

# Willand Neighbourhood Plan

## Strategic Written Evidence Base Report

ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT AND RETAIL SECTION ONLY

Produced for: Willand Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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## Economy, Employment and Retail

### Economy and Employment

#### Census Snapshot

The figures below show census details from 2011<sup>1</sup>. Although now dated, they still provide the most up-to-date position in relation to some demographic data. Some data can be updated through continuing local research to be undertaken by the Steering Group and sourced from the District Council.

| Economic activity                      | Persons |       |
|--|---------|-------|
|  | count   | %     |
| All usual residents aged 16 to 74      | 2,378   | 100.0 |
| Economically active                    | 1,786   | 75.1  |
| In employment                          | 1,666   | 70.1  |
| Employee: Part-time                    | 405     | 17.0  |
| Employee: Full-time                    | 995     | 41.8  |
| Self-employed                          | 266     | 11.2  |
| Unemployed                             | 46      | 1.9   |
| Full-time student                      | 74      | 3.1   |
| Economically Inactive                  | 592     | 24.9  |
| Retired                                | 364     | 15.3  |
| Student (including full-time students) | 63      | 2.6   |
| Looking after home or family           | 77      | 3.2   |
| Long-term sick or disabled             | 47      | 2.0   |
| Other                                  | 41      | 1.7   |
| Unemployed: Age 16 to 24               | 17      | 0.7   |
| Unemployed: Age 50 to 74               | 10      | 0.4   |
| Unemployed: Never worked               | 3       | 0.1   |
| Long-term unemployed                   | 20      | 0.8   |

In order to protect against disclosure of personal information, records have been swapped between different geographic areas. Some counts will be affected, particularly small counts at the lowest geographies

Source: ONS - 2011 Census (KS601EW)

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> for this and more data

## Qualifications and students

|  | Persons        |       |
|--|----------------|-------|
|  | Willand Parish |       |
|  | count          | %     |
| All usual residents aged 16 and over                                 | 2,728          | 100.0 |
| No qualifications  | 647            | 23.7  |
| Level 1 qualifications   | 412            | 15.1  |
| Level 2 qualifications   | 513            | 18.8  |
| Apprenticeship   | 109            | 4.0   |
| Level 3 qualifications   | 352            | 12.9  |
| Level 4 qualifications and above                                     | 573            | 21.0  |
| Other qualifications   | 122            | 4.5   |
| Schoolchildren and full-time students: Age 16 to 17                  | 76             | 2.8   |
| Schoolchildren and full-time students: Age 18 and over               | 55             | 2.0   |
| Full-time students: Age 18 to 74: Economically active: In employment | 35             | 1.3   |
| Full-time students: Age 18 to 74: Economically active: Unemployed    | 2              | 0.1   |
| Full-time students: Age 18 to 74: Economically inactive              | 18             | 0.7   |

In order to protect against disclosure of personal information, records have been swapped between different geographic areas. Some counts will be affected, particularly small counts at the lowest geographies

Source: ONS - 2011 Census (KS501EW)

## Industry

|  | Persons        |       |
|--|----------------|-------|
|  | Willand Parish |       |
|  | count          | %     |
| All usual residents aged 16 to 74 in employment the week before the census | 1,734          | 100.0 |
| A Agriculture, forestry and fishing  | 54             | 3.1   |
| B Mining and quarrying   | 2              | 0.1   |
| C Manufacturing  | 200            | 11.5  |
| D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply                      | 16             | 0.9   |
| E Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities      | 22             | 1.3   |
| F Construction   | 126            | 7.3   |
| G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles    | 359            | 20.7  |
| H Transport and storage  | 127            | 7.3   |
| I Accommodation and food service activities                                | 68             | 3.9   |
| J Information and communication  | 29             | 1.7   |
| K Financial and insurance activities                                       | 42             | 2.4   |
| L Real estate activities   | 12             | 0.7   |
| M Professional, scientific and technical activities                        | 106            | 6.1   |
| N Administrative and support service activities                            | 68             | 3.9   |
| O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security            | 110            | 6.3   |
| P Education  | 130            | 7.5   |
| Q Human health and social work activities                                  | 183            | 10.6  |
| R, S, T, U Other   | 80             | 4.6   |

