


a The Basement Office
4 Baring Crescent
Exeter
EX1 1TL



East Devon District Council
Blackdown House
Border Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
EX14 1EJ

06 January 2023

By Email Only

Dear Sir/ Madam

MLPD 20009 On Behalf of Broom, Down and Freemantle East Devon Local Plan 2020-2040 Preferred Options Regulation 18 Draft Plan Consultation Response

On behalf of our client Broom, Down and Freemantle, we submit representations in relation to the Draft East Devon Local Plan for strategic development scale land free from environmental and physical constraints between Clyst St George and Clyst St Mary in the “West End” of East Devon district, where the vast majority of key physical, social and community and green infrastructure exists or is planned for. Please see site plans in Appendices 1 and 2.

Whilst there are many elements of the plan that our client fully supports, in this response we raise key Local Plan themes that require urgent attention by East Devon District Council (EDDC) as part of the due process regarding appropriate consultation of the plan, its policies, and allocations.

We go on to provide specific responses to the plan questions in a table attached as Appendix 3.

It is clearly in the interests of everyone that a “sound” plan is adopted as soon as possible, and our client will support the Council in this aim.

The Duty to Cooperate

The Duty to Cooperate places a legal duty on Local Planning Authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters. The NPPF sets out under paragraphs 24-27 that Local Planning Authorities and County Councils are under a duty to cooperate within each other on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. Paragraph 26 specifically notes that joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere. This process within Devon is guided by the Devon Duty to Cooperate Protocol. This protocol includes reference to the development of appropriate housing development strategies across administrative boundaries.

East Devon District Council (EDDC) has a duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities. Moreover, its Local Plan must align with the requirements of the NPPF and synchronise with Exeter City Council (ECC)'s Local Plan, Teignbridge District Council (TDC)'s Local Plan and Mid Devon District Council (MDDC)'s Local Plan, particularly if it (or any neighbouring authority), cannot show that it (or any neighbouring authority), can viably meet its (their) housing and jobs needs on land in its (their) jurisdiction, as outlined in these representations.

At present, the Council is proposing a 20-year Local Plan to meet its "needs" without harm. This means that the Local Plan will have to earmark land to meet the required housing and jobs numbers projected for 20 years without significant harm to the climate or the environment. Encapsulated, the Council's present position appears to be that it has decided to meet its own needs on land in its jurisdiction without reliance on other Councils; but crucially it has not considered the needs of other Councils and whether other neighbouring authorities can meet their development needs. We do not believe that the Local Plan can be found "sound," in such circumstances, unfortunately.

Taken on, the neighbouring authority, ECC, has also taken the position that it can meet all its development needs on land in its jurisdiction without reliance on other Councils but quite simply this "vision" is undeliverable and unviable mainly because it proposes to build around 8,000 homes on high performing brownfield employment land when it is already 2,000 houses shy (pro rata) of an **at least** housing requirement of 12,000 in the current plan period.

In other words, there is a strong possibility that East Devon will have to accommodate a significant proportion of ECC's development "needs" because either housing will displace

employment land (unlikely in our view) or land will be required for Exeter's housing needs in other districts, including in the "West End" of East Devon.

Response

East Devon District Council (EDDC) is failing in its Duty to Cooperate, to responsibly and sustainably identify and allocate the most appropriate land for development. Further work must be done to ensure that development is delivered in the most sustainable locations around the Exeter area (irrespective of whether it's in EDDC, TDC, MDDC or ECC).

The Plan should be prepared and refined via constant dialogue with adjoining Councils and key stakeholders including landowners. If these key stakeholders are not incentivised to take part, significant parts of the plan will probably fail.

Housing Delivery and 5 Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS)

Neither East Devon District Council (EDDC) nor neighbouring Exeter City Council (ECC) have a robust 5-year housing land supply (*5YHLS).

For EDDC, the annual housing requirement figure has gone up to 946 homes per year because of changes to the affordability ratio which is a key input into the government's standard method for calculating housing need (the GESP annualised local housing need for EDDC was 900 dwellings). The increased figure combined with a declining supply position means that a 5-year housing land supply can no longer be demonstrated, with EDDC only having 4.68 years of housing land supply with a 5% buffer (Housing Monitoring Update to year ending 31 March 2022 Report to Strategic Planning Committee, 4th October 2022).

The reporting confirms 4.68 years of housing land supply, meaning a shortfall of 328 dwellings (65.6 dwellings per year over the 5-year period) (Housing Monitoring Update to 31 March 2022).

