical presence is required (or in attendance including remotely where

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such physical presence is not required). ~~During any meeting if the Chairman counts the number of Members present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.~~

~~8~~6.2 The quorum for a meeting of the Cabinet and any ~~, Scrutiny~~ Committees will be one half of the number of members appointed to that body (rounded up) subject to a minimum of three in each case. ~~, Audit Committee, Standards Committee, Policy Development Groups, Planning Committee, Licensing Committee, Licensing Regulatory Committee, a Committee or a sub-committee of the Council will be one half of the number of members appointed (rounded up) to the Cabinet (four), Scrutiny Committee (six), Audit Committee (four), Standards Committee (five), Policy Development Groups (five), Planning Committee (six), Licensing Committee (six), Licensing Regulatory Committee (six), a Committee or a sub-committee. See the procedure Rules for information about quorum per committee~~

6.3 During any meeting if the Chairman counts the number of Members present and declares there is not a quorum present the meeting will adjourn and remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman or failing such, at the next ordinary meeting.

~~**9. Single Issue Debate**~~

~~9.1 Where any five members give notice in writing, delivered at least eight clear days before the next meeting of the Council at the office of the Chief Executive, of request for a single issue debate. Rule 16 (Rules of Debate) shall not apply to any debate under this Procedure Rule.~~

~~9.2 A period of not exceeding one hour shall be allowed during which debate may take place. Any recommendations arising from such debate shall be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration.~~

~~10~~7. Members' Business

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~~10~~7.1 At each ordinary meeting of the full Council, a period not exceeding 15 minutes shall be allowed during which any Member may make a statement or give preliminary verbal notice of a question provided that:-

(a) such statement or question must be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the District and has not been otherwise before the Council for consideration at the same meeting;

(b) no Member may make more than one statement or give notice of more than one question;~~,~~

(c) ~~and~~ no Member shall speak pursuant to this Procedure Rule for longer than two minutes;

(d~~c~~) the statement or notice of question shall not be the subject of discussion or reply at that meeting;

(e) ~~(d)~~after the expiry of the said period of 15 minutes the Council shall proceed to the next business; and

(f) ~~.~~ such statement or questions is not (in the opinion of the Chairman) scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable.

~~11~~8. Questions ~~by~~ from the Public

~~11~~8.1 Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District shall be entitled to ask questions at a meeting provided that:

~~General~~

(a) ~~(a)~~the question(s) are relevant to an item on the Agenda for that meeting;~~Public Question Time shall apply at all public meetings of the Council with the exception of the Licencing Sub Committee, Licensing Regulatory Sub-committee and Standards Sub Committee.~~

(b) all the questions from one body shall not exceed three minutes when read out;

(c) written notice has been given to the Member Services Manager by noon plus one clear working day before the meeting (via email or otherwise as he/she agrees) of the question(s) to be asked; and

(d) the questions have not been rejected in accordance with Rule 8.5.

8.2 **Time for Public Questions**

~~(b)~~ Any ~~P~~public ~~Q~~question ~~Time~~ shall ~~normally~~ be dealt with at the beginning of the Agenda ~~(i.e. as part of the formal meeting) unless a Committee/Group shall determine otherwise;~~and

~~(c) The total time allocated for questions by the public is~~ limited to 30 minutes provided that the Chairman may extend the time, or proceed to the next agenda time within the shortened period if there are no questions or all permitted questions are answered. ~~In the event that there are no questions, or no further questions, the Chairman shall have the discretion to proceed with the Agenda prior to the expiry of that period. The Chairman also has discretion to extend the time for public questions if he/she deems it to be appropriate~~

~~(d) Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District shall be entitled to ask questions~~

~~11.2~~8.3 ~~Asking a question at the meeting~~**Attendance**

~~Ideally p~~Persons submitting questions ~~should~~ must be present (remotely or in person) at the meeting unless the Chairman agrees to address the questions in the questioner's absence. ~~It is preferable that notice is given of the question to be asked at the meeting~~

~~However, if a questioner who has submitted a question is unable to be present, they may ask the Chairman to put the question on their behalf.~~

8.4 **Order of Questions**

~~(a)~~ Questions will be asked in the order they have been received

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8.5 **Scope**

~~(b) Written questions will be dealt with first~~

~~(c) Questions may be verbal or, preferably written~~

~~(d) A question shall not exceed 3 minutes~~

~~(e) Questions must be relevant to an item on the Agenda for that meeting~~

~~(f)~~ The Chairman may, following advice from either the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Member Services Manager, ~~shall have the discretion to~~ reject a question~~,~~ giving reasons for that rejection, if it:

(a) Is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the District;

(b) Is in his/her opinion scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable;

(c) Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting to which these rules apply ~~of the Council~~ in the past six months; or

(d) ~~r~~Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

~~11.3~~8.6 **Supplementary question**

At the discretion of the Chairman ~~of that meeting,~~ questioners may ask one supplementary question.

~~11.4~~8.7 **Answers to questions**

8.7.1 The ~~c~~Chairman ~~of the meeting,~~ or at meetings of the Council the appropriate ~~c~~Committee chairman, shall respond to all valid questions.

8.7.2 Replies to questions may be verbal~~, or at the discretion of the Chairman,~~ in writing~~,~~ or by reference to a published document.

8.7.3 ~~Written R~~Replies which are not provided at the meeting shall be reported to the next relevant meeting ~~of the Committee and~~ by publishing~~ed~~ them alongside the draft minutes when available and by circulating them ~~. Responses will also be sent~~ to all ~~Councillors~~Members.

