

Stockland Neighbourhood Plan  
Sustainability Appraisal  
for Stockland Parish Council

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## **Contents**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Stockland Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Methodology</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. SA Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Changes made to the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the Sustainability Appraisal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Other changes made to the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan and Sustainability Appraisal Implications</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>7. Monitoring and Review</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>8. Conclusions</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – Sustainability Appraisal Checklist - Sustainability Appraisal of the draft Stockland Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>14</b>

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process to assess the environmental, social and economic effects of plans. The purpose is to ensure that plans contribute to delivering sustainable development.
- 1.2. SA is legally required for certain types of plans. However the Department of Communities and Local Government have advised that a separate SA of Neighbourhood Plans is not always required. East Devon District Council has advised the Stockland Neighbourhood Planning Group that a Strategic Environmental Assessment<sup>1</sup> and Habitats Regulation Assessment<sup>2</sup> are not required for the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan (SNP)<sup>3</sup>. The SNP Steering Group have decided to undertake a SA as part of good practice. Clare Reid Consultancy was commissioned to do a SA of the SNP.

### 2. Stockland Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1. The SNP sets out the community's Vision and priorities for how they would like to see the Parish change over the plan period and the local planning policies which will be taken into account in planning decisions. The Plan covers the period between 2014 and 2031.
- 2.2. Stockland Parish is situated within East Devon District. It is a traditional rural Devon parish at the heart of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The main (but small) settlement is Stockland village, surrounded by rural countryside and hamlets. In 2011, the census recorded that the parish had a population of 661 residents in 311 households. Overall, Stockland Parish is likely to see limited growth over the next fifteen years.
- 2.3. The Plan was developed following extensive community consultation, including:
  - Public exhibitions, meetings and events;
  - A community questionnaire sent to all households;
  - Updates on a dedicated 'Our Plan' page of the village website;
  - Contact with local businesses and groups;
  - Directly contacting wider-than-local organisations and agencies (strategic stakeholders) which have an interest in planning issues in the parish; and,
  - Consultation 'windows' during which comments have been invited on draft documents

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<sup>1</sup> Required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 which transpose the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment" (known as the SEA Directive)

<sup>2</sup> Required under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which transpose the requirements of the European Directive 92/43/EEC "on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora" (known as the Habitats Directive)

<sup>3</sup> Stockland Neighbourhood Development Plan Screening Report, East Devon District Council, March 2015

- 2.4. The SNP includes policies relating to:
- (a) Natural Environment
  - (b) Built and Historic Environment
  - (c) Housing and Population
  - (d) Community facilities and Services
  - (e) Transport and Access
  - (f) Economy and Employment
  - (g) Energy and Low Carbon.
- 2.5. It does not allocate sites or include housing provision.
- 2.6. The SNP is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the East Devon Local Plan (EDLP) as the primary development plan for the area, which was subject to SEA/HRA and adopted on 28 January 2016<sup>4</sup>. The SNP also has to be in general conformity with the Minerals Local Plan and the Waste Local Plan of Devon County Council which have been subject to separate SAs (available on Devon County Council's website). As the Parish is located within the Blackdown Hills AONB, the policies set out in the AONB Management Plan and other guidance documents (which are advisory rather than carrying statutory weight in the planning system) are also important in Stockland.

### **3. Methodology**

- 3.1. The SA assesses the potential implications of the SNP against a set of social, economic and environmental objectives (see Appendix 1). The SA objectives are taken from the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Report. The SA criteria are taken from the East Devon Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal. This allows a consistent approach to testing the Plans.
- 3.2. For each sustainability objective, the baseline situation is considered, i.e. what the current situation is. This is used to identify any existing issues that need to be considered. The baseline situation and identified issues are drawn from a variety of documents, references are given at the end of Appendix 1. The SA then assesses how the SNP responds to this issue looking at the SNP as a whole. It lists the relevant SNP aims, objectives, and policies. An overall score is given to the SNP relating to each SA objective (see Table 1 below for scoring system). For some objectives, the SNP is not relevant, and so reasons are given for scoping these out of the SA. The purpose of the SA is to highlight where the SNP might have negative impacts on the sustainability objectives, so that recommendations can be given to avoid or mitigate these. The SA also identifies where the SNP could be strengthened to improve its contribution to the delivery of sustainable development.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/emerging-plans-and-policies/the-new-local-plan/local-plan-adoption/>

3.3. An SA assessment was undertaken of the draft Plan prior to consultation (1<sup>st</sup> draft January 2015). This was then updated in July 2015 to take account of changes made to the SNP in the light of the consultation comments (2<sup>nd</sup> Draft / pre-submission). A final SA assessment was made of the Submission Version (February 2016), following changes to the SNP as a result of further consultation, Government policy changes, and the adoption of the East Devon Local Plan.

**Table 1: SA scoring system**

S++ (S= supports)	Strongly supports the SEA objective
S+	Supports the SEA objective
N	Is neutral in effect
C- (C=conflicts)	Potentially works against the SEA objective
C- -	Strongly works against the SEA objective
X	Effects uncertain

#### 4. SA Summary

4.1. The results of the SA are set out in Appendix 1 and summarised in Table 2. The SNP is considered to be positive for all the SA objectives and criteria, apart from E5 relating to natural resources where it was considered to be neutral as the SNP does not include any policies directly relating to this objective.

**Table 2 – Summary of SA scores**

SA Objectives & factors / criteria	SA score
E1 To protect and enhance the landscape and tranquillity of the Blackdown Hills AONB and its setting.	S++
E2 To protect and enhance biodiversity (habitats and species) and geodiversity within and beyond the AONB.	S++
E3 To conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.	S++
E7 To protect the quality and character of individual settlements and material assets.	S++
E4 To mitigate and adapt to climate change including the impacts of flooding.	S+
E5 To protect and enhance natural resources including water, air and soil.	N
E6 To sustain vibrant communities and safeguard human health & wellbeing.	S++
E8 To promote a thriving economy that supports social and environmental objectives.	S+

**5. Changes made to the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the Sustainability Appraisal**

5.1. The draft Stockland Neighbourhood Plan was revised in the light of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The revised draft incorporated the majority of the SA recommendations as set out in Table 3 below. Where changes were not made, the reasoning behind this decision is given by the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