The new Local Plan will need to demonstrate that EDDC will have a robust 5-year housing land supply at the point of adoption of the plan if it is to be found "sound" at examination.

Response

East Devon's Local Plan is technically "out of date" (it is more than 5 years old). Securing East Devon's 5-year land supply is critical to the Local Plan's success.

The under supply of housing in the current plan period needs to be correctly addressed by the Council and the shortfall should be rectified within the emerging Local Plan.

Our client believes that the Council, in line with Sustainability Appraisal work commissioned by it, should continue to encourage development away from protected landscapes afforded the highest level of national planning policy direction within EDDC (e.g., World Heritage Sites; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; 2/3 of the district is covered by an AONB designation).

Strategic housing and employment development should be focussed within the “West End” of East Devon and/or close to it where the vast majority of key physical, social and community and green infrastructure exists or is planned for. The western end of East Devon (which is where our client’s land is), together with Exeter City is the area considered to be the economic driver for the subregion, and its growth cannot be constrained for social and economic reasons.

The under supply of housing in the current plan period needs to be correctly addressed by the Council and the shortfall should be rectified within the emerging Local Plan.

The Council should positively engage with ECC and accommodate the development “needs” of the City which cannot be met there.

Affordable Housing Delivery

EDDC Housing Monitoring Update to 31 March 2022 confirmed that a total of 241 affordable units were delivered during 2021/22.

The East Devon Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022 report by consultants ORS, Report to Strategic Planning Committee (7th October 2022) states that the Affordable Housing Need in East Devon is forecast to be 3,530 households for the 20-year period 2020 to 2040. The Draft Local Plan states that the affordable housing figure is 4,070 (net). This equates to 204 households per year.

Whilst affordable housing delivery in EDDC is faring better than neighbouring authorities (see Appeal reference APP/Y1110/W/22/3292721 25th August 2022 which noted that Exeter has a demonstrably acute and persistent under-delivery of affordable housing delivering only 6 affordable homes in the last year), a distorted marketplace where house price to earnings ratio is one of the worst in England (and getting worse), will undoubtedly lead to challenges within EDDC to deliver enough “affordable homes” and across the subregion, generally.

Response

The East Devon Local Plan must prioritise securing appropriate, viable levels of affordable housing within the plan period in the context of Exeter's chronic undersupply and the issue faced across the subregion. Inspectors are giving "significant weight" to undersupply in decisions.

Whilst currently EDDC has fared well in terms of delivery, the current delivery forecast is based on a working assumption of 35% affordable housing being delivered on future qualifying sites that meet the policy criteria, with a lower 15% rate at the second new town. Therefore, it is imperative to evaluate these assumptions against overall plan viability.

Adequate resource for these purposes must be made available.

Employment Land Supply and Delivery

Alongside housing growth, the strategic objectives of supporting business investment, job creation opportunities and building a resilient economy must be at the heart of the plan. Policies will need to help make the district an attractive and competitive place to start, grow and invest in a broad range of businesses, attracting more and higher skilled jobs and attracting and retaining people of working age.

A report to Strategic Planning Committee (22nd June 2021) states that in terms of achieving "matched" housing and employment new employment provision is around 1/3 (33%) behind in the delivery of new jobs compared to housing since the adoption of the current Local Plan.

There is a growing demand for additional employment land in the district and subregion to serve successful companies wanting to expand into the subregion and for businesses that want to relocate to the subregion. Additionally, there is demand for land to accommodate the strong and sustainable growth of existing businesses across the district and subregion. Supply is falling well short of demand causing significant negative economic and social impacts. The Council independently recognized the imbalance in availability and supply with a Report to Strategic Planning Committee (22nd June 2021).

This is not a new issue. The HotSW Employment Land Study Research Findings, 5th December 2019 found that East Devon frequently failed to fulfil enquiries. The Report to Strategic Planning Committee (22nd June 2021) cited a lack of available, unconstrained sites and concluded that even though there was a supply of allocated sites, that many of

these were not coming forward for development, suggesting they are not truly available or viable. Therefore, land ownership and viability must be considered critical deliverability issues when allocating employment sites in this plan.

Taken together EDDC committee papers confirm that the western part of the district is the area identified for strategic growth (this reflects the (Greater Exeter Strategic Plan) GESP which said that the area should accommodate subregional development needs) mainly because the same papers recognise (rightly) that two thirds of the EDDC area is covered in the highest tier restrictive landscape policy designations (67% is AONB).

