



SIDMOUTH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Response to consultation on East Devon Draft Local Plan

Introduction

This is a response to the consultation on the draft East Devon Local Plan, on behalf of the Sidmouth Cycling Campaign. The Cycling Campaign is part of the Vision Group for Sidmouth.

We recently circulated a questionnaire about improving cycling in Sidmouth, which was completed by over 180 people and we are currently analysing these responses to identify priorities for our campaign. Many of the respondents identified the need to improve safe cycling routes from Sidmouth to Sidbury and over the Bowd to Ottery St Mary and Feniton.

Objectives

We recognise that cycling directly meets a number of the Objectives in the draft local plan and we support their inclusion. In particular:

Objective 1. Designing for health and well-being.

Objective 2. Tackling the climate emergency.

Objective 5. Promoting vibrant town centres.

Objective 6. Designing beautiful and healthy spaces and buildings

Objective 9. Promoting sustainable transport

Objective 10. Connections and infrastructure

Policies

We would like to make the following comments on the proposed policies:

Strategic Policy 24. Sidmouth and its future development.

The potential site for allocation south west of Woolbrook Road (Sidm_01) lies adjacent to the former railway line that has been identified as a future cycle route from Sidmouth to Feniton (included in Policy 66). We recommend that the boundary of this site be extended to include the former railway line. This will enable a condition to be put on any future planning permission for the former railway line to be adopted as Public Open Space and create a footway/cycleway to the south to link up with the existing public footpath to Ice House Lane. This would support Strategic Policy 65 and Policy 66.

Strategic Policy 26. Development at service villages (including Sidbury)

The potential site for allocation in Sidbury (Sidm_34) encompasses the route of the proposed off-road cycle route from Sidford to Sidbury that Devon County Council are promoting. Construction of this route and links to the adjacent housing should be included as a condition of any planning permission for this site. This would support Strategic Policy 65 and Policy 66



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Chapter 7. Tackling the climate emergency and responding to climate change (Policies 27 to 38)

Figure 8, in this chapter, presents “The Energy Hierarchy” which forms the basis for interventions that developers will need to prioritise to ensure the net-zero target is met. The first and most important item on the hierarchy is “Development location: Minimise need to travel and provide access to sustainable transport”. We agree with this approach; however, there is no further reference to development location or transport in the remainder of this chapter, or how the developer will demonstrate their interventions towards net-zero.

We suggest that this chapter should include paragraphs after Figure 8 detailing how the items on “The Energy Hierarchy” will be addressed. For instance, Strategic Policy 1 directs development to sustainable locations and Chapter 11 prioritises sustainable travel.

Policy 41. Housing to meet the needs of older people.

Clause 4. Refers to sites easily accessible by walking to town centres. We suggest this should be modified to “sites easily accessible by walking, cycling and mobility scooters” as routes incorporating steps, for instance, can be an obstacle to access.

Clause 12a refers to Clause 8. This appears to be in error and should refer to Clause 7.

Policy 47. Hostels and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

We object to Clause 2 which states that cycle storage facilities are not required if the site has access to regular public transport or is within 800m walking distance of a town centre. This should be revised as cycling is a particularly attractive mode of transport if the site is within 800m of a town centre.

Strategic Policy 56. Town centre hierarchy.

We support this policy that out-of-centre sites should be accessible by bicycle and well connected to the centre.

Strategic Policy 65. Walking, cycling and public transport.

We support this policy which prioritises walking and cycling links in new development. However, this policy could be made more effective by defining the features of a “20-minute neighbourhood” that new development will have to incorporate. For instance, that community facilities, such as primary schools and shops, are within a 20 minute walk of all proposed housing.

Policy 66. Protecting transport sites and routes.

We support this policy. Respondents to our recent questionnaire strongly supported the creation of cycle routes between Feniton and Sidmouth, and between Sidford and Sidbury.



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Policy 67. Travel Plans, Transport Statements, Transport Assessments.

Bullet point 3 should be 2 separate bullet points:

- Proximity to environmental designations
- Impact on promoting walking and cycling

Policy 68. Parking standards.

We support the inclusion of a cycle parking standard in this policy, but suggest it is separated from the car parking standards paragraph. We also recommend replacing the requirement of 2 cycle parking space per dwelling with a reference to the requirements of LTN 1/20. Table 11.1 of LTN 1/20 suggests a minimum requirement of 1 secure space per bedroom. This table also provides guidance on parking standards for non-residential development, which should be referenced in this policy. Provision should also be made for charging e-bikes in residential developments.

Contact

This response is on behalf of the Sidmouth Cycling Campaign. Further details about the group can be found in the links below:

Website: <https://visionforsidmouth.org/sidmouth-cycling-campaign/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sidmouthcyclingcampaign>