~~12~~9. Petitions from the Public to Full Council

~~12~~9.1 **Notice of Petition**

9.1.1 If a citizen wishes to present a petition to a Council meeting, notice must be given at least 10 working days before the meeting.

9.1.2 Petitions to be debated at the Council Meeting will have been selected according to the Petitions Scheme (which is attached as Appendix D to the Constitution).

~~12~~9.2 **Presentation of Petitions**

9.2.1 The petition organiser will be allowed 5 minutes to present the petition at the meeting.

9.2.2 Only one person may speak to present a petition.

9.2.3 The Council will ~~then~~ debate a single ~~the~~ petition for a maximum of 15 minutes (if the petition has 1500 signatures or more).

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9.2.4 The Council's response to the petition ~~will depend on what the petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but it~~ may include one or more of the following:

(a) taking the action requested in the petition;

(b) not taking the action requested in the petition;

(c) considering the petition at a council meeting;

(d) holding an inquiry into the matter;

(e) undertaking research into the matter;

(f) holding a public meeting;

(g) holding a consultation;

(h) holding a meeting with the petitioners;

(i) calling a referendum;

(j) referring the petition for consideration by other committees such as the Scrutiny Committee;

(k) where the issue is one on which the Cabinet is required to make the final decision, the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision;

(l) the petition organiser will receive a written acknowledgement of receipt of their petition, details as to when and where their petition will be considered and a letter giving the outcome which will also be published on the Council website.

~~12.5~~9.3 **Scope of Petitions**

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9.3.1 The Member Services Manager may reject a petition if it:

(a) does not qualify under the scheme;

(b) does not ~~i.e. it does not~~ follow the Council's guidelines for submitting a petition;

(~~cb~~) it is vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate;

(~~dc~~) it is a petition qualifying under another enactment;

(~~ed~~) it relates to a planning, licensing or other regulatory decision;

~~(e) it relates to a licensing decision;~~

(f) it relates to any other matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment.

~~13~~10. Questions ~~by~~ from Members at full Council

~~13~~10.1 **Questions without notice ~~O~~on reports of the Cabinet ~~or~~ and C~~c~~ommittees**

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At an Ordinary meeting of the full Council~~, other than the Annual meeting,~~ a Member of the Council may ask the Leader, Cabinet Members or the Chairman of a ~~c~~Committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of the Cabinet or a ~~c~~Committee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council.

10~~3~~.2 **Questions on notice at full Council~~.~~**

A Member of the Council may, ~~if by not later than noon, one clear working day preceding any ordinary meeting of the Council, notice in writing has been given to the Chief Executive,~~ ask the Chairman of the Council, ~~or~~ the Leader, ~~the~~ a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of any Committee any question ~~on any matter in relation to~~ which:

(a) concerns the Council's ~~have~~ powers ~~or /~~ duties or which otherwise affects the District;~~,~~

(b) relates to matters on which the Council has or may determine a policy;

(c) the Member has provided written notice of the question to the Chief Executive no later than noon, two clear days preceding the Council meeting;

(d) ~~that~~ the ~~subject matter of the particular~~ question ~~shall have~~has first been ~~the subject of~~ discuss~~ed~~~~ion~~ at a meeting of the Cabinet or ~~appropriate~~ Committee ~~or Sub-Committee~~ and ~~that, in~~ the ~~particular case the~~ Member ~~who seeks to ask the question~~ is not satisfied with the adequacy of the answer contained in the relevant Minutes; and ~~of the Cabinet or that Committee or Sub-Committee~~.

(e) ~~If any doubt arises as to whether the particular subject matter has been the subject of discussion at a meeting of the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee this shall be determined by the Chairman of the Council whose decision in such regard shall not be open to challenge.~~the question is not (in the opinion of the Chairman taking account of the advice on the matter from the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Member Services Manager) one which:

i) is scurrilous, improper, capricious, irrelevant or otherwise objectionable

ii) is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council (or other meeting to which these rules apply) in the past six months;

iii) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information unless the question is raised in closed session;

iv) contains expressions of opinion; or

~~i)~~v) relates to questions of fact.

10~~3~~.3 **Questions relating to urgent business**

A Member of the Council may, with the advance permission of the Chairman, put to him, ~~or~~ the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chairman of any C~~c~~ommittee any question relating to urgent business of which notice has not been given in accordance with paragraph 10.2(c~~a~~) above, provided that:

(a) the Chairman in his absolute discretion is satisfied that the matter being raised ~~in such a question~~ is of such urgency ~~as to preclude the procedure in~~that compliance with paragraph 10.2(c~~a~~) is precluded nor should its ~~above being pursued and that he is also satisfied that it is not appropriate for the matter to await~~ consideration be delayed until the next meeting of the Cabinet or the Committee; and

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~~at the next meeting of the Cabinet or the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee and~~

(b) ~~provided also that~~ a copy of any such question has been delivered to the Chief Executive no later than ~~nine o'clock~~9am ~~on the morning of~~ the day before the Council Meeting.

10~~3~~.4 **Order of Questions**

10.4.1 Questions under ~~paragraph~~ 10.2 and 10~~3~~.3 ~~above~~ shall be taken at the appropriate point in the relevant Committee report or in the absence of such, at the Members' Questions agenda item.

10.4.2 Questions and written answers shall be printed in order of receipt and circulated amongst the Members at the commencement of the Council Meeting. ~~and~~

10.4.3 ~~n~~No discussion shall be allowed upon questions or answers save as is permitted under Rules 10.5 to 10~~3~~.8 below.

