

# Neighbourhood Planning & the Local plan Update



December 2021

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This update focuses on the release of the early working draft of the new local plan for initial discussion by EDDC Councillors on 14th December. The link to view the papers is provided. It also includes feedback from the last Strategic Planning Committee discussion on 9<sup>th</sup> November on key topics for the new local plan, including climate change; presentations from our November webinar on the approach to settlements in the new local plan; an update on the work for the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, and; useful links for more information.

We hope this provides some useful content. Feedback on these newsletters is welcomed.

If you have any questions or requests for guidance on any neighbourhood planning topics please do get in touch with our Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Angela King, or a member of the Planning Policy Team.

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## Early Working Draft Local plan Available to View

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As you will be aware, an early working draft of the new local plan for East Devon is due to be considered by EDDC Councillors for their initial views and guidance to officers at the next Strategic Planning Committee, on **14th December 2021**.

It has not been possible to share the contents ahead of Councillors having sight, but as of today, the papers are now available for all councillors and interested parties.

Following input from Councillors at December Committee, and continued evidence gathering, research and analysis, the earliest first public consultation on a draft Plan (including with the many statutory agencies) is expected to take place in the early summer.

As you will be aware, the timetable we are working to reflects an imperative to have an up-to-date Local plan in place for the district at the earliest opportunity. The bringing of this early working draft Local plan before our councillors at year-end adheres to the timetable agreed. We appreciate this has given only limited opportunity to date for engagement with communities, mainly via our sharing of topic papers and several webinars. However, it remains very early days in the plan making process, and a working draft at this stage has not been made available publically before. It is intended that sight of this early working draft will facilitate transparent, informed and constructive discussion and debate.

Once we have sought the views of our Members on the options put forward in the paper we look forward to engaging with our communities and neighbourhood planning groups on the issues.

As you know and will have heard frequently reflected in discussions at Strategic Planning Committee to date, EDDC strongly supports the role that neighbourhood planning has to play, and recognises and values the time and effort given to it by so many of our communities. Furthermore, in line with the general ethos of our neighbourhood plans (made and emerging), we want to protect and enhance what makes our area so special, at the same time as planning to meet identified needs and responding to key challenges, including the climate emergency.

We hope you will therefore appreciate the difficulty (in common with many other Local Planning Authorities developing new Local plans) in seeking to minimise conflict with neighbourhood plans whilst accommodating the housing requirement set by Government, and delivering sufficient supply of affordable homes, infrastructure and jobs. As you will be well aware, the fact that the majority of the district lies within highly protected landscapes, and there are many other constraints to development besides, is also key to directing where development can go.

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A key focus for our preferred approach and policies relates to seeking to locate growth predominantly in areas of high demand, and where residents will be close to services, facilities and jobs, securing high standards of development and in being ambitious in our proposals to secure zero net carbon by 2040 and achieve net gains in biodiversity.

Naturally we encourage you to take a look at the papers and tune in to hear the debate on 14th December, and to begin giving consideration to possible implications of the options presented for your particular communities and relationship with your neighbourhood plan. We will seek as far as possible to engage with neighbourhood plans groups and other community leaders in the new year, once we have Members initial views and guidance and prior to public consultation. This is likely to take the form of a further webinar in January/February time to consider the emerging strategy and evidence base, and we will also endeavour to engage on an individual basis with communities that may be most affected, as far as possible within the timetable set.

### [Link to papers:](#)

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[Agenda for Strategic Planning Committee on Tuesday, 14th December, 2021, 2.00 pm - East Devon](#)

As always, the discussion will be available to view live on our You Tube Channel (link can be found in the 'agenda frontsheet'.)

Please note a [press release](#) has been issued this afternoon and contains some further information.

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## Update from last Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

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The last meeting, held 9<sup>th</sup> November, considered topic [papers](#) relating to the new Local plan on:

- The proposed approach for those promoting sites for development to present to Strategic Planning Committee in a fair and transparent manner to inform options
- Evidence and policy approaches to coastal change
- Thinking on approaches to responding to the climate change emergency

Key points from the Committee for NP groups to note include:

- **Site Promotion** – presentations will be heard by developers and promoters of sites being considered for allocation in the new local plan at a Special meeting of Strategic Planning Committee in the new year, after councillors have had an opportunity to consider the early working draft. The session will be held virtually, over up to 2 full days. Further information will be shared when available.
- **Coastal change** – [topic paper](#) discussed regarding formulating policies for Coastal Change Management Area's (CCMA), which is required under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and will be part of the local plan. Such policies look to guide what development will be appropriate in areas at risk of coastal change, and deal with any associated actions, such as facilitating roll back or safeguarding essential infrastructure. The local plan will seek to draw on best practice and a Supplementary Planning Guidance may be produced on this matter, closer to or after plan adoption.
- **Climate change** – [report](#) discussed as to approaches that might be taken in the local plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through development. The proposed approach for policy in the new Local plan covers:
  - Raising standards for new development
  - Encouraging renewable energy and battery storage (including solar, wind and community energy schemes)
  - Making use of existing opportunities for utilising waste heat
  - Tackling embodied carbon
  - Adaption to the effects of climate change

The report prompted support for these and other measures, underlining that this is an area of significant interest and high priority for our Councillors, in line with the climate emergency declared by EDDC in 2019, where it committed to become carbon neutral by 2040. The importance placed on this in our neighbourhood plans was also highlighted.

Some concerns were expressed about the implications for parts of the rural area if zoning was used as proposed for identification of suitable solar and wind locations. However, it was clarified that this is a requirement under the NPPF and the location

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related to where there was connectivity to the grid as well as suitable conditions for optimum energy production. Control over what could be delivered in those zones would be through a criteria based policy. More information on zoning will be available in the emerging draft Local plan.

Further papers related to tackling climate change through the Local plan are to be brought back to future meetings of Strategic Planning Committee.

Full detailed [minutes](#) are now available.

## Webinar – Approach to Settlements

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Thank you to all who attended the webinar held via Zoom on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and contributed to making it such an interesting and useful discussion. Officers valued the constructive debate which will feed into consideration regarding settlement boundaries at the December Strategic Planning Committee. Please find below links to the presentations made. The notes will follow under separate cover ahead of the SPC meeting – apologies for not having issued these available sooner.

1. [Update on Local plan Preparation](#) (Ed Freeman, Service Lead for Planning Strategy and Development Management)
2. [The Role and Function of Settlements](#) (Keith Lane, Planning Officer)
3. [Use of Settlement Boundaries](#) (Linda Renshaw, Senior Planning Officer)

We look forward to further discussion with you at future webinars and as always welcome any feedback to help inform planning for future sessions.

## Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

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In tandem with, and to provide evidence for, the local plan, work is continuing on the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. Following agreement of the process and the establishment of the HELAA panel, meetings are now underway. This 'advisory only' panel, made up of individuals and organisations with experience in delivering housing and economic development, considers achievability/deliverability of sites only. This advice will help inform the selection of sites for allocation that are deliverable.

Further information will be provided when available.

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## Useful Links

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Information for neighbourhood plans work and status of all our plans: [Neighbourhood Plans being produced in East Devon - East Devon](#)

Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Papers: [Committee details - Strategic Planning Committee - East Devon](#)

Strategic Planning Committee Meetings Live-Stream and Recordings: [East Devon District Council - YouTube](#)

Emerging new Local plan information: [Emerging Local plan - East Devon](#)

Submitted Sites information (including interactive map): [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment - East Devon](#)

[Database](#) of made Neighbourhood Plan Policies

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