In order to protect against disclosure of personal information, records have been swapped between different geographic areas. Some counts will be affected, particularly small counts at the lowest geographies

Source: ONS - 2011 Census (KS605EW)

## Occupation - males

|  | count | Persons             |
|--|-------|---------------------|
|  |       | Willand Parish<br>% |
| All usual residents aged 16 to 74 in employment the week before the census | 907   | 100.0               |
| 1. Managers, directors and senior officials                                | 119   | 13.1                |
| 2. Professional occupations  | 106   | 11.7                |
| 3. Associate professional and technical occupations                        | 114   | 12.6                |
| 4. Administrative and secretarial occupations                              | 27    | 3.0                 |
| 5. Skilled trades occupations  | 184   | 20.3                |
| 6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations                           | 23    | 2.5                 |
| 7. Sales and customer service occupations                                  | 61    | 6.7                 |
| 8. Process plant and machine operatives                                    | 140   | 15.4                |
| 9. Elementary occupations  | 133   | 14.7                |

In order to protect against disclosure of personal information, records have been swapped between different geographic areas. Some counts will be affected, particularly small counts at the lowest geographies

Source: ONS - 2011 Census (KS609EW)

## National Planning Policy Framework

### 81. Planning policies should:

- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;
- b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;
- c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and
- d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

## Supporting a prosperous rural economy

### 83. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

84. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

The NPPF also sets out the Government's policy in relation to telecommunications in section 10 of the NPPF.

## 10. Supporting high quality communications

112. Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).

### [Heart of the South West Strategic Economic Plan and Productivity Strategy](#)

The Heart of the South West Local Economic Partnership (LEP) submitted its "Economic Plan" to government for approval and funding in 2014. In its introduction it recognises the predominance of rural areas in Cornwall and Devon whilst justifying an emphasis on the economic development focus on the urban areas and their population. *Our area is predominantly rural with over 90% of the land area designated as such. However, over 40% of the population live in urban areas and plans for urban expansion are being realised.*

*Our business population spans both the rural and urban environment on a roughly 50:50 basis and analysis shows that with the exception of agriculture and land-based industries, the sector profiles are not so different. That said, our evidence to support our Rural Growth Network, established that rural businesses tended to have differing needs. Our approach to business support measures will therefore be mindful of rural and urban need.*

The Vision for Growth in the Devon Strategic Economic Plan is that- *Both our urban and rural economies will be vibrant and strong. Therefore, in tackling barriers to economic growth we want our approach to benefit both urban and rural people, places and businesses. It does recognise the particular the challenge to stimulate growth in both rural and urban areas whilst protecting and enhancing our outstanding natural environment.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030 Final Submission: 31st March 2014, Heart of the SW LEP, Mar 2014

With this in mind the strategy sets the following priorities for growth:

*Creating the Conditions for Growth - Improving our infrastructure and services to underpin growth*

*Infrastructure for growth:*

- *Transport and accessibility*
- *Digital infrastructure*
- *Sustainable solutions for flood management*
- *Energy Infrastructure*

*Creating a favourable business environment*

- *A simpler, more accessible, business support system, tailored to our needs*
  - *Improving access to finance*
  - *Stimulating enterprise and growth*

*Creating a responsive environment, where businesses and individuals can reach their potential:*

- *Skills infrastructure and facilities*
- *Accessibility to education/employment (transport, careers advice and digital inclusion)*
- *Employer engagement and ownership*

*Maximising Productivity and Employment Opportunities - stimulating jobs and growth across the whole economy*

*The infrastructure and facilities to create more and better employment:*

- *Enterprise infrastructure*
- *Strategic employment sites*
- *Unlocking housing growth*

*Achieving more sustainable and broadly based business growth:*

- *Reaching new markets (on-line, supply chains, public sector)*
- *Globalisation (exports and inward investment)*