**Table 3 – Sustainability Appraisal Recommendations and changes made to the SNP**

SA Objectives & factors / criteria	Action / recommendations (e.g. consider alternative options and/or mitigation measures)	<i>Changes made to SNP as a result of SA</i>
E1 To protect and enhance the landscape and tranquillity of the Blackdown Hills AONB and its setting.	1. None identified.	1. N/A
E2 To protect and enhance biodiversity (habitats and species) and geodiversity within and beyond the AONB.	2. The Parish Biodiversity Audit provides information about the range of habitats and species that are found in the parish, including a number that are notable or rare. The NP includes policies to protect and enhance the natural environment, specifically highlighting the importance of the Turbaries and hedges. Further information about the range of habitats and species found in the parish could be provided in the supporting text, to guide decisions on developments which could affect these. It could also highlight opportunities for enhancement, such as restoration of dry heathland, or management of habitats for priority species, for when opportunities arise.	2. No changes made. There is reference in the supporting text to the Stockland website which contains detailed information on the Turbaries so the Steering Group felt that it was not necessary to add more detail in the NP.
E3 To conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.	3. The NP Objective 4c) is to <i>Seek ways to repair or demolish derelict buildings and protect and repair those at risk</i> and this is reflected in a Community Action (CA9). Sometimes derelict buildings form an important part of the history of a settlement and can contribute to its character. The NP should be clearer about the circumstances in which	3. CA9 amended to cross-refer to other policies, with reference to the surroundings, historic significance of derelict buildings and potential wildlife impact.

	<p>demolition would be preferable to conservation or preservation (for example the priority should be to conserve listed buildings and those on the local list and other key buildings of architectural interest). Demolition may be preferable where the building detracts from the character of the area, for example as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal. Cross-reference should be made to the Natural Environment policies to ensure that impacts on biodiversity are taken into account, as redundant buildings are often important habitats for wildlife including protected species such as bats and barn owls.</p> <p>4. The aims and objectives do not include reference to the setting of heritage assets, although this is highlighted in the supporting text and in policies BHE2 – <i>Protecting Our Hamlets’ Historic Identity</i> and BHE3– <i>Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design</i>. Policy BHE1 – <i>Protecting Our Valued Historic and Heritage Assets in Stockland Parish</i> should also include reference to the setting of heritage assets.</p> <p>5. There is no reference to the potential impact of conversions and alterations on traditional and historic buildings (where these do not fall under permitted development). Unsympathetic development can affect the character of these buildings, and the cumulative impact of minor changes can also be detrimental to the overall character of a settlement.</p>	<p>4. Reference to the setting of heritage assets added to BHE1.</p> <p>5. Policy BHE1 amended to refer to ‘proposals for development, <u>conversion, alteration or extension..’</u></p>
<p>E7 To protect the quality and character of individual settlements and material assets.</p>	<p>6. Policy BHE2 – <i>Protecting Our Hamlets’ Historic Identity</i> includes protection of locally identified heritage assets and their setting, but does not reference <u>traditional or distinctive features</u> (such</p>	<p>6. Policy BHE2 amended to include reference to ‘<u>traditional or distinctive features</u>’. Supporting text added</p>

**Stockland Neighbourhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal**

	<p>as hedgebanks, stone walls, traditional finger posts, and use of local Chert stone) which might also form an important part of the area’s traditional character.</p>	<p>to read ‘<u>The traditional or distinctive features such as hedge banks, stone walls, traditional finger posts and the use of Chert stone are also important determinants of character</u>’.</p>
<p>E4 To mitigate and adapt to climate change including the impacts of flooding.</p>	<p>7. There is no reference in the NP to flood risk, despite this being identified as an issue in the evidence base. The management of development in areas of flood risk is covered through policies in the NPPF and Local Plan and so the NP may not need additional policies for this. However, the evidence base identifies surface water flooding as an issue, particularly in Stockland village, so further consideration should be given to whether this is something that the NP should include for example through addition of a clause (ii) (d) in Policy BHE3 – <i>Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design</i> which supports the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in development and other measures to reduce surface water run-off.</p>	<p>7. Policy BHE3 amended to add clause (d) <u>include the use of appropriate sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) and other measures to reduce surface water run-off.</u></p>
<p>E5 To protect and enhance natural resources including water, air and soil.</p>	<p>8. The NP includes a Statement of Principle - <i>Impact of Quarrying and Processing of Stone on the Natural Environment</i>. This seeks to address the issues arising from quarrying activities. Local stone quarrying and processing would potentially support some of the SA objectives through providing a source of local stone for buildings (to retain local character and vernacular style). However, it also raises concerns over potential impacts on other SA objectives including on natural resources, landscape, tranquillity and wildlife. It is likely that only <u>small scale</u> quarrying and processing would be appropriate within the AONB, and this</p>	<p>8. This SA recommendation is no longer relevant as the Statement of Principle has been taken out of the Submission draft SNP.</p>

## Stockland Neighbourhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal

	should be included in the Statement of Principle or supporting text.	
<p>E6 To sustain vibrant communities and safeguard human health &amp; wellbeing.</p>	<p>9. The <i>Statement of Principle – The Focus for Any New Housing Development</i> should cross-refer in the supporting text to other policies in the NP, including <i>Policy BHE1 – Protecting Our Valued Historic and Heritage Assets in Stockland Parish</i> and <i>Policy BHE3 – Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design</i> to ensure that any new development enhances the character of the Conservation Area through good design.</p> <p>10. The NP Steering Group should consider whether to add a policy to support the provision of additional open space facilities which address the under-provision in the Parish identified in the East Devon Open Space Review 2014.</p> <p>11. There is no reference however to supporting measures that address the issues identified in the Parish Plan of improving road safety and reducing traffic speeds.</p> <p>12. A number of the NP policies support health objectives, particularly through encouraging walking, cycling and horse riding, and the protection of existing community facilities such as the playground and sports field</p>	<p>9. This SA recommendation is no longer relevant as the Statement of Principle has been taken out of the Submission draft SNP.</p> <p>10. No changes made. The Parish has approximately 72 hectares of Turbary land which is accessible to the community, there are also many footpaths and bridleways in the parish. Additional open space was not raised as an issue or concern during the consultation process therefore the Steering Group did not feel it was necessary to include a Policy for this.</p> <p>11. The supporting text to TRA3 Rights of Way now includes reference to traffic speeds and safety.</p> <p>12. The supporting text makes reference to ‘healthy enjoyment of the natural environment’.</p>

## Stockland Neighbourhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal

	but there is no reference to this in the NP. These facilities form an important part of the network of open space and green infrastructure around the parish and encourage healthy activities. The supporting text could highlight the health benefits from these policies.	
E8 To promote a thriving economy that supports social and environmental objectives.	13. None identified.	13. N/A

### 6. Other changes made to the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan and Sustainability Appraisal Implications

- 6.1 The draft SNP was subject to public consultation and changes were made to the draft as a result. The draft SNP was also updated to reflect recent Government policy announcements and the adoption of the East Devon Local Plan in January 2016. The key changes are summarised in Table 4 below.