~~13.5 Content of Questions~~

~~Questions under Rule 13.3 or 13.4 must, in the opinion of the Chairman:~~

~~(a) contain no expressions of opinion;~~

~~(b) relate to matters on which the Council has or may determine a policy;~~

~~(c) not relate to questions of fact.~~

~~If questions or supplementary questions are unsuitable in form, frivolous or derogatory to the dignity of the Council, the Chairman of the Council shall have the right to rule the matter void.~~

10.5 **Form of Response**

10.5.1 The Chief Executive shall arrange for copies of questions and answers to be sent to Members not present at the Meeting of the Council.

10.5.2 An answer may take the form of:

(a) a direct oral answer at the meeting;

(b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or

(c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated within 10 working days to the questioner and all Members.

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1310.6 7 **Supplementary question**

One relevant supplementary question to an answer to a question on notice shall be allowed to the original questioner but may be disallowed or not answered if unless such supplementary question is disallowed by the Chairman of the Council considers it in breach of under paragraph 13.5 10.2(e)of this Rule.

103.78 **Length of Speeches**

A Member asking a question under Rules 13.310.1 or to 13.4 10.3 and a Member answering such a question may speak for no longer than 3 three minutes unless the Chairman consents to a longer period.

103.89 **Time Allowed for Questions** at Council Meetings

10.8.1 The time allowed for consideration of all questions at full council which are submitted under Rule 13 10 shall not, without the consent of the Council, exceed 30 minutes.

10.8.2 At the conclusion of the answer to the question under consideration at the expiry of 30 minutes (or such longer period to which the Council has consented) from the time when the first questioner started to speak, the Chairman shall continue with the meeting unless the Council resolves otherwise at the meeting.

10.8.3 Any remaining questions shall be responded to in writing before the next ordinary meeting of the Council with the written answers to be forwarded to all CouncillorsMembers.

114. Motions

11.1 Motions on Notice

114.1.1 **Notice:**

Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Rule 1511.7, written notice of every motion, must be delivered to the Chief Executive via Member Services at least 8 eight clear working days before the Council meeting at which it is to be considered.

11.1.2 **Record of Motions:** Motions received will be entered in a record, in the order they are received, which is open to public inspection. and wWhere a motion is rejected, the record need only comprise a summary they are rejected giving reason(s) why it was rejected.

14.211.1.3 **Motion set out in summons:**

The Chief Executive shall set out in the Summons for every meeting of the Council all Motions of which notice has been duly given in the order in which they have been received, unless:

(a)The motion is rejected in accordance with Rule 11.5; or

(b) Tthe Member giving such a notice intimated in writing, when giving it, that he/she proposed to move it at some later meeting, or has since withdrawn it in writing.

14.311.1.4 **Motion not moved:**

Subject to 11.1.7 Iif a Motion thus set out in the Summons be is not moved either by a Member who gave notice thereof or by some other Member on his

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behalf it shall, unless postponed by ~~consent~~ resolution of the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

11.1.5 **Speaking on the Motion:** Those moving and seconding the Motion at the Council meeting shall be invited to speak on the Motion. In the event that the Motion stands referred to another body as provided for in 11.1.6 the mover (or in his absence, the seconder) of the Motion shall be invited to the relevant meeting to amplify the Motion, but without any right to vote except as a member of the Cabinet or relevant Committee.

~~14.4~~11.1.6 ~~Automatic~~ **Reference to Committee:**

If the subject matter of any Motion, of which notice has been duly given comes within the province of the Cabinet~~,~~ or a Committee ~~or Policy Development Group~~, it shall, ~~upon~~ after being formally moved and seconded (with those moving and seconding the motion having been given the opportunity ~~being invited~~ to speak ~~at this point~~on the Motion), either:

(a) ~~-~~stand referred to the Cabinet or the most relevant~~,~~ Committee ~~or Policy Development Group~~ as the Chairman may determine for consideration and report; or

~~(a)~~(b) ~~unless~~ on an alternative ~~proposition~~ motion ~~is~~ being put forward and ~~is~~ accepted, be dealt within in accordance with that alternative motion.~~; and that the mover (or in his absence, the seconder) of the Motion should be invited to the meeting of the Cabinet, Committee or Policy Development Group to amplify the Motion, but without any right to vote except as a member of such Committee. Provided that the Chairman may if he considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of business allow the Motion to be dealt with at the meeting, at which it is brought forward.~~

11.1.7 **Consideration by full Council:** The Chairman of Council may if he considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of business allow the Motion to be dealt with at the meeting, at which it is brought forward.

~~14.5~~11.1.8 **Scope of Motions on Notice:**

Motions must:

(a) be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the District; and

(b) not, in the opinion of the Chief Executive be out of order, illegal, irregular or improper.

11.1.9 If ~~notice is given of any original motion that, in the opinion of the proper officer is out of order, illegal, irregular or improper~~a motion is not within scope, the Chief Executive shall as soon as is practicable, ~~then the proper officer shall immediately~~ submit ~~such~~ the notice of motion to the Chairman of the Council and ~~it~~ the motion

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shall not be accepted ~~and~~ nor placed on the agenda without ~~his~~ the Chairman's sanction.

11.1.10 In the event of non-acceptance, the ~~proper officer~~Chief Executive shall inform the member giving notice as soon as reasonably possible ~~and stating~~of the reason(s) for the rejection.