*Increasing employment, progression and workforce skills.*

- *Moving people into employment*
- *Supporting people to progress to better jobs*
- *Improving workforce skills*

*Capitalising on our Distinctive Assets - Utilising our distinctive assets to create opportunities for business growth and better jobs*

*The infrastructure and facilities needed to support higher value growth:*

- *Specialist marine sites*
- *Science/Innovation infrastructure*
- *Maximising our environmental assets*

*Supporting higher value growth:*

- *Innovation through Smart Specialisation*
- *Building our capacity for innovation*

*Creating a world class workforce to support higher value growth:*

- *Enterprise and business skills*
- *Technical and higher-level skills development and retention*
- *Maximising the skills and employment opportunities aligned to our transformational opportunities.*<sup>3</sup>

Moving forward from the 2014 Economic Plan, in 2018 the LEP produced a Productivity Strategy<sup>4</sup>. The LEP's website states that:

“Since the financial crisis, employment levels across Heart of the SW have risen to record levels but collectively, the productivity of the area lags behind other parts of the UK. Productivity is the amount produced per worker or per hour worked and is essential to the long term growth of wealth, better wages, tax revenues to support better public services and better standards of living...Heart of the SW LEP has worked closely with partners and consulted across the area to develop a strategy to address our productivity challenge. Our vision is for all parts of the Heart of the South West to become more prosperous, for people to have a better quality of life and higher living standards. To achieve that, we want to create a more vibrant economy where the benefits can be shared by everyone. Improving our productivity will help us achieve that goal.

The Strategy is an evolution of our Strategic Economic Plan and our ambition is simple – to double the size of the economy over 20 years through improving our productivity. We have ambitious local plans that outline needs and opportunities for housing and economic growth. To accelerate our progress towards our ambition and vision, improving productivity is our collective focus. We will raise productivity to drive prosperity for all.”

### Devon County Growth Strategy

*Summary of critical issues – barriers to growth:*

*Critical issue 1: Devon's economy is performing poorly in terms of productivity*

*Critical issue 2: Devon has a relatively skilled workforce however this masks significant differences at a District level*

*Critical issue 3: Earnings are lower than average in most of Devon and link to housing affordability and relative poverty*

*Critical issue 4: Devon has an opportunity to better exploit the assets it has for high value economic growth*

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<sup>3</sup> Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2030 Final Submission: 31st March 2014, Heart of the SW LEP, Mar 2014  
<http://heartofswlep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SEP-Final-draft-31-03-14-website-1.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://heartofswlep.co.uk/about-the-lep/how-we-work/productivity-strategy/>

*Critical issue 5: Devon's towns and rural communities in more peripheral areas are falling behind*

*Critical issue 6: Devon's population is ageing rapidly – particularly in more rural areas*

*Critical issue 7: Devon's resilience to face environmental changes is being challenged.*

*The overarching vision for Devon is clearly stated in the Strategic Plan (2011-2015) 'Backing Devon':*

*To improve the quality of life for the people who live, work and visit the county.*

*The Strategic Plan also has a separate vision to create:*

*A flourishing and balanced economy, with strong economic growth and high quality employment*

*In order to realise the vision, the evidence base points to 7 critical issues within the economy that need to be tackled. Our aim is to tackle these issues and by doing so, secure the following strategic outcomes:*

- *A more productive economy*
- *A higher wage economy*
- *Employment opportunities for all and a workforce with the right skills for the future*
- *A well connected county*
- *A thriving business community<sup>5</sup>*

#### Exeter and Heart of Devon (EHOD) Economic Strategy (2017 – 2020)

The EHOD Economic Strategy is intended to guide the actions of key players and that of the EHOD economic partnership in accordance with an agreed vision and strategic objectives. The strategy applies to an area which covers Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge.