The neighbouring authority, ECC, does not have a five-year housing land supply putting pressure on the small amount of employment land that is available within the City for alternative uses, and some sites previously allocated for employment have already been granted permission for residential uses.

The draft ECC Local Plan proposes an unsustainable “vision” encouraging residential development on existing high performing employment areas such as Marsh Barton. This would result in the further displacement of employers and occupiers in the City, exacerbating the imbalance with surrounding authorities, and worsening the documented (including in Council papers) demand and undersupply of employment land within East Devon and the subregion.

Response

Simplified, the current shortfall within EDDC and the additional context within adjoining ECC means that the emerging East Devon Local Plan must plan effectively and collaboratively for the sustainable release and delivery of high-quality employment land in the most suitable locations. If it cannot demonstrate that the proposed strategy is appropriate and will meet the Local Plan objectives and the needs of the district and subregion up to 2040, then significant parts of the plan will fail.

It is likely that differing policies and strategies will be needed within East Devon to accommodate the growth that is required. Viably delivering the employment numbers required in the plan period means that more land will need to be released in line with market, district, and subregional needs.

Our client believes that the Council, in line with Sustainability Appraisal work commissioned by it, should continue to encourage development away from protected landscapes afforded the highest level of national planning policy direction (e.g., World Heritage Sites; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; 2/3 of the district is covered by an AONB designation).

Strategic housing and employment development should therefore continue to be focussed in the “West End” of East Devon and/or close to it where the vast majority of key physical, social and community and green infrastructure exists or is planned for.

The Emerging Local Plan Development Strategy / Vision

East Devon District Council’s planning policies are out of date and the district is facing a chronic housing and employment land shortage (along with neighbouring Exeter City).

The plan vision focuses new development on the western side of the district, including a new town and other major strategic developments close to Exeter.

The Plan aims to focus significant development at the Principal Centre of Exmouth and the Main Centres of Axminster, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Seaton, and Sidmouth to serve their own needs and that of the wider surrounding areas

Response

For the reasons highlighted above including significant aggregated undersupply in the current plan period, it is considered that additional land for housing and employment must be allocated, particularly in the “West End”, (away from protected landscapes afforded the highest level of national planning policy direction e.g. World Heritage Sites; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; 2/3 of the district is covered by an AONB designation) which, along with Exeter City, is the area considered to be the economic driver for the subregion; it’s growth cannot be constrained for social and economic reasons.

Our Client’s Landholdings

Strategic Land Between Clyst St George and Clyst St Mary (Please See Plans Attached as Appendices 1 and 2)

Our client’s land is shown in Appendices 1 and 2. It is in the “West End” East Devon, it is suitable and available to meet East Devon’s, and to help meet Exeter’s, housing, affordable housing, employment, and social and community and green infrastructure needs broadly in line with the issues the subregion faces.

Our proposal for an urban extension of C1,500 (up to C1,750 houses), underpinned by technical work, is free from significant environmental constraints (e.g., it would be far enough away from East Devon’s AONBs and SSSIs; there would be no views into it from

the East Devon AONBs; and it would avoid coalescence with East Devon's villages) and from significant physical constraints (e.g., pylons; and gas mains).

It would deliver a strategic road link between the A376 and the A3052 without subsidy, taking traffic away from East Devon villages and Junctions 29 and 30 of the M5, towards the first-choice new town option and onto the strategic employment sites on the A30, all benefitting existing and future residents of the district.

The scheme would require only a 2-year lead in from adoption to strategic scale housing delivery without significant environmental harm and would dovetail with the selected new town proposal in East Devon which would begin to deliver scale later in the plan period, thereby protecting the Council's 5-year housing land supply position until the selected new town option begins to deliver in earnest.

Together with the selected new town, our proposal has the potential to deliver about 10,000 houses in the right locations across 2 Local Plan periods with the potential to deliver strategic road infrastructure all the way from the A376 to the A30.

NPPF Para 11 states that.... Councils should... meet the development needs of their area... **"as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas...."**

NPPF Para 12 states that **"local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, ... if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed"**.

The Masterplan is attached as Appendices 1 and 2.

Conclusions

- The Council is proposing a 20-year Local Plan to meet its "needs" without harm.
- The Local Plan will have to earmark land to meet the required housing and jobs numbers projected for 20 years without significant harm to the climate or the environment.
- EDDC will have to cooperate with adjoining councils to deliver the development requirements of the subregion if its Local Plan is to be found "sound."
- The "West End" should remain the key focus for strategic growth.