~~14.6~~11.2 **Motion on Notice to R~~r~~emove the Leader**

In order for such a motion to be carried it must have the support of the majority of those members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

~~15~~11.3. Motions without Notice

1~~15~~.3.1 The following motions may be moved without notice:

(a) to appoint a Chairman of the meeting at which the motion is moved;

(b) in relation to the accuracy of the minutes;

(c) to change the order of business in the agenda;

(d) to adopt a recommendation on some other course of action arising from a report to the meeting or as a result of a petition submitted to the meeting or recommendation arising from single issue debate

(e) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;

(f) to appoint a committee or member arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;

(g) to receive reports or adoption of recommendations of ~~c~~Committees or officers and any resolutions following from them;

(h) to withdraw a motion which may be moved in accordance with this procedure rule;

(i) to amend a motion which may be moved in accordance with this procedure rule, subject to the provisions of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in relation to amendment of the Cabinet's proposals for the Council's Budget and Policy Framework;

(j) to proceed to the next business (such Motion may only be moved by a Councillor who has not spoken in the debate)

(k) that the question be now put (such Motion may only be moved by a Councillor who has not spoken in the debate)

(l) to adjourn a debate;

(m) to adjourn a meeting;

(n) to suspend a particular Council Procedure Rule;

(o) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules;

(p) Not to hear further a Member named under Rule ~~23.3~~18.2 or excluded from the meeting under Rule ~~23.4~~18.3; and

(q) to give the consent of the Council where its consent is required by this Constitution.

16~~2~~. Rules of Debate

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12.1 No speeches may be made unless the appropriate Notice has been given and until the Motion is seconded; or the appropriate Notice has been given and is moved by the Chairman of the meeting.

~~A Motion or Amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and unless the appropriate Notice has been given:~~

~~(a) in the case of a Motion, in accordance with Rule 14; or~~

~~(b) in the case of an Amendment (other than an Amendment moved in accordance with Rule 15), notice in writing of the Amendment shall have been delivered to the office of the Chief Executive of the District Council by no later than 9.30am on the day before the day of the meeting and a copy of it shall be circulated to each Member of the District Council by the Chief Executive at the commencement of the meeting at which it is to be discussed.~~

~~Except that where the Chairman is satisfied that, in the context of the debate which has taken place, a further Amendment becomes necessary, he may at his discretion allow such further Amendment to be moved at the meeting. Any such further Amendment shall be put in writing and handed to the Chairman before it is discussed or put to the meeting.~~

12.2~~16.1~~ ~~Seconder's speech~~

When seconding a motion or amendment, a member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

~~16.2~~12.3 **Content and length of speeches**

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12.3.1 Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order.

12.3.2 No speech shall exceed:

(a) Five minutes in the case of the mover of a Motion;

(b) Three minutes in the case of the seconder;

(c) Five minutes in the case of the Leader, the relevant Cabinet Member or the Chairman of a Committee dealing with the matters arising from committee reports except with the consent of the Chairman who shall have discretion to extend that time if it appears prudent in his judgement to do so;

(d) Three minutes in all other cases except by consent of the Council; and~~.~~

(e) When the Council's annual budget is under discussion, the leader of each political group on the Council may speak for up to five minutes or such longer period as the Chairman shall allow.

~~16.3~~12.4 **When a Member may speak again**

A member who has spoken on a motion may not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

(a) to speak once on an amendment moved by another member;

(b) to move a further amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;

(c) if his/her first speech was on an amendment moved by another member, to speak on the main issue (whether or not the amendment on which he/she spoke was carried);

(d) in exercise of a right of reply;

(e) on a point of order; and

(f) by way of personal explanation.

~~16.4~~12.5 **Amendments to motions**

An amendment to a motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:

(a) to refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual for consideration or reconsideration;

i. to leave out words;

ii. to leave out words and insert or add others; or

iii. to insert or add words

iv. as long as the effect of i)~~1~~ to ~~3~~iii) is not to negate the motion.

(b) Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of provided that the Chairman may permit two or more ~~A~~amendments to be discussed (but not voted on) together if circumstances suggest that this course of action would facilitate the proper conduct of the Council's business.

(c) If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.

(d) If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended takes the place of the original motion. This becomes the substantive motion to which any further amendments are moved.

(e) After an amendment has been carried, the Chairman will read out the amended motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none, put it to the vote.

~~16.5~~12.6 **Alteration of motion**

12.6.1A Member may alter a motion of which he/she has given notice with the consent of the meeting. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

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12.6.2 A Member may alter a motion which he/she has moved without notice with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

12.6.3 Only alterations which could be made as an amendment may be made.

~~16.6~~12.7 **Withdrawal of motion**

12.7.1 A Member may withdraw a motion which he/she has moved with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder.

12.7.2 The meeting's consent will be signified without discussion.

12.7.3 No member may speak on the motion after the mover has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused.

~~16.7~~12.8 **Right of reply**

12.8.1 The mover of a motion has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.

12.8.2 If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion has the right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment, but may not otherwise speak on it.

12.8.3 The mover of the amendment has no right of reply to the debate on his/her amendment.

~~16.8~~12.9 **Motions which may be moved during debate**

When a motion is under debate, no other motion may be moved except the following procedural motions:

(a) to withdraw a motion;

(b) to amend a motion;

(c) to proceed to the next business;

(d) that the question be now put;

(e) to adjourn a debate;

(f) to adjourn a meeting;

(g) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules; and

(h) Not to hear further a Member named under Rule ~~23.3~~18.2 or excluded from the meeting under Rule ~~23.4~~18.3.

