

The Cranbrook Plan
Planning Policy
East Devon District Council
Blackdown House, Border Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
EX14 1EJ

Dear Sir / Madam

15/02/2022

Cranbrook Plan – Proposed Main Modifications Consultation

LiveWest is a registered provider of social housing, and the largest landlord in the southwest, managing over 38,000 homes across the region. We are building circa 6,000 new homes across our region over the next 5 years and investing £2billion and sustaining 6,500 jobs in the building and supply chain over the next 10 years

Our vision is to deliver a home for everyone, and we will achieve that through providing quality homes, across a range of tenures, which are as affordable as possible to as many people as possible. We strive to create places where people want to live, which protect and nurture the environment, are efficient and sustainable, with excellent local infrastructure and which promote a healthy economy that provides opportunities for all.

LiveWest currently manage 610 properties in Cranbrook and our Head Office is located nearby at Skypark in Clyst Honiton. We manage over 2,000 homes across the District and are keen to work with East Devon District Council wherever we can to ensure that we can deliver a home for everyone in sustainable, thriving communities. As a significant developer, landlord and investor in local people, LiveWest is well placed to act as a long-term partner in the community. We welcome the opportunity to make comments on the proposed modifications.

MM9 Cranbrook infrastructure delivery

This policy emphasises that infrastructure delivery needs to be a major consideration in the proposals to expand to the north, south, east and west. This is a sensible approach and is to be welcomed. We support the proposal that the infrastructure which is site specific must be delivered in full by developers of the relevant expansion area. This will ensure that it is provided at the right time.

A focus on delivering infrastructure is welcomed, but the direct link between achieving this objective and delivering a lower number of affordable homes is not proven. It is disappointing to

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see a reduction in the affordable housing provision to 15% of the new homes in the proposed expansion of the town. This is considerably lower than the existing obligation of 30% in the first phase. This lower requirement is justified by the council on the grounds of viability and the infrastructure required for the expansion, as well as a desire to increase housing diversity. Seeking 15% is in conflict with the approach taken in the initial phase of development, which requires 30% affordable housing, and also the adopted Local Plan and Affordable Housing SPD, both of which refer to a requirement for 25% affordable to be delivered in the town. The plan should seek to recognise affordable homes as intrinsic to addressing housing need to ensure access to quality homes across a range of tenures.

MM13 Public Transport Enhancement

LiveWest welcome land continuing to be safeguarded for the provision of a second railway station. As Cranbrook continues to grow (especially eastwards away from the existing railway station) it will be essential to make travelling by sustainable forms of transport easy to do. We support the requirement for an enhanced public transport network to serve the expanded town, including enhanced bus capacity and routes. Enhancements to public transport are to be welcomed. Improved bus services will provide necessary links to serve the residential, commercial and employment areas as the town grows.

MM15 Cranbrook Affordable Housing

We welcome the amendment to the affordable tenure from 30% intermediate housing to 'affordable home ownership' which reflects changes in national policy and allows for other affordable routes to home ownership. The NPPF states that where major development includes the provision of housing, at least 10% of the housing provided should be for affordable home ownership. Home ownership has become increasingly difficult to access, particularly for first-time buyers, as house prices continue to grow.

MM23 Design Codes and Placemaking

We are pleased to see that the Council are considering ambitious policies in relation to designing for health and wellbeing, promoting sustainable transport and improving connections as well as nurturing our environment. We also encourage the Council further strengthen this by explicitly recognising the need for delivery of significant affordable housing as a vital and integral part of creating a sustainable community.

LiveWest fully supports the National Design Guide which is included by the modifications, and the use of Design Codes. It is helpful to provide further clarification on when Design Codes should be considered by the Local Planning Authority.

We welcome the council's commitment to promoting well defined streets and spaces and support the expectation for the provision of tree lined streets. LiveWest are committed to promoting

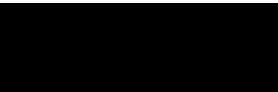
sustainable landscaping design, including edible landscaping, wild meadows and wildlife corridors, through design on our new build estates and re-wilding on our existing green spaces where appropriate.

MM34 Biodiversity Net Gain

LiveWest support the requirement to deliver biodiversity net gain. The requirement to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain is now mandatory since the Environment Bill was enacted, and it is important that the Council's policy is consistent with this.

Following consideration of the responses received to this consultation, we look forward to being notified about subsequent progress of the Cranbrook Plan.

Yours faithfully,



Katie Wakefield

Development Planning Manager