- Our client's landholdings are in this sustainable location.
- Our Masterplan proposal for an urban extension of C1,500 (up to C1,750 houses), underpinned by technical work, shows that the land is free from significant environmental constraints and from significant physical constraints.
- The land is suitable and available to meet EDDC development needs, as well as to help meet Exeter's development needs broadly in line with the issues the subregion faces.

If you require further information about specific aspects of the representations made, please contact us at the above address.

We look forward to further dialogue as 'The East Devon Local Plan' progresses.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

James

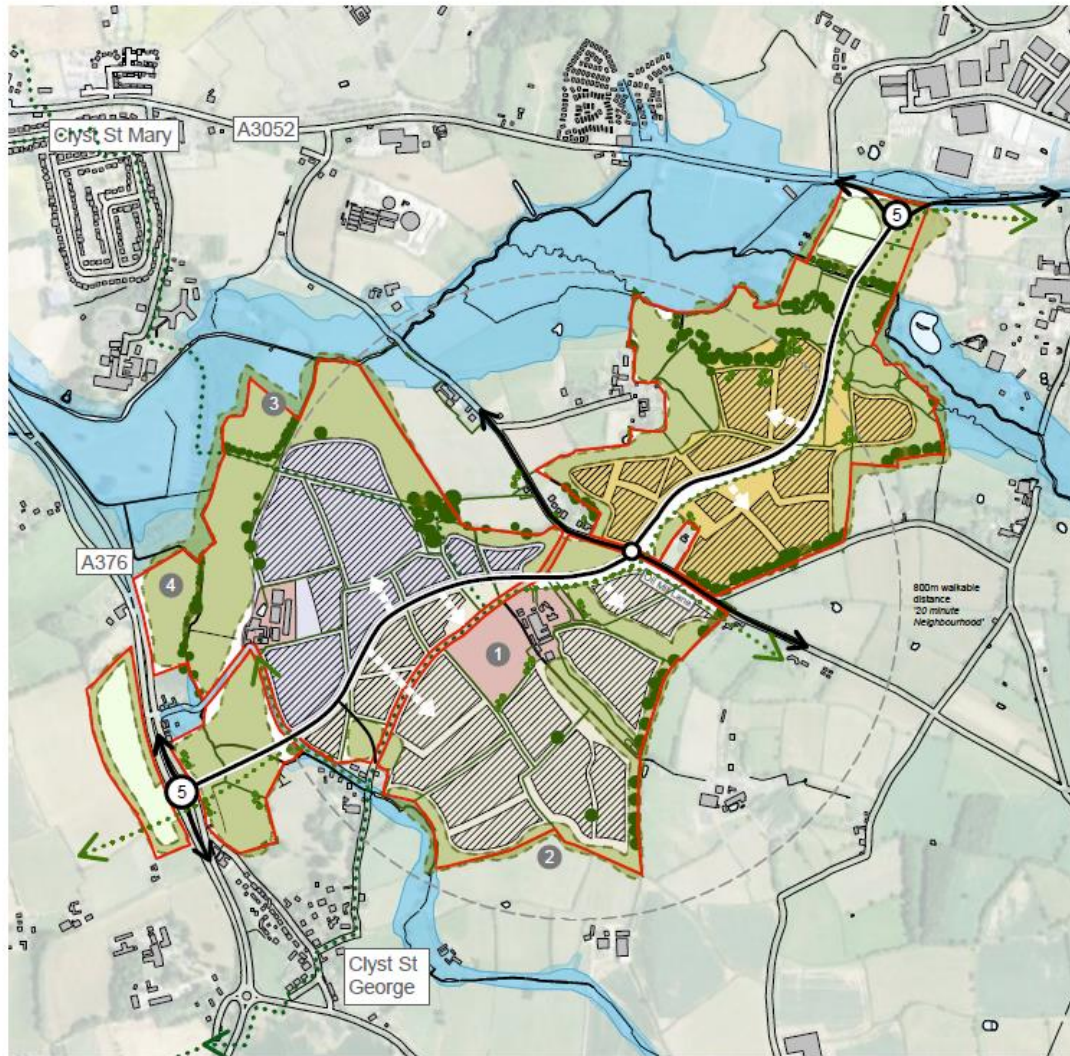
James McMurdo MRTPI MRICS

Director

For and on behalf of McMurdo

Copies: Client

APPENDIX 1. SITE MASTERPLAN



16 - STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN
Land Between Clyst St. Mary & Clyst St. George
Parameter Plan