~~16.9~~12.10 **Closure motions**

12.10.1 A Member may move, without comment, the following motions at the end of a speech of another Member;

(a) to proceed to the next business;

(b) that the question be now put;

(c) to adjourn a debate; or

(d) to adjourn a meeting.

12.10.2 If a motion to proceed to next business is seconded and the Chairman ~~thinks~~ considers the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will give the mover of the original motion (if there is one) a right of reply and then put the procedural motion to the vote.

12.10.3 If a motion that the question be now put is seconded and the Chairman ~~thinks~~ considers the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote. If it is passed he/she will give the

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mover of the original motion (if there is one) a right of reply before putting his/her motion to the vote.

12.10.4 If a motion to adjourn the debate or to adjourn the meeting is seconded and the Chairman ~~thinks~~ considers the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be so discussed on that occasion, he/she will put the procedural motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply.

~~16.10~~12.11 **Point of order** — Formatted: Font: Bold

A point of order is a request from a member to the Chairman to rule on an alleged irregularity in the procedure of the meeting. A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Chairman will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of procedure set out in these Council Rules of Procedure or the law. The member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken. The ruling of the Chairman on the matter will be final.

~~16.11~~12.12 **Personal explanation** — Formatted: Font: Bold

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate. The ruling of the Chairman on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

~~17~~13. State of the District Debate — Formatted: Underline

~~17~~13.1 **Calling of the debate** — Formatted: Font: Bold

The Leader may call a state of the District debate annually on a date to be agreed with the Chairman.

~~17~~13.2 **Form of the debate** — Formatted: Font: Bold

The Leader will decide the form of the debate with the aim of enabling the widest possible public involvement and publicity. This may include holding workshops and other events prior to or during the state of the District debate.

~~17~~13.3 **Chairing of the debate** — Formatted: Font: Bold

The debate will be chaired by the Chairman.

~~17~~13.4 **Results of the debate** — Formatted: Font: Bold

13.4.1 The results of the debate will be:

(a) disseminated as widely as possible within the community and to agencies and organisations in the area; and

(b) considered by the Leader in proposing the Budget and Policy Framework to the Council for the coming year.

13.4.2 If the Leader fails to call a debate within nine months in any municipal year, it may be called by notice in writing to the Chief Executive signed by any 10 Members of the Council and that the debate shall be heard on the subject and form specified by those 10 Members.

~~18~~14. Previous Decisions and Motions — Formatted: Underline

~~18~~14.1 **Motion to rescind a previous decision** — Formatted: Font: Bold

A motion or amendment to rescind a decision made at a meeting of Council within the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion is signed by at least 10 Members.

~~18~~14.2 **Motion similar to one previously rejected**

14.2.1 This Procedure Rule 14.2 shall not apply to Motions moved in pursuance of a recommendation of a Committee.

14.2.2 A motion or amendment in similar terms to one that has been rejected at a meeting of Council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least ten members.

14.2.3 Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no one can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months.

~~Provided that the Procedure Rule shall not apply to Motions moved in pursuance of a recommendation of a Committee.~~

~~19~~15. Voting

~~19~~15.1 **Majority**

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members voting and present in the room at the time the question is put.

~~19~~15.2 **Chairman's casting vote**

If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chairman chooses to exercise a casting vote.

~~19~~15.3 **Method of Voting**

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rule ~~19~~15.4 the Chairman will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

~~19~~15.4 **Recorded vote**

If ~~ten~~ 10 members present at the meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes.

~~19~~15.5 **Right to require individual vote to be recorded**

Where any member requests it immediately after the vote is taken, their vote will be recorded in the minutes to show whether they voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

~~19~~15.6 **Voting on appointments**

15.6.1 If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken.

15.6.2 The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

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~~19~~15.7 **Voting on the Budget and Council Tax**

At a Budget meeting, the vote on any motion or amendment relating to the setting of the Budget (revenue and capital budget) and Council Tax or precept shall be by roll call and the names of Members who voted as for, against or in abstention to any such motion or amendment shall be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

~~20~~16. Minutes

~~20~~16.1 **Signing the minutes**

16.1.1 The Chairman will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting.

16.1.2 The Chairman will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record.

16.1.3 The only part of the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.

16.2 **No requirement to sign minutes of previous meeting at an E~~e~~xtra-ordinary meeting**

Where in relation to any meeting, the next meeting for the purpose of signing the minutes is a meeting called under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 (an extraordinary meeting), then the next following meeting (being a meeting called otherwise than under that paragraph) will be treated as a suitable meeting for the purposes of paragraph 41(1) and (2) of Schedule 12 relating to signing of minutes.

~~20.2~~16.3 **Form of minutes**

Minutes will contain all motions and amendments in the exact form and order the Chairman put them.

~~**21. Record of Attendance**~~

~~Every member of the Council attending a meeting of the Council, the Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Policy Development Groups, Committees and Sub-Committees of which he/she is a member, shall sign his/her name in the attendance book or sheet provided for that purpose.~~

~~All members present during the whole or part of a meeting must sign their names on the attendance book or sheets before the conclusion of every meeting to assist with the record of attendance.~~

~~22~~17. Exclusion of Public

Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution or Rule ~~24~~ 19 (Disturbance by Public) or otherwise permissible in law.

~~23~~18. Members' Conduct

~~23~~18.1 **Speaking at meetings**

18.1.1 When a Member speaks at full Council he/she must address the meeting through the Chairman.

18.1.2 If more than one member signifies their intention to speak, the Chairman will ask one to speak.

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18.1.3 Other Members must remain silent whilst a Member is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.