The latest version of the strategy has the following vision: *by 2040, EHOD will have been transformed to a leading business location, attracting more high-value investors and businesses through its diverse and*

*skilled workforce, high-quality commercial sites, local services, and accessibility to transport links and strategic routes to the South West, UK, continental and global markets.*

The partners have signed up to work on four economic initiatives to secure EHOD's overall priority of *strengthening the sub-regional economy to secure sustainable growth through creating more higher-value, better-paid jobs*

- *Business transformation - Retain and grow the business base. Provide the conditions for business-led growth. Promoting innovation to maximise competitiveness.*
- *Inward investment - Design and deliver a proactive and targeted approach to inward investment.*
- *Employment and skills - Transform skills from a growth barrier to a growth stimulus.*
- *Strategic planning and infrastructure - Support the identification and delivery of strategic and deliverable employment sites through strategic planning. Pursue investment to deliver transport and digital infrastructure.*

As regards the strategic planning initiative, the partners' agreed actions are:

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<sup>5</sup> A Strategy for Growth 2013 – 2020, Devon County Council, May 2013 <http://www.devon.gov.uk/strategy-for-growth-2013-2020.pdf>



- *Help ensure the HELAA methodology and pro-forma is robust and captures information to inform an assessment of the deliverability of land put forward for employment use*
- *Ensure that the delivery of housing across EHOD is balanced against the delivery of sufficient employment premises. In this way, we will be promoting the right mix of housing and employment land in the right locations to meet the needs of businesses now and in the future.*
- *Engage with estates management functions in the EHOD local authorities to ensure land owned by local authorities is submitted to the process in the same way as any other site*
- *Assist planning officers with the initial filtering of sites (assessing suitability and availability), pre-panel assessments and highlighting major transport needs*
- *Ensure the demand data collated by the Commercial Property Register informs both the identification of suitable employment sites and supports the approval of planning applications for commercial use*
- *Directly inform scenario development and propose appropriate amendments to existing growth trajectory scenarios based on local employment step change interventions such as the Enterprise Zone.*
- *Lead a broadband development event, bringing together all major developers and broadband providers to focus on maximising the delivery of superfast connectivity in all major construction projects across EHOD<sup>6</sup>*

Local Plan 2013-33 (Emerging)

## Policy S6

### Employment

**The employment needs of the community will be met through the development of 154,147,000 square metres of commercial floorspace comprising a range of employment-generating uses, including:**

- Offices, industry, storage and distribution (B1-B8);**
- Retail, tourism and leisure (A1-A5, C1, D2 and relevant sui generis uses);**
- Development for healthcare, education and public facilities (C2-C2a, D1);**  
and
- Other forms of sustainable employment-generating uses.**

<sup>6</sup> <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1986797/ehod-shared-economic-strategy-2017-20.pdf>

## Policy S14

### Countryside

Development outside the settlements defined by Policies S10-S13 will preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. Detailed development management policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses, subject to the following criteria:

- a) Affordable and low cost housing to meet local needs, ~~gypsy and traveller accommodation~~; residential conversion of appropriate existing buildings, replacement dwellings, housing essential to accommodate a rural worker and accommodation ancillary to a dwelling;
- b) Appropriately scaled retail, **employment**, farm diversification, tourism and leisure related development (including appropriate conversion of existing buildings);
- c) Appropriately scaled and designed extensions and other physical alterations to existing buildings;
- d) Agricultural and equestrian development;
- e) Community facilities, such as educational facilities, buildings associated with public open space, transportation and infrastructure proposals (including green infrastructure); and
- f) Renewable energy and telecommunications.

## Policy DM18

### Rural **employment** development

In countryside locations, planning permission will be granted for new-build employment development or expansion of existing businesses, provided that the development is of an appropriate use and scale for its location. Proposals must demonstrate that:

- a) The development would not lead to an unacceptable impact on the local road network;
- b) There would not be an unacceptable adverse impact to the character and appearance of the countryside; and
- c) There are insufficient suitable sites or premises in the immediate area to meet the needs of the proposal.

