

Buckerell Parish Council welcomes the chance to comment on the Regulation 18 consultation on the emerging East Devon Local Plan.

It supports the overall strategic spatial strategy set out in Policy 1, which is to guide new development to the most sustainable locations within the district. It is noted that Bucknell is not included as a settlement within that policy and that is supported due to the lack of facilities within the village and the restricted road network serving the village. Its designation as countryside maintains its current status as set out in the adopted Local Plan.

The Parish Council does note that the overall level of housing set out in Policy 3 is based on the current version of the National Planning Policy Framework. With the recent publication of the proposed revisions to the NPPF, released on 23rd December 2022, there is a case for pausing work on the local plan review in terms of housing numbers, to allow the implications of the changes to national policy to be fully worked through. In particular the fact that the standard method is only now to be an advisory starting point for establishing housing requirements. The constraints of having two AONBs in the district faces greater pressure on the remaining areas of East Devon, particularly from Buckerell's perspective at the eastern half. It is noted that the current housing figure is solely derived from using the standard methodology. Once the NPPF has been updated, then the overall housing number can be re-visited, so that pressure resulting from new homes on the district's services and infrastructure, which residents of the parish need to access, can be reassessed. It is noted that a number of District Councils across the country are pausing work on their local plans whilst the implications of the new policy approach is worked through.

Buckerell Parish Council is concerned that specifically identifying areas on the Proposals Map, which include all of our parish, as being suitable for solar energy, places an unwelcomed presumption in favour of solar farms, potentially in our parish. The Parish Council would prefer to see that area of search removed, to be replaced by a criteria-based policy. Defining an area of search offers developers unnecessary in principle support for such installations which could radically change the appearance of the countryside within the parish and East Devon as a whole, particularly when viewed from the higher ground such as Hembury Fort .

Buckerell Parish continues number of farms which are not just important for the rural economy, but also play a major role in maintaining the landscape quality of the parish. However, the Parish Council does not consider Policy 46 which presumes against allowing extensions, alterations and outbuildings to agricultural dwellings can be justified and could restrict the farmers ability to meet the changing needs of their family, especially as these properties would enjoy permitted development rights, in any event. The policy appears to be inconsistent with Policy 50- Housing for Rural Workers, which does allow minor works to such dwellings, without the requirement of a reassessment of need.

The Parish Council looks forward to be able to comment on future versions of the Local Plan.