



# Woodbury Parish Council

(serving Exton, Woodbury and Woodbury Salterton)

Clerk to the Council:

Mrs. Anne-Marie Bates  
Woodbury Parish Council Offices,  
Greenside, Greenway,  
Woodbury, Devon EX5 1LP

Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Website: [woodburyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://woodburyparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
Email: [REDACTED]

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EDDC Planning Department  
Blackdown House, Border Road  
Heathpark Industrial Estate  
Honiton  
Devon EX14 1EJ

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023

Dear Sirs,

RE: East Devon District Council Emerging Local Plan Consultation

Woodbury Parish Council has approved this response and the two accompanying documents which are site specific at our Planning Committee Meeting on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023. Our response incorporates residents' views gathered at two independent Parish Council consultations; each consultation consisted of six events across the three villages within the Parish. We had a particularly good turnout at all the events and the demographic of those who attended and completed our questionnaires represented a wide age range and a good cross section of the community.

The Parish Council and many of our residents found the District Council's consultation hard to navigate; with a time period over one of the most busiest times of the year. The Commonplace platform was frustrating, hard to understand and confusing especially with the terminology for example "rejected" which actually meant "not preferred". For residents to make comments it was very time consuming, with many unable to find the information they needed, causing them to give up. Our residents were appreciative of the consultations the Parish Council organised and for our Parish Councillors and two Ward Members being able to answer the many questions they had.

We have enclosed the observations for each of the proposed sites that were submitted during the call for sites and below are some points that were almost unanimously supported by the over 400 residents who attended our consultations:

- It was very evident that residents felt that it was paramount that each of villages individual identity and community was retained and any development was not detrimental to the future of any of the villages across the District.
- Support was given to a new large town development and small amount of development in most villages, rather than substantial development across existing villages.
- Option "A" was the preferred site for the new large town.

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- The “Landscape Proposal” previously submitted by Woodbury Parish Council and supported by residents and neighbouring villages and Exmouth Town Council was an important element to the future of the west side of East Devon. This will provide important green wedges, wildlife corridors, a new Country Park for residents’ wellbeing, as well as biodiversity and connectivity via footpaths, cycleways and bridleways and we urge EDDC to adopt and facilitate this proposal. The Countryside is our major asset and the utmost needs to be done to preserve it.
- East Devon District Council should adopt a Policy to levy a higher level of Council Tax charge for holiday lets or 2<sup>nd</sup> homes in each village / town. This would help to address the issue of properties not being available or affordable to local people, also it would help to stop thriving villages becoming ghost villages which has an impact on the local community and businesses.
- Solar and wind farms were important, but should not impact negatively on wildlife or hinder areas of natural beauty.
- All current planning applications are considered for approval in isolation from the impact of other developments nearby and in nearby villages and towns. Residents fully supported the need for EDDC to have a Policy requiring that due consideration is given to how the cumulative impact of proposed developments on key local infrastructure will be dealt with, but also address the cumulative impact not only within a Parish, but also on neighbouring locations (i.e. Exmouth and Woodbury).

At present, when taken in isolation, the benefits that can accrue from the co-ordination of and the planning for future developments cannot be shown. However, when considered together several planned developments could incorporate major Parish enhancements e.g. traffic flow along trunk roads that run through settlements.

- Infrastructure is a major concern to the Parish Council and to all residents; EDDC needs to consider the cumulative impact and associated pressures from additional developments.

The following should be implemented;

- (a) Traffic calming measures especially due to the increased volume of traffic.
- (b) 20 mile hour speed limits in all villages to assist with safety concerns.
- (c) Suitable pedestrian routes to facilities and village centres, which have adequate lighting and footpath surfacing as many currently are already dangerous and substandard.

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- Water companies continue to discharge untreated raw sewage into our rivers and sea, an environmental catastrophe and danger to human, animal and wildlife health and it is not been given the attention it absolutely deserves. These discharges should not be happening the first instance and by building more dwellings with exacerbate the issues, so until sufficient infrastructure has been implemented to resolve the issues any building should be put on hold.

The River Exe is a renowned SSSI site, it is internationally important as a tidal feeding and roosting habitat for wintering water birds - including for example the iconic two species of dark and pale bellied Brent geese. Streams in the Exe catchment area are in poor condition. Our beaches are a significant attraction to residents and for tourism and a magnet for outdoor activities and sports.


In Partnership, solutions must be found to massively reduce the discharge of untreated raw sewage. As urgent is resolving agricultural runoff; another avoidable destructive pollutant, hugely detrimental to the health and safety of people, animals and the natural environment. EDDC needs to ensure that all new developments do not add further to the current unacceptable situation. For example ensuring that surface and grey water is dealt with separately from sewage.

Woodbury Parish Council and our resident's urge that East Devon District Council contests the Governments allocation of numbers for East Devon. This Council over the years has oversupplied the number of new dwellings and this should be taken into consideration against future numbers, especially when other areas in the country have underdelivered. East Devon is an area whereby many residents and businesses rely on tourism and although the east side is protected by AONB's the west cannot and should not accommodate large scale development that ruins this area and that causes unwanted merging between the ever sprawling Exeter and Exmouth destroying the valued characteristics, independence and identity of the villages in between. This area is also an important tourist area and has SSSI/AONB sites and Coastal Protection Areas, which must be protected.

Woodbury Parish Council feels that there is an opportunity for the District Council to make contact with the First Tier of Local Government and ask Parish / Town Councils if and how many new dwellings that they feel would benefit their communities; some lower ranked villages would actually benefit with some development to make their villages more sustainable, this would then lessen the burden on higher ranked villages and towns.

Woodbury Parish Council trusts that East Devon District Council Members and Officers will take on board the above and attached observations, also our Landscape proposal. The importance for local knowledge to be incorporated in the New Local Plan and for us to be part of shaping the future of the District and enhance it to its fullest potential whilst making it a place for future generations to be proud of and a place where we and they want to live.

Yours sincerely

  
Anne-Marie Bates  
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