~~23.2 Chairman speaking~~

~~When the Chairman stands during a debate, any member speaking at the time must stop and sit down. The meeting must be silent.~~

~~23.3~~18.2 **Member not to be heard further**

18.2.1 If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chairman by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chairman may move that the member not be heard further.

18.2.2 If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

~~23.4~~18.3 **Member to leave the meeting**

18.3.1 If the Member continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the Chairman may move that either the Member leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period.

18.3.2 If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

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~~23.5~~18.4 **General disturbance**

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

~~24~~19. Disturbance by the Public

~~24~~19.1 **Removal of member of the public**

19.1.1 If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned.

19.1.2. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room.

~~24~~19.2 **Clearance of part of meeting room**

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

~~25~~20. Suspension and Amendment of Council Procedure Rules

~~25~~20.1 **Suspension**

All of these Council Rules of Procedure except Rules ~~19.5~~5.3, ~~20.2~~15.5, ~~and 27~~ 16.3 may be suspended by motion on notice or without notice if at least one half of the whole number of members of the Council are present. Suspension can only be for the duration of the meeting.

~~25~~20.2 **Amendment**

Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Council Rules of Procedure will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council unless the amendment is the subject of a report from the Standards Committee.

~~**26. Application to Committees and Sub-Committees**~~

~~All of the Council Rules of Procedure apply to meetings of full Council.~~

~~The Rules which apply to meetings of the Cabinet (except Rule 4), Committees and Sub-Committees are as follows:~~

~~(a) Rule 4 – Appointment of substitute members~~

~~(b) Rule 5 – Time and Place of Meetings~~

~~(c) Rule 6 – Notice and Summons to Meeting~~

~~(d) Rule 7 – Chairing of the Meeting~~

~~(e) Rule 8 – Quorum~~

~~(f) Rule 11 – Public Question Time~~

~~(g) Rule 16 – Rules of Debate~~

~~(h) Rule 19 – Voting (with the exception of 19.4 and 19.6)~~

~~(i) Rule 20.1 – Signing the Minutes~~

~~(j) Rule 21 – Record of Attendance~~

~~(k) Rule 22 – Exclusion of Public~~

~~(l) Rule 23 – Members Conduct~~

~~(m) Rule 24 – Disturbance by Public~~

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~~(n) Rule 25 – Suspension of Procedure Rule~~

~~In applying Rule 16 to meetings of the Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees, Rules 16.4, (content and length of speeches) and 16.5 (when a member may speak again) shall not apply.~~

~~**27. Interpretation of Procedure Rules**~~

~~The ruling of the Chairman as to the construction or application of any of these Procedure Rules, or as to any proceedings of the Council, shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Council.~~

Scrutiny Chairman's Annual Report

It's been a busy year for the Scrutiny Committee, with nine full meetings and one special meeting (with hybrid accessibility) and briefings. We started the year by introducing our new way of working, that of 'critical friend' giving robust clear guidance to Cabinet, Council, officers and external bodies / organisations. Both pre- and post-decision making. This approach was given significant praise and encouragement by the external review team, who highlighted our efforts.

An early informal meeting developed and added to the works program, with a keen emphasis towards 'adding to and ongoing'. Of the varying work that Scrutiny Committee undertook we actively encouraged public participation – a key facet of local government activity. As usual, committee deliberated and debated a wide range of topics, reaching decisions and democratically resolving to advise the various bodies engaged.

Topics of note were:

- Decisions of Cabinet, Council, Officers and external organisations
- Corporate Plan and mid-point review
- Six monthly Establishment updates
- Collection of debt
- Voids
- Planning consultants
- Planning enforcement working group recommendations
- Planning Procedure
- Six monthly whistleblowing updates.
- The Leader's Annual Report
- Participatory budgeting
- Annual report of complaints and compliments
- S106 agreements
- Does local government work for women
- 3 RD Ltd business plan x 3
- 3 RD Ltd business appraisals for sites
- Cost of living crisis
- Motion 583 – protecting rivers and seas
- Scrutiny agenda process
- Ongoing budget updates

In November 2022, Dean Emery and I visited the anaerobic digester plant at Cannington, near Bridgwater. We gave a detailed report of the visit to the Scrutiny Committee and followed up with more questions for the owner.

Finally, it has been a privilege and pleasure to chair the Scrutiny Committee and I am indebted to officers and members for their tireless hard work, thus making our meetings well informed. There were a number of comings and goings of officers and members, as to be expected, the transition was smooth and seamless. A large thank you to everyone.

Cllr Simon Clist (Upper Culm)

Chairman – Scrutiny Committee

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Audit Committee 2022-23

Chairman's Report

At the start of the new civic year the membership of the Audit Committee was bolstered from seven to nine members, with councillors Nikki Woollatt and Ray Stanley being welcomed as new members. The increase in the committee's size is a recognition of the important role the committee plays in the governance of the Council.

At each of our bimonthly meetings we receive reports from both internal auditor, Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) and external auditor Grant Thornton. We also receive regular performance and risk reports. Devon Audit Partnership, audit the many services and functions across the Council and provide us with their reports and opinion on risks and the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls and update us on progress made by services in addressing recommendations made by internal audit. At our January meeting we were also presented with their Counter Fraud Resilience and Assessment Report.

