



# NW Cullompton Urban Extension Supplementary Planning Document

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

**April 2022**

## **1. NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

### *Purpose, scope and content*

1.1 The NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan bridges 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 Masterplan is set out in 5 Chapters. A brief description of each part is provided below:

1. Introduction

This sets out the relationship between planning policy, the existing adopted Masterplan SPD and the draft revised Masterplan, and set out the purpose the Masterplan.

2. About the site

This introduces the site within the wider context of Cullompton. It provides background and context including land ownerships, constraints and opportunities across the urban extension.

3. Development, vision and concept

This outlines the overarching ambition for the development of the urban extension as an attractive, well designed neighbourhood, that is set out within a number of development concepts and guiding principles.

4. Creating the structure

This provides specific detail for the Masterplan area in terms of character, densities, movement, landscape and open space, drainage and character, whilst providing an illustrative Framework Plan and land use budget.

5. Delivering the place

This section details the infrastructure requirements for the urban extension and delivery including S106 contributions and their triggers as well housing delivery rates and phasing of development, as well as monitoring and review.

### *Relationship with the National Planning Policy*

1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021), in 'Identifying Land for Homes' paragraph 73 sets out the following:

*“The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities. Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should:*

*a) consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area’s economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;*

*b) ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access;*

*c) set clear expectations for the quality of the development and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles), and ensure that a variety of homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community will be provided;*

*d) make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery, given the lead-in times for large scale sites, and identify opportunities for supporting rapid implementation (such as through joint ventures or locally-led development corporations); and*

*e) consider whether it is appropriate to establish Green Belt around or adjoining new developments of significant size.”*

1.4 The NW Cullompton Urban Extension was allocated in the Mid Devon Local Plan (2013-2033) as an urban extension to Cullompton town as it is considered to be well located and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities<sup>1</sup>. Policies CU1-CU6 are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework. The NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD provides further detail on the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area’s economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains. It ensures the community has sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself as well as setting out clear expectations for the quality of the development to ensure there are a variety of homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community. It also makes a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery.

#### *Relationship with the Mid Devon Local Plan*

1.5 The adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 (“Local Plan”) Policies CU1-CU6 NW Cullompton Urban Extension provide the policy baseline for the more detailed guidance included in the NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD:

#### **Policy CU1 NW Cullompton**

A site of 100 hectares to the North West of Cullompton is allocated for mixed use development subject to the following:

- a) 1350 dwellings with 28% affordable housing to include at least five pitches for gypsies and travellers and provision of extra care housing;
- b) 5% of housing to be provided as serviced plots for sale to self-builders;
- c) 10,000 square metres commercial floorspace to include a care home or retirement complex, and other suitable uses such as a hotel or leisure development;
- d) Provision of at least 28 hectares strategic green infrastructure;
- e) Provision of a road linking Tiverton Road to Willand Road, and transport provision to ensure appropriate accessibility for all modes;

---

<sup>1</sup> The NW Cullompton urban extension was previously allocated through the Mid Devon Allocations & Infrastructure DPD which was superseded by the adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033.

- f) Environmental protection and enhancement;
- g) Community facilities and primary school to meet local needs arising;
- h) Carbon reduction and air quality improvements;
- i) An agreed phasing strategy to bring forward development and infrastructure in step and retain the overall viability of development; and
- j) 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 CU2 North West Cullompton Transport Provision**

As part of the development of North West Cullompton, the following transport infrastructure will be provided and funded by all new development within the site:

- a) Provision of a network of streets linking to the existing highway network, including a through route linking Tiverton Road to Willand Road suitable for buses and all agricultural vehicles;
- b) 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;
- c) Cycle and pedestrian links to and from the town centre and within the mixed-use urban extension;
- d) Implementation of travel plans and other non-traditional transport measures to minimise carbon footprint and air quality impacts;
- e) Financial contributions to bus service enhancements within, into and out of, the mixed-use urban extension;
- f) Financial contributions to bus service enhancements between Cullompton, Exeter, Tiverton Parkway and Tiverton;
- g) Financial contributions towards the Town Centre Relief Road and traffic management measures on Willand Road and Tiverton Road; and
- h) 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.