	Area For Consideration	= 153.3 Ha
	Flood Zone 3	
	Flood Zone 2	
	Ecology Buffer	Creating and enhancing specific wildlife areas
	Road Network:	
	Cycle Routes (Including Clyst Valley Trail)	
	Development Zone A	= 15.9Ha
	Medium density average (X 32 dph)	= 509 Units
	Development Zone B	= 23.5Ha
	Medium density average (X 32 dph)	= 752 Units
	Development Zone C	= 14.5Ha
	Medium density average (X 32 dph)	= 464 Units
	Social & Community Infrastructure	= 6.9Ha
	Employment & Connectivity	= 5Ha

Total potential units at a medium density of 32 dwellings per hectare
= 1725 Units

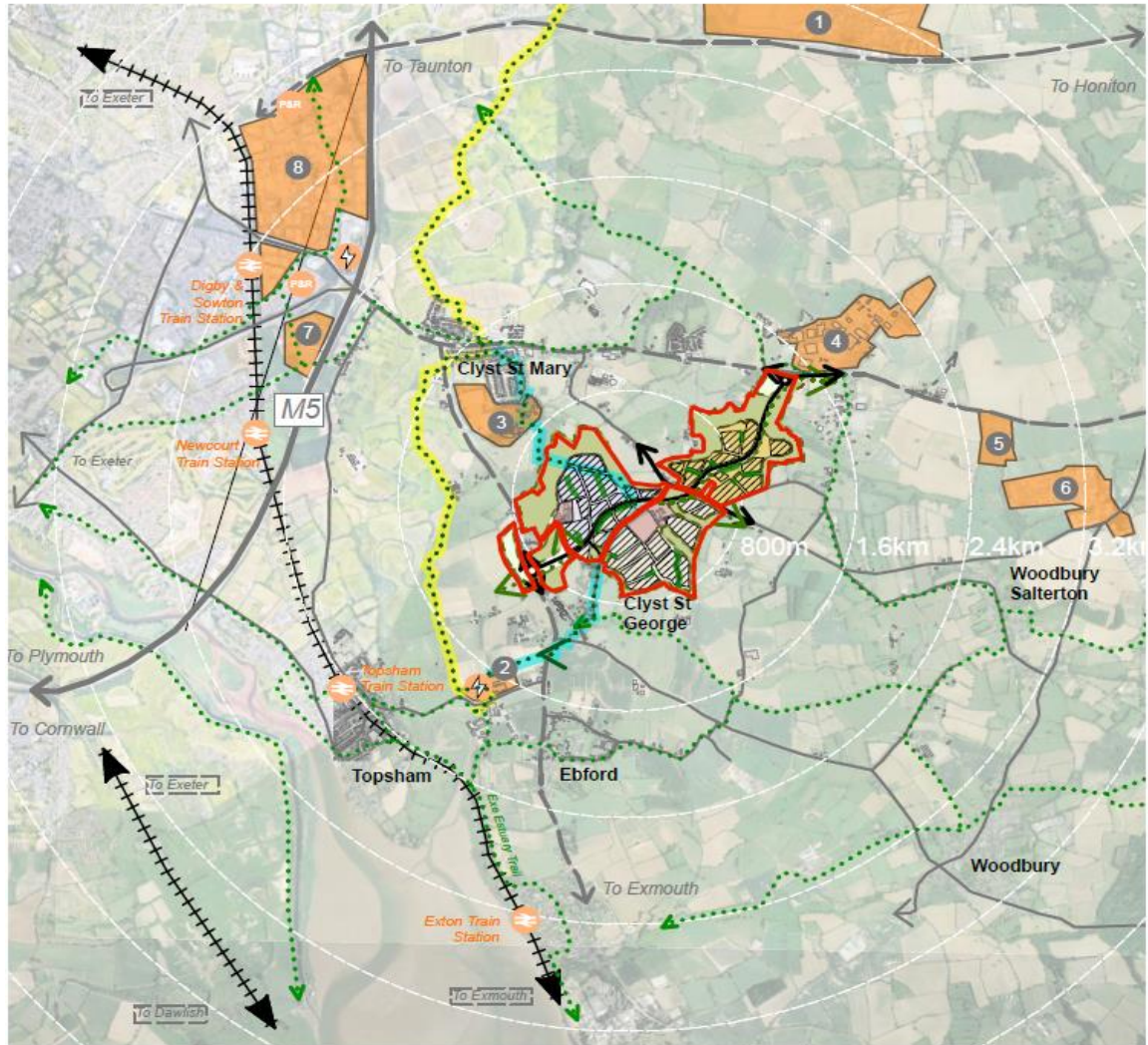
Developable Area By Ownership:

Down	=	16.6Ha = 531 units at 32 units per Ha
Freemantle	=	11.3Ha = 362 units at 32 units per Ha
Broom	=	26.1Ha = 835 units at 32 units per Ha

- Potential For Kenniford Farm to act as centre for development as most of the site is within 800m walkable distance
- Development buffer to be created on southern boundary
- Wildlife area created within flood zone
- Enhanced woodland / wildlife area to provide screening from A376
- New Junction



APPENDIX 2 SITE CONTEXT



15 - PROPOSED CONNECTIONS TO EMPLOYMENT & CONNECTIVITY
Land Between Clyst St. Mary & Clyst St. George
Parameter Plan

- Area For Consideration
- Road Network
- Cycle Routes
- Proposed Clyst Valley Trail Route Option 1 - Published 2018
- Proposed Clyst Valley Trail Route Option 2 - Published Nov 2021
- Employment Area
- Railway Line
- Train Station
- Park & Ride
- Electric Car Charge Points
- 1 Exeter International Airport
- 2 Darts Farm
- 3 Winstlade Park
- 4 Hill Barton Business Park
- 5 Greendale Farm
- 6 Greendale Business Park
- 7 Exeter Chiefs Rugby Club
- 8 Sowton Industrial Estate





APPENDIX 3

Policy	Comment
<p>1. Strategic Policy – Spatial Strategy New development will be directed towards the most sustainable locations in East Devon, consistent with the spatial strategy</p>	<p>It is agreed that new development should be focused on the western side of the district including a new town and other strategic developments close to Exeter.</p>
<p>2. Strategic Policy – Housing distribution</p>	<p>New development should be focused on the western side of the district including a new town and other strategic developments close to Exeter.</p> <p>Our client’s land can accommodate large scale development in this location.</p> <p>It would only require a 2-year lead in from plan adoption to strategic scale housing delivery without significant environmental harm and could dovetail with the selected new town proposal which would begin to deliver scale later in the plan period, thereby protecting the Council’s 5-year housing land supply position until the selected new town option begins to deliver in earnest.</p> <p>Together with the preferred new town, our client’s proposal would ensure housing delivery throughout the plan period, achieving about 10,000 houses in the right locations across 2 plan periods with the potential to deliver strategic road infrastructure all the way from the A376 to the A30.</p> <p>The table attached to this policy should be updated to take this into account.</p>
<p>3. Strategic Policy - Levels of future housing development</p>	<p>Neither East Devon District Council (EDDC) nor neighbouring Exeter City Council (ECC) have a robust 5-year housing land supply (*5YHLS).</p>

	<p>The annual housing requirement figure has gone up to 946 homes per year because of changes to the affordability ratio which is a key input into the government's standard method for calculating housing need (for the GESP the annualised local housing need for EDDC was 900 dwellings). The increased figure combined with a declining supply position means that a 5-year housing land supply can no longer be demonstrated, with EDDC only having 4.68 years of housing land supply with a 5% buffer (Housing Monitoring Update to year ending 31 March 2022 Report to Strategic Planning Committee, 4th October 2022).</p> <p>The reporting confirms 4.68 years of housing land supply, meaning a shortfall of 328 dwellings (65.6 dwellings per year over the 5-year period) (Housing Monitoring Update to 31 March 2022).</p> <p>The new Local Plan will therefore need to demonstrate that EDDC will have a robust 5-year housing land supply the point of adoption of the plan if it is to be found sound at examination.</p>
<p>4. Strategic Policy - Employment Provision and Distribution Strategy</p>	<p>Simplified, the current shortfall within EDDC and the context within ECC means that the emerging East Devon Local Plan must plan effectively for the sustainable release and delivery of high-quality employment and be able to demonstrate that the proposed strategy is appropriate and will meet the Local Plan objectives and the needs of the district up to 2040.</p> <p>It is likely that differing policies and strategies will be needed within East Devon to accommodate the growth that is required.</p>

The emerging East Devon Local Plan needs to consider the impact of ECC's New Local Plan in terms of its impact on employment land and reflect that in its employment land requirements. Both Councils have a duty to cooperate, and it is not evident from either Local Plan consultation that either have fulfilled that duty.

Specific reference is made within this policy to "sufficient additional employment land to meet East Devon's requirements will be identified." Supporting paragraphs also refer to "building a resilient local economy aimed at providing economic prosperity for East Devon." There is no reference to the needs of the wider subregion, specifically Exeter nor the impact of ECC' new Local Plan policies relating to the redevelopment of existing employment sites or the lack of reliance on greenfield allocations for residential, employment and mixed-use development.