The Audit Committee approved the updated 'Data Quality Policy' at our November meeting and updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and Strategy' at our January meeting. We also recommend approval of a new Procurement Strategy. At our November meeting we considered the business plan being presented by 3 Rivers Development and provided Cabinet with our opinion and recommended that the business plan not be supported in the form presented, due to the level of risk to the Council.

Grant Thornton have been our external auditor for many years, they are however appointed on our behalf through the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) scheme, of which we opt to be part and following the most recent tendering exercise Bishop Fleming are to be our new external auditors commencing with the 2023/24 year. Grant Thornton will still audit the 2022/23 accounts and therefore provide their reports and opinions to the Audit Committee in respect of that audit, but the Committee will also start to hear from Bishop Fleming over the course of the next year. Our thanks to Grant Thornton for all the work they have done for Mid Devon and the support and advice they have provided to the committee over many years.

As the Committee chairman I have attended meetings Devon Audit Partnership Committee, on which each member authority is represented and also South West Councils Chairs of Audit Forum. This included attending a very useful Chair of Audit and Governance workshop at Taunton Racecourse in June. It is always good to meet members from other authorities hear about the work they undertake and issues they experience.

My thanks my Vice Chairman Cllr Andy Wyer for his support, and all the other members of the Audit Committee for their commitment and work. Thanks to officers of the Council for all they do, Andrew Jarrett, Deputy CEO & S151 officer, Paul Deal, Corporate Manager for Finance and his team who put together the Council's accounts, Matthew Page, Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste and Paul Middlemass from Devon Audit Partnership. A special thank you to Sarah Lees our Member Services Officer who ensures the efficient working of our committee.

Cllr Neal Davey

Chairman of the Audit Committee

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Economy Policy Development Group – 2022/2023

Chairman's Annual Report

Overview

During 2022/23 the Group received updates on a range of initiatives which will contribute towards economic recovery. In summary these included:

- A presentation regarding Urban Renewal in Devon's Coastal and Market Towns
- Covid 19 Economic Recovery Update
- Economic Updates regarding Junction 27 and Junction 28
- A presentation from Eden
- Various UK Shared Prosperity Fund & Rural England Prosperity Fund reports
- Culm Garden Village Employment and Skills Strategy
- A New Tiverton Shopfront Enhancement Scheme
- A New Crediton Shopfront Enhancement Scheme
- Various Budget updates and financial discussions
- Agricultural Overview paper
- Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document and Delivery Plan

In addition throughout the year members have been provided with a number of reports and presentations providing data and analysis regarding the current economic position nationally and locally. Members have also been updated with progress regarding other initiatives such as:

- Tiverton Job Fairs in partnership with Tiverton JobCentre Plus (DWP) at Tiverton Pannier Market for local employers and job-seekers
- Cullompton Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) –public realm enhancements
- Cullompton Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) - distribution of grants
- Asylum Seekers support and Accommodation
- Major Infrastructure updates
- Various grant assistance programmes for households
- Successful Job Fairs for Ukrainian refugees
- Visit Mid Devon – Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality Business
- Love Your Town Centre grants
- Field to fork programme

For the first part of the year the Economic Development Team was fully engaged in managing and delivering the Covid-related Business Grants, with a total of £1.97 million of grants being distributed to struggling businesses in the last round of funding. Since then the Shared Prosperity and the Rural England Prosperity Funds have been the main focus for the team. The Policy Development Group has played an important role in the formulation of Shared Prosperity Investment Plans as part of the District's

submissions to government. The Policy Development Group will continue to play an important role in overseeing the delivery of these plans over the next few years.

Cllr John Downes
Chairman of the Economy Policy Development Group

Chairman's Report: The Environment Policy Development Group (PDG) 2022-2023.

Environment PDG has acted to further environmental sustainability in the round, both within the way the Council operates and across the Council's remit on behalf of Mid Devon's communities. Environment PDG has shaped, scrutinised and recommended important initiatives brought forward by officers, such as:

- the Bin-it-123 scheme; (*already making a positive difference)
- electric vehicle rapid chargers;
- revenue reviews and spending plans.

With officer support, Environment PDG Members worked together in a joined-up manner between different groups and committees.

- Members from all PDGs participate in the Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG) which has helped explore and steer activity on a wide range of topics from river pollution, to active travel, to better procurement.***
- Our sustainable farming report has provided online guidance and fed into the Economy PDG's rural economy report.
- The PDG and NZAG held a special meeting on budgets in the autumn, and PDG successfully highlighted spend priorities to Cabinet.
- The PDG has indirectly supported the new Climate Emergency planning policy statement.

On October 10 2022 Waste and Recycling moved to three weekly bin collections, hereby becoming the second District in Devon to adopt the practice after East Devon. This followed a trial of the scheme in the summer of 2021 and a decision taken by the Cabinet to introduce the scheme in February 2022. The design and implementation of the scheme had to be carried out at the same time as continuing to collect all waste and recycling from the District and included;

-The sending out of letters and leaflets to residents to raise awareness of the scheme and give detail on how it would work.
-Distributing 37K bins and then dealing with requests for additional bins or supplementary seagull sacks from households.
-Providing site visits and education to residents on how to adapt to the new scheme.
-Increased patrolling of our town centres, car parks and other key areas of the district by our Environment Enforcement team to identify any arising issues or concerns.

Congratulations to all staff and operational management in making the transition to the new scheme work. Our thanks to our Communications, Finance, Customer First and Human Resources teams for all their contributions and support to the project management team.