**Table 4 – Changes to the SNP and SA implications**

Neighbourhood Plan Section	Changes to SNP	SA comments
Natural Environment section	<p>The Submission draft SNP added a reference to the role that banked hedges and associated ditches can play in mitigating against flooding in the supporting text to policy <i>NE1 - Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish</i>.</p> <p>Reference to air pollution was added to Policy <i>NE1 - Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish</i> in the Submission draft SNP to require that development proposals have no adverse impacts on air quality or result in excess smell or dust.</p> <p>The draft NP included a Statement of Principle - <i>Impact of Quarrying and Processing of Stone on the Natural</i></p>	<p>The SA assessment was not considered to have changed in the light of these amendments.</p> <p>Reference to the role hedges can make to mitigating against flooding supports the SA objective <i>E4: To mitigate and adapt to climate change including the impacts of flooding</i>.</p> <p>Reference to air pollution supports the SA objective <i>E5: To protect and enhance natural resources including water, air and soil</i>.</p>

## Stockland Neighbourhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal

Neighbourhood Plan Section	Changes to SNP	SA comments
	<p><i>Environment</i> which sought to address the issues arising from quarrying activities including impacts on <i>visual amenity, its setting and surrounding landscape; biodiversity and wildlife habitats; and, existing noise levels, air quality and tranquillity in the parish</i>. This policy was removed in the Submission draft SNP.</p>	
Housing and Population section	<p>Minor amendments to reflect the adoption of the East Devon Local Plan and removal of Built-up Area Boundary for Stockland. The <i>Statement of Principle – The Focus for Any New Housing Development</i> is deleted.</p>	<p>Not considered to have any SA implications as Policy HP1 – <i>Meeting Demonstrable Local Needs on Local Exceptions Sites</i> already includes reference to the principles that should apply if the Built Up Area Boundary is removed.</p>
Community Facilities and Services section	<p>Minor amendments to Policy CFS1 – <i>New Retail and Commercial Development in Stockland Village</i> to reflect the adoption of the East Devon Local Plan and removal of Built-up Area Boundary for Stockland.</p> <p>Minor amendments to Policy CFS5 – <i>Stockland Church of England Primary Academy</i> to reflect the fact that the school does not want to take additional pupils but may want to make improvements to the accommodation and facilities in the future.</p>	<p>Not considered to have any SA implications as Policy CFS1 makes it clear that development should be located within the confines of the village and should be well related to the built form of the settlement and close to existing development.</p> <p>Changes to Policy CFS5 are unlikely to have significant impacts due to the low levels of development likely in the Parish, although there could be implications for any new families moving into new housing if their children are unable to attend the local school.</p>
Economy and Employment section	<p>Comments regarding the focus of the Economy and Employment section which was considered to be almost exclusively on broadband and traditional farm buildings and activities. Suggestion that this section is expanded to cover broader economic activity and employment opportunities for example farm shops, campsites, home based businesses etc. Objective 10c) amended to: Support measures to</p>	<p>No implications for the SA. The changes to Objective 10c and Policy EE3 will support the SA objective <i>E8: To promote a thriving economy that supports social and environmental objectives</i>.</p>

## Stockland Neighbourhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal

Neighbourhood Plan Section	Changes to SNP	SA comments
	<p>promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. Wording added to the supporting text: <u>Our objectives reflect a desire to see improved connectivity (particularly in terms of broadband access) and thereby put in place the infrastructure necessary for modern businesses including home based business, farm diversification (for example, farm shops) and other land-based rural businesses. Our objectives elsewhere in the Plan support these and other facets of our rural economy such as tourism.</u></p> <p>Policy EE3 amended to refer to <u>Farming and other rural businesses.</u> Policy requirements relating to new agricultural buildings and development deleted.</p>	
Energy and Carbon section	<p>A reference was added to the Energy and Carbon section of the document to the Government requirement introduced on 18th June 2015, “for local planning authorities to only grant planning permission for wind energy development if: the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan; and, following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing. Notwithstanding this policy position, our policies on energy still cover proposals for wind turbines and provide additional and locally specific tests to ensure that, should any such proposals come forward during the Neighbourhood Plan</p>	<p>The SA assessment was not considered to have changed in the light of this amendment. The SNP supports small scale, unobtrusive renewable or low carbon energy schemes providing they are sensitively sited and screened. However, given the location of the Parish within the AONB, the SNP does not support large-scale renewable or low carbon energy schemes as these are likely to have a negative impact on enjoyment of the natural and built environment and on the quality of the AONB’s landscape, biodiversity and wildlife habitats. This is appropriate within the context of the AONB, but does limit the contribution that can be made towards the SA objective to mitigate climate change and contribute towards a reduction in local emissions of greenhouse gases.</p>

## Stockland Neighbourhood Plan: Sustainability Appraisal

Neighbourhood Plan Section	Changes to SNP	SA comments
	period, and national policy or Local Plan policies change, there are criteria in place against which applications can be appropriately tested".	

- 6.2 The amendments to the draft SNP were not considered to be significant in relation to the SA and no additional impacts or recommendations have been identified.

### 7 Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 The NP states that 'the Parish Council will periodically monitor the impact of policies on change in the parish by considering the policies' effectiveness in the planning application decision making process.' No significant effects have been identified through the SA and as such do not require monitoring. However, the Parish Council may also wish to consider whether to monitor the effectiveness of the SNP in contributing to sustainable development, in relation to the SA objectives. This could be done through commenting on the positive or negative impacts of decisions on relevant SA objectives. Such monitoring would assist with any reviews that might take place of the SNP.

### 8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The SNP was considered to be positive for all bar one of the SA objectives. It was judged to be neutral in relation to Objective E5 on natural resources. There are no references to soil or water quality or waste in the SNP, but these are issues that are not likely to be significantly affected by the SNP.
- 8.2 No significant adverse impacts have been identified. A number of recommendations were made (as set out in section 5), which would help to strengthen the SNP's performance in sustainability terms. The majority of these were incorporated into the revised draft SNP.
- 8.3 The changes made to the SNP in the light of consultation comments and updates as a result of Government policy announcements were not considered to have any significant implications for the SA.

## Appendix 1 – Sustainability Appraisal Checklist - Sustainability Appraisal of the draft Stockland Neighbourhood Plan

SA originally undertaken of the 1<sup>st</sup> draft NP [Jan 2015], updated in July 2015 [2<sup>nd</sup> draft / pre-submission draft] and Feb 2016 [Submission draft].

The table below provides an assessment of the draft Stockland Neighbourhood Plan (NP) against a set of sustainability objectives and criteria identified for this sustainability appraisal (SA). The results are set out in the following table, an explanation of each column is given below.