More emphasis needs to be given to the needs of the subregion as opposed to East Devon as a single entity.

Whilst the supporting policy text acknowledges that strategic policy should provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses and the needs that cannot be met in neighbouring areas, there is no dialogue to suggest that the needs of Exeter specifically have been considered when calculating both housing and employment land need.

The policy and the supporting text recognise the need to secure employment opportunities in the western end of East Devon, acknowledging the geographical advantages for business.

See comments relating to policy 5 which are also relevant to policy 4.

<p>5. Strategic Policy – Mixed use developments incorporating housing, employment, and community facilities</p>	<p>Without the evidence of the EDNA, it is difficult to conclude that the ratios set out for employment provision is adequate to meet the needs of East Devon and the subregion. Paragraph 3.66 notes that the site allocations are intended to meet the identified East Devon employment need, being evidence by the EDNA. If the EDNA is not available, it is not possible to confirm that the site allocations will meet the need across the plan period, nor those of the wider subregion.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.71 regarding alternative strategies in noted, as is confirmation that EDDC do not have sufficient evidence to make recommendations on alternative approaches. This would confirm thoughts above that without this evidence this policy cannot be fully assessed as appropriate or not.</p> <p>Further sites should be considered for allocation within the western part of the District that can deliver additional employment land in sustainable locations alongside the new town option.</p> <p>The mechanism for determining the amount of off-site contributions needs to be detailed. The impact on viability of developments also needs to be considered here, and priorities for contributions where they can render developments unviable also needs consideration.</p>
<p>8. Strategic Policy – Development of a second new town east of Exeter</p>	<p>Development is being steered towards the western side of East Devon, rightly.</p> <p>Our client’s land could accommodate an urban extension of C1,500 to C1,750 houses, underpinned by technical work, is free from significant environmental constraints (e.g., it would be far enough away from East Devon’s AONBs and SSSIs; there would be no views into it from the East Devon AONBs; and it would avoid coalescence with East Devon’s villages) and from significant physical constraints (e.g., pylons; and gas mains).</p>

	<p>It would deliver a strategic road link between the A376 and the A3052 without subsidy, taking traffic away from East Devon villages and Junctions 29 and 30 of the M5, towards the first-choice new town option at Denbow and onto the strategic employment sites on the A30, all benefitting existing and future residents of the district.</p> <p>The scheme would require only a 2-year lead in from plan adoption to strategic scale housing delivery without significant environmental harm and could dovetail with the preferred new town proposal which would begin to deliver scale later in the plan period, thereby protecting the Council's 5-year housing land supply position until the selected new town option begins to deliver in earnest.</p> <p>Together with the preferred new town, this proposal would ensure housing delivery throughout the plan period, achieving about 10,000 houses in the right locations across 2 plan periods with the potential to deliver strategic road infrastructure all the way from the A376 to the A30.</p>
<p>16. Strategic Policy – Green infrastructure and the Clyst Valley Regional Park</p>	<p>Our client's land offers high potential development which does not impact upon existing designated GI assets. The land offers significant potential to contribute to the delivery of the CVRP and extend green infrastructure coverage within the EDDC area. The land offers the ability to deliver strategic SANGS and biodiversity net gain within site.</p> <p>The mechanism for determining the number of contributions needs to be detailed.</p> <p>The impact on viability of developments also needs to be considered here, and priorities for contributions where they can render developments unviable also needs consideration.</p>

27. Strategic Policy – Climate Emergency	Our client supports the aspirations within this policy.
28. Strategic Policy – Net-Zero Carbon Development	Our client supports the aspirations within this policy.
29. Strategic Policy – Promoting renewables and zero carbon energy	Our client supports the aspirations within this policy.
33. Strategic Policy – Heat Networks	Consideration needs to be given to how such measures will impact the viability of developments coming forward.
39. Strategic Policy - Housing to address needs	<p>Noted, housing need however needs to include the wider subregion consideration should be given to Exeter’s 5YLS issues.</p> <p>There is a housing delivery crisis within East Devon, Exeter City and across the subregion. The western part of East Devon (along with Exeter City) is the area considered to be the economic driver for the subregion, and its growth cannot be constrained for social and economic reasons. The shortfall should be addressed within the emerging Local Plans (added to the numbers required) for the two authorities.</p>