**Policy CU3 North West Cullompton Environmental Protection and Green Infrastructure**

As part of the development of North West Cullompton, the following environmental protection and enhancement measures will be provided and funded by all new development within the site:

- a) A strategic landscaping and tree planting scheme 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;

b) An area of 28 hectares for strategic green infrastructure, laid out and managed with an appropriate mix of public parkland, open space, landscaping and potential local nature reserve;

c) Areas of equipped and laid out public open space, totalling 0.7 hectares of equipped play, 2.6 hectares amenity open space, 4 hectares for parks, sports and recreation grounds, 0.7 hectares of allotments and 0.1 hectares for a community garden adjoining the health centre;

d) Protection and enhancement where possible of all existing Public Rights of Way;

e) Appropriate provision for sewerage systems serving the development, and provision of a strategically designed, and phased, Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme to deal with all surface water from the development and arrangements for future maintenance;

f) Detailed archaeological investigation and measures to record, and where necessary, protect the archaeological interest of the site through appropriate design, layout and mitigation; and

g) Design solutions which respect the settings of listed buildings within and adjoining the site.

#### **Policy CU4 North West Cullompton Community Facilities**

As part of the development of North West Cullompton, the following community infrastructure will be provided and funded by all new development within the site:

a) A serviced site of 2.1 hectares for a new primary school at no cost to the Local Education Authority;

b) Provision of a 420-place school with early years provision and a children's centre service delivery base funded by appropriate contributions from developers;

c) A site of 1.0 hectare for community uses including provision of a multi-purpose community building

d) Contribution towards sporting and leisure facilities; and

e) Contributions towards a new recycling centre to serve Cullompton.

#### **Policy CU5 North West Cullompton Carbon Reduction and Air Quality**

The development of North West Cullompton will be required to implement a Carbon Reduction and Low Emissions Strategy funded by 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:

a) Renewable and low carbon energy to provide a proportion of the site's energy use;

- b) 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;
- c) Measures to encourage the sustainable treatment of waste;
- d) Measures to manage the impacts of construction;
- e) Offsite tree planting where sufficient cannot be accommodated onsite;
- f) Energy improvements to existing buildings;
- g) Other measures to capture or mitigate carbon emissions and air quality impacts from development.

**Policy CU6 North West Cullompton Phasing**

A phasing strategy will be required for the development of North West 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:

- a) Provision of affordable housing will be in broad step with the market housing;
- b) Provision of all serviced self-build plots after the ‘through route’ linking Tiverton Road to Willand Road is operational;
- c) Provision of commercial development after the delivery of the first 500 houses and prior to the delivery of the first 800 houses, at a rate of at least 0.9 hectare per 150 occupied dwellings thereafter;
- d) Provision of 8.8 hectares of strategic green infrastructure including equipped public open space and one playing pitch prior to the occupation of no more than 500 dwellings;
- e) Implementation of local bus service improvements prior to the occupation of no more than 500 dwellings and strategic bus service enhancements phased with development;
- f) Occupation of no more than 500 dwellings before the opening of a ‘through route’ linking Willand Road to Tiverton Road and the delivery of traffic management measures on Willand Road;
- g) Transfer of land for a primary school together with right of access to the Local Education Authority prior to the commencement of the development on the site, and transfer of funding for education facilities in instalments;
- h) The necessary sustainable urban drainage features, and linking pipe work is integrated and phased appropriately in step with development and, where required, temporary measures should be taken during construction to protect downstream areas from additional water run-off; and
- i) Occupation of no more than 600 dwellings prior to the completion of the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road.

### *Status of the NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD*

- 1.6 The NW Cullompton Urban Extension 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. 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 (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.