**SA Objectives & factors / criteria:** The SA objectives are taken from the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Report. The SA criteria are taken from the East Devon Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal.

**Baseline situation/issues:** The baseline situation and identified issues are drawn from a variety of documents, references are given at the end.

**How does the Neighbourhood Plan respond to this objective?:** This column records which parts of the draft NP address the SA objective, looking at the NP as a whole. It lists the relevant NP aims, objectives, and policies.

**SA score:** This provides an overall assessment of the NP as a whole against the SA objective. The scoring system is set out below:

S++ (S= supports)	Strongly supports the SEA objective
S+	Supports the SEA objective
N	Is neutral in effect
C- (C=conflicts)	Potentially works against the SEA objective
C- -	Strongly works against the SEA objective
X	Effects uncertain

**Action / recommendations:** This column notes any conclusions from the SA and recommendations for the NP Steering Group to consider amendments to the NP in order to strengthen the contribution of the NP to sustainable development.

SA Objectives & factors / criteria	Baseline situation/issues (Source documents given in brackets, see references at the end of the table)	How does the Neighbourhood Plan respond to this objective?	SA score	Action / recommendations (e.g. consider alternative options and/or mitigation measures)
<p>E1 To protect and enhance the landscape and tranquillity of the Blackdown Hills AONB and its setting.</p> <p><i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>promote the conservation and wise use of land and protect and enhance the landscape character of East Devon?</i></li> <li>- <i>maintain the local amenity, quality and character of the local environment?</i></li> </ul>	<p>Within Blackdown Hills AONB.</p> <p>The parish straddles the defined Axe Valley and East Devon Central Ridge Landscape Character Areas and is comprised of a combination of predominantly undulating and rolling farmland and woodland and steep wooded slopes. (NP)</p> <p>Its historic village and hamlets are tranquil places to live. (NP)</p> <p>There is a significant body of evidence which demonstrates the presence of dark skies above the parish and their value. (NP)</p> <p>The A30 and A303 pass some two or three miles from the village. The A35 passes the southern boundary of the parish. The parish itself has little through traffic. (NP)</p>	<p>The NP aims include protecting and enhancing the distinctive landscape; tranquillity; and maintaining the dark skies.</p> <p>The draft NP includes 2 policies which will support achievement of the SA objectives and criteria.</p> <p>Policy NE1 - <i>Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish</i> seeks to ensure that development does not adversely affect the natural environment including landscape (or satisfactorily mitigate these impacts). It also seeks enhancement where there is the opportunity to do so. The policy seeks to avoid loss of traditional Devon hedgebanks which are important landscape features.</p> <p>Policy NE3 – <i>Preserving Tranquillity and Our Dark Skies</i> seeks to maintain tranquillity and dark skies through</p>	<p><b>S++</b></p>	<p>None identified.</p>

	<p>A local stone processing operation raises concerns over noise and impacts on tranquillity. (EB part 2c p 287)</p> <p>Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Controlling light pollution including cumulative impacts from small changes to lighting</li> <li>- Minimising noise pollution</li> </ul>	<p>minimising noise and light pollution.</p>		
<p>E2 To protect and enhance biodiversity (habitats and species) and geodiversity within and beyond the AONB.</p> <p><i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>conserve and enhance the biodiversity of East Devon</i></li> </ul>	<p>The parish has many designated County Wildlife Sites (a total of around 120ha) and Ancient Woodland Sites. (NP)</p> <p>The turbaries are protected common land well-known for their rich biodiversity and wildlife. They support many species of flora and fauna within their wet heath, bog and woodland. The wet boggy communities are very significant in conservation terms, as these types of landscapes are restricted both locally and indeed across Europe. All of Stockland's turbaries are County Wildlife Sites covering 66.6 ha of</p>	<p>The NP aims include protecting and enhancing ecology.</p> <p><i>Policy NE1 - Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish</i> seeks to ensure that development does not adversely affect the natural environment including ecology (or satisfactorily mitigate these impacts). It also seeks enhancement where there is the opportunity to do so. The policy requires the use of native species of trees and hedges for planting schemes to screen new development, which will also benefit wildlife. It seeks to avoid loss of traditional Devon hedgebanks which</p>	S++	<p>The Parish Biodiversity Audit provides information about the range of habitats and species that are found in the parish, including a number that are notable or rare. The NP includes policies to protect and enhance the natural environment, specifically highlighting the importance of the Turbaries and hedges. Further information about the range of habitats and species found in the parish could be provided in the</p>