<p>40. Policy - Affordable Housing</p>	<p>The East Devon Local Plan must prioritise securing appropriate, viable levels of affordable housing within the Plan period for the sub region considering Exeter’s affordable housing non-performance in its current plan period. (6 affordable houses in a year last year is plainly unacceptable in a City of C 130,000 people) Inspectors are giving “significant weight” to undersupply in decisions.</p> <p>Adequate land for this purpose must be made available.</p>
<p>44. Policy – Self-Build and Custom Build Housing</p>	<p>This policy notes that a proportion of SBC units will be affordable on developments of over 250 dwellings. The policy needs to be specific. What proportion will be required or is the proportion set by the viability of the scheme? i.e., via independent viability assessments as part of an application submission.</p>
<p>65. Strategic Policy – Walking, cycling, and public transport</p>	<p>This policy recognises that, in rural areas, the delivery of this policy will be more challenging. It should be made clear that this policy should be applied flexibly in rural areas to ensure the vitality of such locations.</p>
<p>66. Policy – Protecting transport sites and routes</p>	<p>Our client’s land also offers significant potential to contribute to the delivery of the CVRP and extend green infrastructure coverage within the EDDC area.</p>

74. Policy – Landscape Features	The need to conserve landscape character and appearance is recognised. However, the provision of homes and employment carries substantial weight in the planning balance when considered against the lack of robust housing and employment land supply in EDDC and across the subregion. This policy needs to be applied flexibly in recognition of this shortfall; this is especially the case in areas outside of the AONB which are less sensitive to change.
77. Policy – Areas of Strategic Visual Importance	The need to preserve the visual integrity, identity, and scenic quality of the District through conserving and enhancing key views of local landmarks is recognised. However, the provision of homes and employment carries substantial weight in the planning balance when considered against the lack of robust housing and employment land supply in EDDC and across the subregion. This policy needs to be applied flexibly in recognition of this shortfall; this is especially the case in areas outside of the AONB which are less sensitive to change.
78. Policy – Green wedges	<p>It is noted that the Green Wedge locations and boundaries are currently under review to take account of development and other changes which have occurred since the boundaries were defined in the adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>Comments are likely following the review of Green Wedges.</p>
83. Policy - Development on High Quality Agricultural Land	The need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land is recognised. However, the provision of homes and employment carries substantial weight in the planning balance when considered against the lack of robust housing and employment land supply in EDDC and across the subregion. This policy needs to be applied flexibly in recognition of this shortfall; this is especially the case in the western side of the District where development is clearly focused.

<p>84. Policy – Protection of Internationally and Nationally important wildlife sites</p>	<p>The BNG requirement of 20% exceeds that outlined in the Environment Bill. Whilst justification is provided within the supporting paragraphs, we would dispute that a significant increase such as this would not render many developments unviable. Further evidence to support the justification for this increase needs to be presented. The evidence relates to other areas; not East Devon.</p>
<p>86. Policy – Habitats Regulations Assessment</p>	<p>Our client supports the aspirations of this policy.</p> <p>It is noted a review of SEDESMS is currently being undertaken. The findings of this review will then be used to further inform and revise this policy. Without the evidence of the SEDESMS, it is difficult to comment on the appropriateness of this policy.</p> <p>The impact on viability of developments also needs to be considered here, and priorities for contributions where they can render developments unviable also needs consideration.</p>
<p>87. Policy – Biodiversity Net Gain</p>	<p>The BNG requirement of 20% exceeds that outlined in the Environment Bill. Whilst justification is provided within the supporting paragraphs, we would dispute that a significant increase such as this would not render many developments unviable. Further evidence to support the justification for this increase needs to be presented. The evidence relates to other areas; not East Devon.</p>

<p>88. Strategic Policy – Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Network</p>	<p>The aspirations of this policy are noted.</p>
<p>97. Policy –Land and buildings for sport, recreation, and open space areas in association with development</p>	<p>Our client supports the aspirations of this policy.</p> <p>The policy acknowledges that the levels set out are based on a study that is now out of date and will need to be updated. Without up-to-date evidence it is difficult to comment on the appropriateness of this policy.</p> <p>The impact on viability of developments also needs to be considered here, and priorities for contributions where they can render developments unviable also needs consideration.</p>
<p>102.Policy – Historic Environment</p>	<p>The need to conserve and enhance heritage assets is recognised. However, the provision of employment carries substantial weight in the planning balance when considered against the lack of robust employment land supply in EDDC and across the subregion. This policy needs to be applied flexibly in recognition of this shortfall.</p>

