

Exmoor National Park Local Plan 5 Year Review

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

2nd December 2021

Summary notes

Housing and Communities

(Including housing delivery, local housing, community facilities)

<u>Housing</u>	<u>Community</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of affordable housing – need to establish whether it is a policy issue • Affordable housing viability. Cross-subsidy as an option to deliver more affordable housing • No unrestricted market homes - become second and holiday homes • Definition of ‘affordable’ thought to help some people – on lowest incomes- but not others • Local housing - employees of local businesses / local workers with a local but not local affordable need tie e.g. as in Yorkshire Dales • Local connection criteria too stringent. Should include workers (in addition to agricultural and forestry or jobs benefiting the National Park) e.g. contributing to local economy • ENPA needs to look at interpretation of the current Local Plan • Local connection criteria and bordering parishes - Brushford • Lack of staff accommodation • Maximum floor space of 93m² too small e.g. for self-builds. Why does it apply to conversions? Different size limits on owner occupied compared to Registered Provider controlled housing. Larger housing to move to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing and declining population and the impact on local community services and economy • Example of Community Land Trust shop underway at Parracombe • Other community shops set up, e.g., Exford, Winsford • Concern over pub no longer accepting customers unless booking for a meal
<u>Housing cont.</u>	

- Policies are good and progress is being made – patience is needed as development is a long process
- Affordable self-builds permitted through the Local Plan - policy is working. Other factors may be affecting delivery
- Non-policy related issues raised include:
 - The loss of the Rural Housing Enabler – now reinstated (in Somerset part of ENP) things seems to be happening - hoped will lead to development
 - Loss of affordable housing grants for Registered Providers (RPs) - recently reinstated
 - difficulties with Homefinder - does not reflect all local housing need
 - RPs and scale of sites
 - Concern over second / holiday homes (19.4% in 2011) and shortage of rented housing compared to holiday lets
 - High cost of living on Exmoor
 - Potential to look at managed (custom) build options
 - Opportunities for landowners to release land for affordable housing as lower agricultural values on Exmoor

Environment

(including biodiversity net gain, climate change, design)

Climate Change

- Does climate change have sufficient prominence in Local Plan, should it guide all other policies
- Important to link nature and climate crises, allowing space for nature
- Links between where people live and work, to reduce the need to travel
- Need to retrofit existing housing stock
- Place greater emphasis on retaining historic/traditional buildings for embodied energy

Biodiversity Net Gain

- Support for further guidance /SPD to provide clarity to applicants
- Standard calculator has limitations – useful for NP to develop own tool/metric
- Positive contribution to historic environment too
- NP should go beyond minimum, set net gain at 20% and longer than 30 year commitment for habitat
- Opportunity for off-site BNG to provide a new income stream for farmers, this should include those who have already done a lot for biodiversity
- Important to ensure that off-site BNG is credible

Renewable Energy

- Strengthen current LP wording so that development must demonstrate how it will use low carbon and renewable energy, not just 'have regard to'
- Opportunity for more locally generated power, especially hydro
- More flexibility on renewables and listed buildings / Conservation Areas
- Need the enabling infrastructure for renewable energy
- Support for community renewable energy (even if large scale)

Design

- Revision of design guide welcomed
- Too much concern over preservation rather than adapting and changing
- New guide needs to include modern design not just traditional
- Design requirements can make housing unaffordable
- Build nature into design as part of buildings
- Look at LP requirements for materials, particularly for windows

Economy

(including farming, tourism and diversification, digital communications)

Farming and Land Based Economy

- There will be many changes to farming over the next 18 months and beyond which may impact on viability
- Some people felt Intensive farming is not supported by policy
- Others suggested it may not be the policies but getting used to using them
- Farming activities are supported by other micro business which need to be in the park.
- May need to find land for them
- Farms may need to be bigger to survive

Diversification and Tourism

- Current Policies may be too restrictive and need change
- Agricultural ties for housing may prevent diversification
- Farms may have tried tourism, but this may not suit them
- Are tourism impacts too great?
- Need to diversify to other industries
- Concern over attaching greater weight to the environment than food production
- Policies generally get balance right between diversification and the environment

Digital Communications

- Series of well known problems, poor signal and coverage, poor internet, patchy good areas
- Loss of copper phone service in 2025
- Masts still needed at the moment
- Technology may change e.g. cable or fibre
- Vital for successful businesses
- Need to know what the strategy is to roll out improvements

Other Businesses

- Micro businesses may not provide high paid skilled jobs
- Need allocations to help this or allow more farm diversification
- On Farm holdings; farming may become less important than these other income streams; a subsidiary business?

List of Participants

Carl Beneyworth	Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
Sarah Buchanan	Clerk, Brompton Regis Parish Council
Matthew Byrne	Community Council for Somerset
Charles Carter	North Devon District Council (Housing)
Ian Cowling	Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust
Donna Crabtree	National Trust
Elizabeth Dee	North Devon District Council (Planning)
Christine Dubery	Chair, Dulverton Town Council
Chris Edwards	Quantock Hills AONB
Mike Ellicott	Chair, Exford Parish Council (& ENPA Member)
Victoria Eveleigh	West Ilkerton Farm (& Exmoor Society Trustee)
Louise Flagg	CVS Health Promotion Group
Philip Griffin	Wootton Courtenay Parish Council
Victoria Hancock	Torrige District Council (Planning)
Rebecca Harfield	Historic England
Harry Harrison	Individual
Jeremy Holtom	Chair, Parracombe Parish Council (& ENPA Member)
Tim Jones	Individual/South West Business Council
Mike Kelly	ENPA Member
Frances Nicholson	ENPA Member (& Somerset County Councillor)
Ed Parr-Ferris	Devon Wildlife Trust
Angela Percival	Vice Chair, Brendon & Countisbury Parish Council
Steven Pugsley	ENPA Member, Chair of Planning (& Somerset West and Taunton District Councillor)
Mark Sanders Brian Dinnis & Isabella Pine)	Acorn Rural Property Consultants
Anne-Marie Spalding	Western Somerset & Somerset Levels & Moors LEADER Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Sue Southwell	Somerset West and Taunton District Council (Housing)
Roger Webber	Individual
Vivian White	Chair, Cutcombe Parish Council (& ENPA Member)
Colin Wilkins	Chair, Winsford Parish Council
Claire Wright	CLA Devon and Somerset

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