	<p>parish land. (NP)</p> <p>The Corry Brook near Popehayne is also a County Wildlife Site, as is the full length of the River Yarty. (EB)</p> <p>There is one local nature reserve at Ashcombe Copse that is owned by the Devon Bird Watching and Preservation Society. (EB)</p> <p>Devon hedgebanks are a common feature. They are often very old, rich in biodiversity and host a wide variety of wildlife. (NP) Devon Notable species of Stockland's hedge banks include orpine, surge-laurel and green hellebore. (EB)</p> <p>Dry heathland was once widespread within the parish. Now almost all has been converted to grassland. Horner Hill is under heathland regeneration. Areas of wet heath, fen meadow and spring-line mire are well-represented by the Stockland Turbaries. (EB)</p> <p>There are no sites within the Parish</p>	<p>are important wildlife habitats.</p> <p>Policy NE2 - <i>Supporting and Protecting our Turbaries</i>. This policy seeks to protect and enhance the important wildlife and habitats of the Turbaries, and public access to them.</p> <p>Development in Stockland Parish has the potential to affect the River Axe SAC's interest features, mainly through increasing nutrient levels within the SAC. However, Natural England is satisfied that nutrient levels in the SAC will be addressed via an interim Diffuse Water Pollution Plan (DWPP) which has been prepared to take action to reduce phosphorous entering the system from diffuse sources. The potential for increased recreational pressure on the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC is considered to be negligible due to the distances involved, the small scale nature of development, and the numerous intervening recreational opportunities. (EDDC)</p>		<p>supporting text, to guide decisions on developments which could affect these. It could also highlight opportunities for enhancement, such as restoration of dry heathland, or management of habitats for priority species, for when opportunities arise.</p>
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	<p>designated for national or international nature conservation interest (Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) or Ramsar sites). The River Yarty eventually flows into the River Axe, which is designated as a SAC. The Sidmouth to West Bay SAC is on the coast, some 15 miles from the Parish. (EB, MAGIC)</p> <p>Otters are back on the Yarty, and dippers, grey wagtails and sand martins are regular breeders along it. Small teasel, a Devon Rarity, grows on the river bank. Salmon are sometimes seen leaping the salmon Ladder south of Beckford in Autumn, and the Lamprey is seen regularly in the Corry. (EB)</p> <p>Wet heathland on Stockland's Turbaries supports a number of Devon Notable plant species including oblong-leaved sundew, bog myrtle, round-leaved crowfoot, early</p>			
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	<p>marsh orchid, wood horsetail and royal fern. Raft spider occurs here too. The last record of the nationally rare marsh fritillary was in 1994. (EB)</p> <p>Oak woodland has a strong population of dormouse and tawny owl. Pied flycatcher and redstart bred here throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Willow tit occurs occasionally in wet woodland, home to the Devon Notable marsh valerian. (EB)</p> <p>A long-term study of barn owl confirms the species continues to breed within the parish, and there are records going back to 1939 of curlew breeding on one farm which may be one of its few remaining sites in Devon. (EB)</p> <p>A 30 year study of toadstools in the neighbouring parish of Membury has led recently to the identification of 700 species, of which 16 were new to science and seven others were new records for Britain. Stockland's fungal diversity seems likely to be</p>			
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	<p>comparably great. Current surveys have identified the presence in Stockland of several Biodiversity Action Plan species. (EB)</p> <p>Initial surveys have been conducted on fungi, lichens and bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) and also dragonflies. Uncommon species of fungi have been identified including a BAP target species. (EB)</p> <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Loss of hedges</li> <li>- Conversion of dry heathland to grassland</li> <li>- A survey of lichens suggests local nutrient enrichment is depleting species diversity (Turbaries Management Committee “Turbary Management and Losses and Gains in Wildlife”)</li> </ul>			
<p>E3 To conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage. <i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p>	<p>The village has a number of designated heritage and historic assets such as listed buildings and buildings referenced on the local list of important historic buildings and</p>	<p>The NP aims include protecting the area’s heritage (sites and locations).  Policy BHE1 – <i>Protecting Our Valued Archaeological and Heritage Assets in</i></p>	<p><b>S++</b></p>	<p>The NP Objective 4c) is to <i>Seek ways to repair or demolish derelict buildings and protect and repair those at risk</i> and this is</p>

<p>- <i>maintain and enhance built and historic assets?</i></p>	<p>retains its Conservation Area status. (NP)</p> <p>Across the rest of the parish there are numerous significant heritage and historic assets including listed buildings and scheduled monuments. (NP)</p> <p>One Scheduled Monument (Stockland Great Castle) is on the Heritage at Risk Register which states that it has extensive significant problems in terms of its overall condition and is vulnerable from arable ploughing. (NP)</p> <p>The small hamlets of Heathstock, Millhayes, Broadhayes, Ham and Shorebottom, each have historical character and the community has identified the importance of local built structures and buildings which tell the story of the hamlets' development, features which are important to retain. These are not all features which are designated as important nationally. (NP)</p>	<p><i>Stockland Parish</i> seeks to protect nationally and locally designated and protected historic buildings, the Stockland Village Conservation Area and other valued archaeological, heritage and historic assets in the parish.</p> <p>Policy BHE2 – <i>Protecting Our Hamlets' Historic Identity</i> seeks to retain and enhance the built character and heritage value of locally identified heritage assets, traditional or distinctive features in the hamlets, and acknowledges the role these once played in the history of the hamlet.</p>		<p>reflected in a Community Action (CA9). Sometimes derelict buildings form an important part of the history of a settlement and can contribute to its character. The NP should be clearer about the circumstances in which demolition would be preferable to conservation or preservation (for example the priority should be to conserve listed buildings and those on the local list and other key buildings of architectural interest). Demolition may be preferable where the building detracts from the character of the area, for example as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal. Cross-reference should be made to the Natural Environment policies to ensure that impacts on biodiversity are</p>
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			<p>taken into account, as redundant buildings are often important habitats for wildlife including protected species such as bats and barn owls.</p> <p>The aims and objectives do not include reference to the setting of heritage assets, although this is highlighted in the supporting text and in policies BHE2 – <i>Protecting Our Hamlets’ Historic Identity</i> and BHE3– <i>Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design</i>. Policy BHE1 – <i>Protecting Our Valued Archaeological and Heritage Assets in Stockland Parish</i> should also include reference to the setting of heritage assets.</p>
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				There is no reference to the potential impact of conversions and alterations on traditional and historic buildings (where these do not fall under permitted development). Unsympathetic development can affect the character of these buildings, and the cumulative impact of minor changes can also be detrimental to the overall character of a settlement.
E7 To protect the quality and character of individual settlements and material assets. <i>Will the plan / policy:</i> - <i>maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Towns of East Devon?</i>	The built character and form of Stockland village and the hamlets of Heathstock, Millhayes, Broadhayes, Ham and Shorebottom contribute significantly to the sense of place and the parish's identity. (NP)  Characteristic traditional finger posts are used on the highway. (NP)  Features of interest include hedgebanks and stone walls. (NP)	The NP aims include ensuring that all new development is sympathetic to the traditional character of the area.  Policy BHE2 – <i>Protecting Our Hamlets' Historic Identity</i> seeks to protect the built character and heritage value of locally identified historic and heritage assets in the parish's hamlets of Heathstock, Millhayes, Broadhayes, Ham and Shorebottom.	<b>S++</b>	Policy BHE2 – <i>Protecting Our Hamlets' Historic Identity</i> includes protection of locally identified heritage assets and their setting, but does not reference <u>traditional or distinctive features</u> (such as hedgebanks, stone walls, traditional finger posts, and use of local Chert stone) which might

	<p>There is a characteristic local building style using Chert stone. (NP)</p> <p>The Conservation Area Appraisal found that there had been little change since the previous consideration of the Conservation Area. Issues identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minor increase in PVCu replacement windows due to a high proportion of building being listed and therefore being subject to greater scrutiny and control of changes from traditional materials.</li> <li>- Overhead cable wires are becoming more obtrusive.</li> <li>- Impact of access for any new development disrupting existing frontages and boundary walls.</li> <li>- Unsympathetic conversion of redundant agricultural buildings impacting on their character.</li> <li>- Loss of hedgerows and trees. (EB)</li> </ul>	<p>Policy BHE3 – <i>Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design</i> seeks to ensure that new development is sympathetic to the traditional built character of the parish and references the AONB Design Guide for Houses.</p>		<p>also form an important part of the area’s traditional character.</p>
<p>E4 To mitigate and adapt to climate change including</p>	<p>The local community are very car-dependent. There is no public</p>	<p>The NP Aims indirectly support this SA objective through encouraging</p>	<p><b>S+</b></p>	<p>There is no reference in the NP to flood risk, despite</p>