Our Environment Enforcement Team have had an excellent year in both delivering best enforcement practice and reporting on our results to members. The team have dealt with a wide variety of cases including abandoned vehicles, fly typing, environment enforcement and parking. Our statistics and their follow through have become a key component of our Continuous Improvement programme as elected members have highlighted issues and concerns which affect the cleanliness of our District and protect its open spaces and parks. The work of the District Officers has also been of central

importance to us moving to three weekly bin collections by us patrolling town centres, car parks and other key areas of the District to proactively identify any arising issues or concerns.

Going forward to next year I hope to be able to serve on the Environment Committee again. Balancing the demands of tight budgets with ever increasing demands on public services and at the same time as supporting our communities to live as sustainably as possible is the greatest challenge our generation faces. I look forward to being part of the discussions and debates that help that future.

I would like to thank fellow members for their contribution to the debates this year, officers for their guidance, support and professional recommendations and I would particularly like to thank Carol and Sarah for organising the agendas and report packs and ensuring everything runs smoothly. Your help and support is really appreciated.

Community Policy Development Group Report 2022 - 2023

Introduction

I would like to thank Carole Oliphant for her help as clerk to the committee. I would also like to say thank you to all the officers that wrote reports and attended the meeting. I appreciated the committee for taking part in discussions and for all their input throughout the year - without whose help it would have been difficult.

7 June 2022

- Crediton Area History & Museum Society

- Revenue and capital revenue and capital revenue and capital outturn 2021/22

- Unauthorised encampment policy – three yearly review
    - RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the updated Unauthorised Encampment Policy and procedure for managing and enforcing unauthorised encampments as detailed in annex A be adopted (Procedure for Managing and Enforcing Unauthorised Encampments)

- Corporate Plan 2020-24 – Mid Point Review

2 August 2022

- Performance and risk outturn report for 2021/22

- Mid Devon as a trauma informed council:
    - RESOLVED to recommend to the Cabinet that:
        1. It recommended to Full Council the degree of investment the Council would require towards becoming a Trauma Informed Council
        2. Subject to recommendation 1 that it recommended to Full Council a stepped approach was adopted, as set out in annex 1 (Mid Devon District Council Trauma Informed Stepped Approach)

- Report of anti-social behaviour working group
    - RESOLVED to recommend to the Cabinet:
        1. That Members of the ASB working group are consulted on the review of the Housing ASB policy (due to take place this year, and to be incorporated into Neighbourhood and Community Standard Policy) through an informal, in-depth discussion with the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing and other officers.
        2. That information around ASB and how to report it is clearly communicated to Members and the public.
        3. That the Mid Devon Senior Inspector is requested to provide Members with a monthly update on policing in the District and consideration is given to other ways to engage with members.
        4. That the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) review the Community Trigger process.

27 September 2022

- 6 month Leisure – Update

22 November 2022

- Medium term financial plan

24 January 2022

- Council tax reduction – banded scheme
    - RESOLVED to recommend to the Cabinet:
      1) To increase the maximum reduction from 85% to 100%
      2) To disregard the housing element of universal credit in the calculation
      3) To increase the income bands by inflation each year
      4) That any income from welfare provision to be disregarded
      5) That this policy is adopted

- Draft Budget
    - The Policy Development Group agreed the following should be considered by officers:
        1. Planned maintenance within Leisure services being reduced, as long as this does not impact on health and safety.
        2. A vacancy factor be set for Leisure services, as long as this does not impact on health and safety or income generation.
        3. In addition the PDG AGREED that officers should not consider the following:
        4. Savings within Community Safety as this should be considered a high priority service area which should be protected.
        5. Savings within Public Health as this should be considered a high priority service area which should be protected

Annual report of the Chairman of the Homes PDG
2022 - 2023

The Homes PDG targets and aims for 2022/2023 were to see progress in:

1. Housing provision
2. Homelessness
3. The improvement of Mid Devon's tenants properties and environment
4. Housing standards in the private sector

The construction of the award-winning modular homes at St. Andrews is underway, with similar pods at Shapland Place, Tiverton (on the site of the former dilapidated garages). With all the hurdles to progress out of the way, completion and occupancy of these homes is possible before the end of this Council in May.

Additional Council building schemes are near to fruition at Siddalls Gardens and Beech Road, Tiverton.

Mid Devon's housing build programme for the next 5 years has around 500 homes planned including 70 at Post Hill (currently at the tender stage after consultation and planning consent) as just a small part of our ambitious Housing Strategy.

Our Neighbourhood Team has been commended for its innovative approach to tackling Anti-social behaviour and dealing with loan sharks preying on our tenants.

Homelessness is to be combated by two former HMO's being purchased to provide temporary accommodation to lessen the reliance on hotel's and B&B's etc. The successful bid for three year's rough sleeper funding for 2023 – 2025 (totalling £346,000) will be of great assistance.

The desperate plight of Ukrainian citizens has seen Mid Devon rising to the occasion. 70 plus hosts providing support for over 200 guests. Agreement is in place with DLUHC to draw down up to £1.3m of Local Authority Housing Fund monies to support provision of additional temporary accommodation to alleviate housing pressures under the Afghan and Ukraine schemes. The effective and rapid roll-out of support for these unfortunate souls is a credit to our officers and staff.

In the private sector, Damp and Mould legislation, with regard to the tackling of standards in private rented accommodation, has been embraced by our housing teams.

Also under the umbrella of the Homes PDG, mandatory tenant satisfaction measures, anti-social behaviour (and its effects) and other numerous matters, to the benefit of the public welfare, have been addressed.

The Homes PDG thank all officers and staff for their help, commitment and assistance.

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