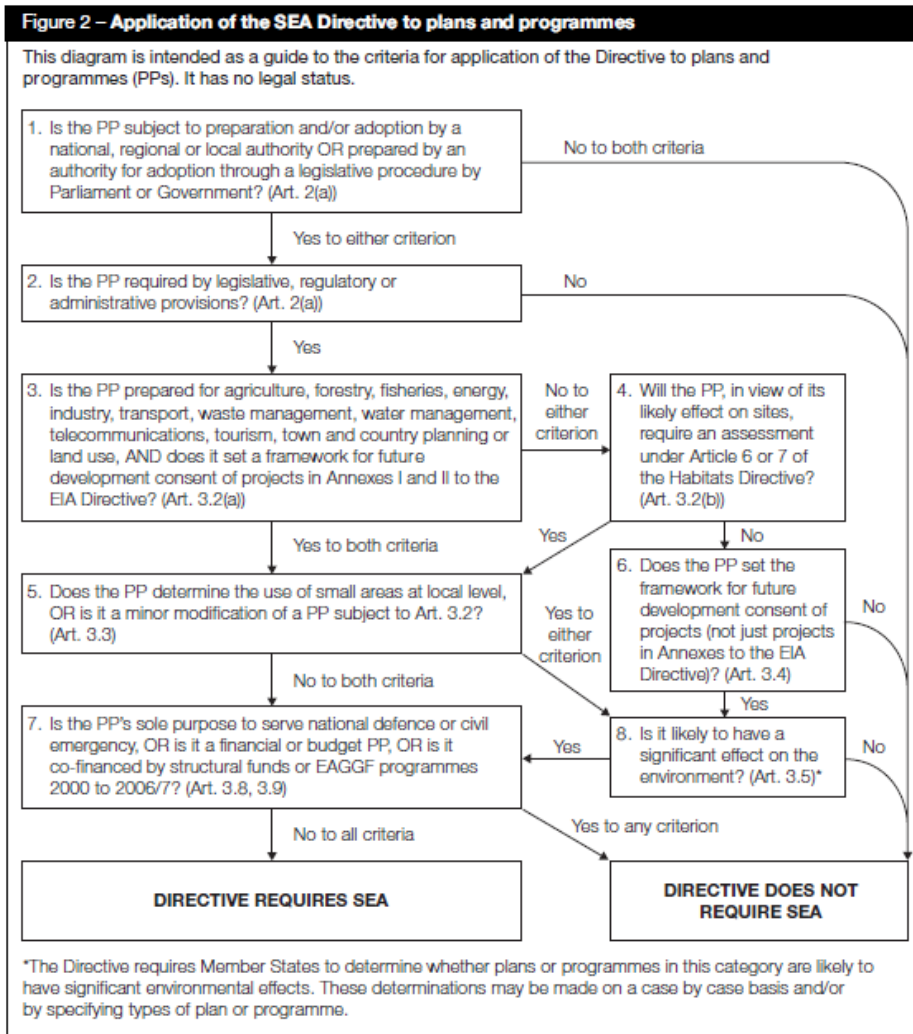


Diagram 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes (Figure 2 extracted from 'A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive')

2.5 Table 1 below sets out the Council's response to the above questions in order to clearly assess the whether there is a requirement for the NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD to be subject a full SEA.

2.6 Table 2 provides the Council's assessment of likely significant effects of the NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD on the environment, in accordance with the screening report process in Table 1.

**Table 1: Screening of the Mid Devon NW Cullompton 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	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.



Stage	Y/N	Reason
Government? (Art.2(a))		<b>Go to STAGE 2</b>
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.  <b>Go to STAGE 3.</b>
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 Mid Devon Local Plan (2013-2033) by providing detailed guidance as to how these policies are interpreted in relation to the site allocation NW Cullompton Urban Extension.  The area covered comprises approx. 100ha to provide approx. 1,350 dwellings. The SPD does not create new policy or identity specific sites for development.  <b>Go to STAGE 5</b>
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))	N/A	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 minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art 3.2? (Art.3.3)	Y	The SPD will be material consideration in planning applications for new developments. It provides detailed guidance to adopted Local Plan policy (minor modification).  <b>Go to STAGE 8</b>
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)	N/A	
7. Is the SPD's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or	N/A	

Stage	Y/N	Reason
programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)		
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.  <b>DIRECTIVE DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA</b> of the SPD

**Table 2: Determining the likely significance of effects of the NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD on the environment**

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
<b>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to -</b>		
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 the relevant NW Cullompton Urban Extension policies of the Local Plan and therefore 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 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 a view to promoting sustainable development;	N	The SPD will help the integration of environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable development as part of the development proposals. This includes retention of hedgerows and trees within the development as well as green spinal corridors, areas of open space, allotment and orchards.
d) Environmental problems	N	The environmental problems are

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
relevant to the SPD; and		consistent with those set out in the relevant NW Cullompton Urban Extension policies in the Local Plan which include flood risk, biodiversity and landscape. Planning policy in relation to these environmental problems is principally established through the National Planning Policy Framework and the Mid Devon Local Plan Review.
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.
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to -</b>		
a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	N	The SPD has an overarching vision for an attractive and well-designed green neighbourhood. This will ensure the development has positive social and environmental impacts. 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 in Local Plan 2013-2033 and 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 the delivery of Green Infrastructure, and its long term management and maintenance for ecological net gain.
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due	N	The SPD is likely to have a positive impact on human health by

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
to accidents);		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 is limited to approx. 1350 dwellings (estimated population at 2.3 occupants per dwelling: 3,105).
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	Previous work has revealed a number of areas of archaeological potential, including a Scheduled Ancient Monument adjacent to the site. There are a number of Listed Buildings and built features in reasonable proximity. The SPD seeks a positive approach to maintain, or improve the 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 site is within 4 miles of the Blackdown Hills AONB. Although this development is highly unlikely to adversely affect this protected landscape, the SPD falls within the framework of the Local Plan which includes Policy DM27 protecting landscapes.

### 3. Conclusions

3.1 This SEA screening has identified that the draft NW Cullompton Urban Extension 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 NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD to be subject to a full SEA.

#### **4. 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 NW Cullompton Urban Extension Masterplan SPD and will also be subject to public consultation.