<p>the impacts of flooding. <i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>promote and encourage non-car based modes of transport and reduce journey lengths?</i></li> <li>- <i>contribute towards a reduction in local emissions of greenhouse gases?</i></li> <li>- <i>ensure that there is no increase in the risk of flooding?</i></li> <li>- <i>ensure energy consumption is as efficient as possible?</i></li> </ul>	<p>transport and anyone without a car is reliant on lifts from others and / or community transport to get to services and facilities not available in the village. (NP)</p> <p>Consequently, car ownership is high – only 5% of households do not have regular access to a motor vehicle. The parish has a much higher proportion of households with access to two or three cars than both the Devon and England averages. 38.8% of households have 2 cars (above the national average of 24.7%). 16.3% of households have 3 cars (above the national average of 5.5%). (EB part 2 p204)</p> <p>People enjoy walking locally and there are a network of local footpaths and bridleways. The Parish Plan identifies road safety and traffic speeds as local issues as well as raising awareness of and improving signposting for footpaths. (EB)</p> <p>The potential renewable energy</p>	<p>walking and cycling through maintaining and enhancing a network of footpaths and bridleways.</p> <p>The NP includes policies to encourage walking, cycling and horse-riding but these are primarily for leisure purposes and are unlikely to have a significant impact on levels of car use. Policy TRA5 – <i>Safer Walking, Horse Riding and Cycling</i> supports measures that prevent motorised vehicles (except those specifically designed for the disabled) using designated footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.</p> <p>The NP aims support small scale, unobtrusive renewable or low carbon energy schemes providing they are sensitively sited and screened.</p> <p>Policy ELC1 - <i>Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes</i> supports proposals for renewable or low carbon energy schemes where they are small scale, sensitively sited and screened where necessary.</p>		<p>this being identified as an issue in the evidence base. The management of development in areas of flood risk is covered through policies in the NPPF and Local Plan and so the NP may not need additional policies for this. However, the evidence base identifies surface water flooding as an issue, particularly in Stockland village, so further consideration should be given to whether this is something that the NP should include for example through addition of a clause (ii) (d) in Policy BHE3 – <i>Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design</i> which supports the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in development and other measures to reduce surface</p>
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	<p>resource in the area could be considerable, for example, windy exposed plateau locations for wind power, extensive woodland coverage. However this is significantly restricted by the potential landscape effects of renewable or low carbon energy development – either a site-specific local impact or the broader landscape impact of larger installations. (EB)</p> <p>An assessment of types of renewable energy within the AONB concluded that small scale technologies could be accommodated, but large scale wind turbines, waste to energy plants, centralised anaerobic digestion plant and large-scale 10-40MW electricity generation plant would not be appropriate within the AONB. “Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills” report. (EB part 2c p257)</p> <p>There is already some use of local resources such as biomass and</p>	<p>Proposals will need to demonstrate how they will not have an adverse impact on the quality of landscape, tranquillity, biodiversity and wildlife habitats.</p> <p>However Policy ELC2 - <i>Large Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes</i> does not support large-scale renewable or low carbon energy schemes as these are likely to have a negative impact on enjoyment of the natural and built environment and on the quality of the AONB’s landscape, biodiversity and wildlife habitats. This is appropriate within the context of the AONB, but does limit the contribution that can be made towards this SA objective.</p> <p>Table 1 sets out what is meant by “small scale” and “large scale” renewable energy installations, using research carried out for the Blackdown Hills AONB - “Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills” report.</p>		<p>water run-off.</p>
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	<p>woodfuel from the hedgerow network, and woodfuel from the turbaries. (EB)</p> <p>Energy efficiency of the existing housing stock is an issue, as many dwellings were built prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and do not have cavity wall insulation, damp proof courses, central heating, or double glazing. Retro-fitting these features in older housing can be problematic, particularly in listed buildings which can be damaged by installation of such measures. (EB)</p> <p>There is limited flood risk in the parish. Areas within flood zone 3 run along the rivers and some small areas are in flood zone 2 including through Stockland and Millhayes. Rainwater drainage is a problem in the whole area and will need to be addressed in any new development as flooding occurs in the village centre- loss of greenfields to development will exacerbate the run-off. (EB p120) Flooding in the centre of the village is</p>	<p>The Submission draft SNP recognises that Government policy towards wind energy has changed and requires suitable areas to be identified and for schemes to demonstrate community backing. However the locally specific tests in policy ELC1 are considered to still be relevant if proposals should come forward in future.</p> <p>The Submission draft SNP added a reference to role that banked hedges and associated ditches can play in mitigating against flooding in the supporting text to policy NE1 - Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish.</p>		
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	a concern, particularly with water running down Chard Road. (EB p136)			
<p>E5 To protect and enhance natural resources including water, air and soil.</p> <p><i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>maintain &amp; enhance the environment in terms of air, soil &amp; water quality.</i></li> <li>- <i>promote wise use of waste resources whilst reducing waste production and disposal?</i></li> </ul>	<p>The water environment is fundamental to the landscape character of the Blackdown Hills - the plateau landscape is dissected by long deep river valleys. The AONB is the source of the rivers Culm, Yarty and Otter (SEA).</p> <p>Stockland parish is bounded by the River Yarty to the east and the Umborne Brook to the west. (NP)</p> <p>Water quality in the River Yarty is moderate, and the Corry Brook is poor – both due to the biological quality of the water. (EA)</p> <p>Air quality is generally good, and there are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Parish. (SEA)</p> <p>The District recycling rate has increased from 16.40% in 2004/5 to 48.5% 2011/12. There are targets to increase this 63% by 2020. There are</p>	<p>The draft NP included a Statement of Principle - <i>Impact of Quarrying and Processing of Stone on the Natural Environment</i> which sought to address the issues arising from quarrying activities including impacts on <i>visual amenity, its setting and surrounding landscape; biodiversity and wildlife habitats; and, existing noise levels, air quality and tranquillity in the parish</i>. This policy was removed in the Submission draft SNP.</p> <p>Reference to air pollution was added to Policy NE1 - Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish in the Submission draft SNP to require that development proposals have no adverse impacts on air quality or result in excess smell or dust.</p> <p>There are no references in the NP to soil or water quality or waste. These are not issues that are likely to be</p>	<p><b>N</b></p>	<p>The original SA recommendation relating to the Quarrying Statement of Principle is no longer relevant as this has been taken out of the Submission draft SNP.</p>

	<p>no parish figures available. <i>90% of respondents to the questionnaire for the Stockland Parish Plan indicated that they would recycle a higher proportion of refuse if a separate collection was made at the door.</i> (EB part 2c p 287)</p> <p>A local stone processing operation raises concerns over noise and impacts on tranquillity. Conversely, it provides a source of <i>local stone for buildings (to meet the design guide).</i> (EB part 2c p 287)</p>	<p>significantly affected by the NP.</p> <p>Water quality issues relating to the River Axe SAC through increasing nutrient levels from development arising as a result of the NP are not considered to be significant and Natural England is satisfied that nutrient levels in the SAC will be addressed via an interim Diffuse Water Pollution Plan (DWPP) which has been prepared to take action to reduce phosphorous entering the system from diffuse sources. (EDDC)</p>		
<p>E6 To sustain vibrant communities and safeguard human health &amp; wellbeing.</p> <p><i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>ensure everybody has the opportunity to live in a decent home?</i></li> <li>- <i>ensure all groups of the population have access to community services?</i></li> <li>- <i>provide for education, skills &amp; lifelong learning to</i></li> </ul>	<p>In 2011 the census recorded that the parish had a population of 661 residents in 311 households. (NP)</p> <p>The parish comprises 231 detached houses, 54 semi-detached houses, 17 terraced houses and 6 flats, with no caravans / temporary accommodation units. Of these, 247 are owner-occupied with 19 of the remainder private rented and 22 either social rented or other rented</p>	<p>The NP Aims support new small-scale housing development in the village on rural exception sites, where local needs are demonstrated. They also support the retention of local facilities and amenities. Aims 8 &amp; 9 support transport and access improvements through seeking ways to minimise parking problems in the village and enhancing the footpath and bridleway network.</p>	<p><b>S++</b></p>	<p>The original SA recommendation relating to the <i>Statement of Principle – The Focus for Any New Housing Development</i> is no longer relevant as this has been taken out of the Submission draft SNP.</p> <p>The NP Steering Group should consider whether to</p>

<p><i>meet local needs?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>improve health</i></li> <li>- <i>reduce crime fear of crime?</i></li> <li>- <i>reduce noise levels &amp; exposure to unacceptable levels of noise pollution?</i></li> <li>- <i>maintain &amp; improve cultural, social &amp; leisure provision?</i></li> </ul>	<p>accommodation. The majority of households in the parish are formed by married couples with no dependent children (133 in number or 46.2% and single person households (73 in number or 25.3%).<sup>5</sup> (NP)</p> <p>In the last 15 years, records suggest that 7 dwellings have been built in the parish. (NP)</p> <p>The affordability ratio (i.e. the ratio between earnings and house price) is 18.1 (with the England average being 15.4).<sup>6</sup> (NP)</p> <p>15% of the parish population is aged 17 or under with 37.1% of the population in the 30 – 59 age group and 29.1% over 64.<sup>7</sup> (NP)</p>	<p>A number of policies support this SA objective.</p> <p>The draft SNP included a <i>Statement of Principle – The Focus for Any New Housing Development</i> states that ‘<i>Stockland village will be the focus for any new additional housing development in the parish</i>’. This was subsequently removed from the Submission draft SNP as a result of the adopted East Devon Local Plan, which did not include a Built-up Area Boundary for Stockland.</p> <p>Support for local affordable housing is given through Policy HP1 – <i>Meeting Demonstrable Local Needs on Local Exceptions Sites</i>.</p> <p>The provision of new shops or cafes is welcomed through Policy CFS1 –</p>		<p>add a policy to support the provision of additional open space facilities which address the under-provision in the Parish identified in the East Devon Open Space Review 2014.</p> <p>There is no reference to supporting measures that address the issues identified in the Parish Plan of improving road safety and reducing traffic speeds.</p> <p>A number of the NP policies support health objectives, particularly through encouraging walking, cycling and horse riding, and the protection</p>
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<sup>5</sup> 2001 census data, Neighbourhood Statistics website, ONS, [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/)

<sup>6</sup> Data taken from the Stockland Rural Place Profile, ACRE / OSCI, 2013 (original data sourced from ONS 2011 census and Department). The Profile states that “The housing affordability ratio is based on comparing house prices to earnings. Rather than compare average house prices and incomes, we have compared the “lowest quartile” (the lowest 25%) of prices to the lowest quartile of household incomes – which is more representative of groups trying to get onto the housing ladder. An affordability index of 10 would mean that lowest quartile house prices are 10 times as high as lowest quartile incomes. This data is only available for the local authority, not the local area.”

<sup>7</sup> 2001 census data, Neighbourhood Statistics website, ONS, [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/)

	<p>There is an affordable housing need for 2 dwellings in the parish, one of which is required for a household in 2015 and one required in the next 5 year period to 2020<sup>8</sup>. (NP)</p> <p>The East Devon Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and draft Villages Development Plan Document (DPD) suggest that the village can physically accommodate some small scale housing development if the built-up area boundary is extended. (EB)</p> <p>However, the adopted East Devon Local Plan no longer considers Stockland as suitable to sustain further development under Strategy 27 due to its limited range of services and facilities. Further development is limited under Strategy 35 of the Local Plan to Exception Sites only. (NP)</p> <p>The A30 and A303 pass some two or three miles from the village. Stockland parish has little through</p>	<p><i>New Retail and Commercial Development</i> - as this would strengthen the sense of community.</p> <p>Policy CFS2 – <i>Improvements to Existing Community Facilities, Amenities and Assets</i> supports changes and improvements to local community facilities and amenities where they are needed and where they respect the local character and historic and natural assets of the area.</p> <p>Proposals to save the King’s Arm Inn as a community hub are supported through Policy CFS4 – <i>The King’s Arm Inn</i>. Policy CFS3 - <i>Loss of Existing Facilities and Amenities and Assets through Redevelopment</i> resists the loss of existing (or recent) community facilities, unless they include proposals for alternative local provision nearby or it is demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of viable</p>		<p>of existing community facilities such as the playground and sports field but there is no reference to this in the NP. These facilities form an important part of the network of open space and green infrastructure around the parish and encourage healthy activities. The supporting text could highlight the health benefits from these policies.</p>
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<sup>8</sup> Draft Housing Needs Survey, Community Council of Devon, November 2014

	<p>traffic. There is a lack of off-road parking spaces combined with the growing number of households with more than one car, leading to an increase in the number of cars parked along the narrow roads and lanes. (NP) Recent consultation shows that travel and traffic issues are few and most people accept and enjoy their relative seclusion. Many local people enjoy walking. (NP)</p> <p>The village has a number of publically accessible open spaces including - Recreation ground with cricket (not marked out), children’s play area (recently refurbished), car park, village hall, tennis court, Church and churchyard (EB)</p> <p>The community consultation did not highlight any issues in relation to the provision of open spaces, however the East Devon Open Space Review 2014 examined open space supply for each parish and identified an under-provision in Stockland parish for allotments, amenity open space,</p>	<p>continued use of the existing building or facility for similar local and community uses. Policy CFS5 – <i>Stockland Primary School</i> supports developments that lead to the provision or improvement of facilities at Stockland Primary School.</p> <p>Access and parking issues are addressed through <i>Policy TRA1 – Off-road Car Parking</i> which supports proposals to provide additional off-road parking spaces, which do not adversely affect the local character or visual amenity of the area, and Policy TRA2 - <i>Vehicular Access and Egress Arrangements</i> which requires that adequate off-road parking provision proposals for vehicular access and egress arrangements demonstrate they have taken the safety of pedestrians and other road users fully into account.</p> <p>Measures to extend the existing network of public footpaths and rights of way are supported through Policy TRA3 – <i>Rights of Way</i> and</p>		
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	<p>sports pitches, and parks and recreation grounds, when judged against District wide standards. (EB part 2b p174).</p> <p>The village also benefits from a village hall and primary school, and a monthly market. The village pub is the subject of continuing efforts to retain it as a community asset and there is no shop (closed since 1982) in the village. (NP)</p> <p>There are several community organisations and a range of regular community activities that take place. (NP)</p> <p>The main surgery is at Hemyock, with a Somerset surgery five miles away at Churchinford and another at Dunkeswell, five miles towards Honiton. The community is also able to choose between other NHS practices situated in the surrounding towns of Wellington, Taunton, Chard, Axminster, Honiton and Cullompton. (EB)</p>	<p>support for the maintenance of the network is given in Policy TRA4 – <i>Footpaths and Bridleways</i>. Safety issues are addressed through Policy TRA5 – <i>Safer Walking, Horse Riding and Cycling</i> which seeks to prevent motorised vehicles (except those specifically designed for the disabled) using designated footpaths, bridleways and cycleways. (<i>Policies TRA3, TRA4 and TRA5 were merged in the Submission draft SNP</i>)</p>		
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	<p>Operating in tandem with the Blackdown Practice is a charity, The Blackdown Support Group, set up in 1991 to provide comprehensive health and wellbeing related support services across the area. These include shopping services, carer respite, escorted transport to health services and local social events, short term loan of equipment, careline telephones, and a library. (EB)</p> <p>The health of people in all four of the local authorities encompassing the Blackdown Hills AONB area is generally better than in England overall (EB)</p> <p>The key issues identified in the Stockland Parish Plan were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued programme of improvements to facilities in village Hall</li> <li>- Village Hall Car park re-surfacing</li> <li>- Sports Pavilion</li> <li>- All weather sports pitch</li> </ul>			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional tennis courts and lighting</li> <li>- Alternative site for cricket pitch</li> <li>- Youth activities</li> <li>- Activities for the elderly</li> <li>- New clubs</li> <li>- Local vandalism and petty theft</li> <li>- Difficulty in getting to health services</li> <li>- Difficulty in getting to shops</li> <li>- Difficulty in getting to village events</li> <li>- Popular support to reinstate village shop</li> <li>- High house prices making it difficult for younger people to stay in the parish or for new young families to move there.</li> <li>- A strong call for rented accommodation or shared equity housing.</li> <li>- The community would benefit from a small number (around 10) of low cost or shared equity dwellings which would in turn benefit local facilities such as the school and shop if reinstated. (EB)</li> <li>- Road maintenance, use of public transport, raising awareness of and improving signposting for footpaths</li> </ul>			
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	<p>and road safety and traffic speeds (EB) Stockland Views, Parish Plan, Stockland Parish Council, 2008</p>			
<p>E8 To promote a thriving economy that supports social and environmental objectives. <i>Will the plan / policy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>provide for education, skills and lifelong learning to: (ii) meet local employment needs?</i></li> <li>- <i>maintain sustainable growth of employment for East Devon, to match levels of jobs with the economically active workforce?</i></li> <li>- <i>encourage and accommodate both indigenous and inward investment?</i></li> </ul>	<p>The Blackdown Hills are not a self-contained economic area, and are heavily influenced by surrounding market towns with many residents commuting further afield. (SEA)</p> <p>There is limited employment in the village and much of the local employment in the parish is naturally based on farming activity. Other businesses include software development, light engineering, the Post Office, building and tourism (including the pub). Many of those of working-age that do not work within the local economy commute out of the parish. (NP)</p> <p>The proportion of self-employed is relatively high, as too is the proportion of people that work from home, which was 29% of the working population in 2011. (EB part 2b p231)</p>	<p>The NP Aims encourage small scale retail and/or hospitality development that meets local needs; and help support and sustain local businesses.</p> <p>A number of policies support this SA objective.</p> <p>Policy EE1 – <i>Super-fast Connectivity</i> supports the development of a super-fast broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish where it is sensitively sited and sympathetically designed.</p> <p>Policy EE2 – <i>Conversion of Agricultural Buildings</i> supports the conversion of existing agricultural buildings for business or business-related purposes where it is justified in order to support farm diversification in the interests of viability. These policies would need</p>	<p><b>S+</b></p>	<p>None identified.</p>

	<p>Broadband coverage is being improved as part of the Connecting Devon &amp; Somerset programme but actual connection dates and likely speeds for the Parish vary as they are served by different exchanges. Nationally, targets are to have 90% coverage by end of 2016 and 95% by 2019. The target date for achieving the final 5% is by 2020. Provision in very rural areas is problematic and new approaches and technologies are being piloted nationally to deliver this. (EB part 2b p.201)</p> <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most people of working age are in employment or retired and unemployment is low.</li> <li>- The idea of light industrial workshops was well received, and there was general popular support for a range of tourism facilities/ activities in the village. (Stockland Parish Plan)</li> <li>- Broadband coverage.</li> </ul>	<p>to be read in conjunction with other policies in the NP to ensure that traditional farm buildings are sympathetically converted and that there are no adverse impacts on landscape, tranquillity, wildlife.</p> <p>Policy EE3 – <i>Farming and other rural businesses</i> requires that new development proposals on farmland (which require planning permission) demonstrate how the rural characteristics of the surrounding area including the natural beauty and special character of the AONB landscape will be protected.</p>		
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**Source documents:**

Draft Stockland Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

Stockland Evidence Base (provided by Stuart Todd Associates) (EB)

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan SEA (SEA)

Magic Map <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> (MAGIC)

Environment Agency - What's in my backyard <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/default.aspx> (EA)

Stockland Neighbourhood Plan SEA/HRA Screening Decision (EDDC)