## Policy DM19

### Protection of employment land

Non-employment use or development of employment land or buildings, including sites that are established, allocated or have planning permission, will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes. Alternative uses will be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

- a) Firstly, there is a sufficient range of suitable and available employment sites in the local area; then
- b) There is no commercial interest in the re-use of the site for employment, demonstrated by suitable marketing at an appropriate price for at least 18 months; and
- c) A sequential viability test has been applied following the unsuccessful marketing of the site, based on the following sequence of testing:
  - i) Mixed use of the site that incorporates an employment-generating use, then
  - ii) Non-employment use.

## Policy WI2

### Willand Industrial Estate, Willand

A site of 92.2 hectares is allocated for commercial uses subject to the following:

- a) 22,008,800 square metres of commercial floorspace within use classes B1, B2 and B8; and
- b) Archaeological investigation and appropriate mitigation.

## Policy DM22

### Tourism and leisure development

Proposals for new or expanded tourism, visitor or leisure facilities will be supported within or adjacent to defined settlements. Elsewhere, the nature of the proposed development must justify a countryside location and minimise environmental impacts, avoiding an unacceptable traffic impact on the local road network. Development proposals must:

- a) Respect the character and appearance of the location;
- b) Where **possible** **appropriate**, involve conversion or replacement of existing buildings; and
- c) Demonstrate that the need is not met by existing provision within nearby settlements.

Other documents for consideration (depending on degree of focus on topic in Neighbourhood Plan)

Mid-Devon Employment land Review 2013 -

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/103536/economy-land-review-2013.pdf>

Mid-Devon Tourism Study 2014 - [https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/103537/tourism\\_study-2014.pdf](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/103537/tourism_study-2014.pdf)

Summary of Commercial Land Availability 2016 -

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/342708/summary-of-commercial-development-as-at-31-3-16.pdf>

Recommendations for collecting local written evidence base

Possible further work for the Steering Group:

- Are there local employment and business premises needs over and above that proposed / allocated in the Local Plan?
- Identify what the needs are of local businesses to determine if there is any policy support that the Neighbourhood Plan can provide.

## 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres

85. Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:
- a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;
  - b) define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;
  - c) retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;
  - d) allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary;
  - e) where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre; and
  - f) recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.
121. Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to:
- a) use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework; and
  - b) make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools and hospitals, provided this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space.

## National Planning Practice Guidance

*Local planning authorities should plan positively, to support town centres to generate local employment, promote beneficial competition within and between town centres, and create attractive, diverse places where people want to live, visit and work.*

*Local planning authorities should assess and plan to meet the needs of main town centre uses in full, in broadly the same way as for their housing and economic needs, adopting a ‘town centre first’ approach and taking account of specific town centre policy. In doing so, local planning authorities need to be mindful of the different rates of development in town centres compared with out of centre.*

*This positive approach should include seeking to improve the quality of parking in town centres (in line with the National Planning Policy Framework) and, where it is necessary to ensure the vitality of town centres, the quantity too. Local planning authorities should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town centres and parking enforcement should be proportionate, avoiding unfairly penalising drivers.<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 2b-001-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014

## Policy S1

### Sustainable development priorities

The following strategic priorities outline what will need to be achieved to deliver the Vision and address the key issues that have been identified in Mid Devon. All development will be expected to support the creation of sustainable communities by:

- a) A development focus at Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton as Mid Devon's most sustainable settlements, with long-term growth to the east of Cullompton and a limited level of development in identified villages;
- b) Building a strong, competitive economy through access to education, training and jobs, infrastructure, the creation of new enterprise, economic regeneration and flexibility of uses to respond to changing circumstances;
- c) Ensuring the vitality of town centres and communities through a hierarchy of centres, defined town centre shopping areas, a diverse retail offer at Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton, through controls on Junction 27 retail and support for the vitality and viability of defined villages;
- d) Supporting a prosperous rural economy through the conversion of suitable existing buildings and well-designed new buildings in suitable locations, diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses, support for equestrian activities, retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, and the promotion of sustainable rural tourism and leisure development;
- e) Promoting sustainable transport by delivering appropriate infrastructure, reducing the need to travel by car, integrating public transport and other forms of sustainable travel such as walking and cycling, and providing safe environments while recognising Mid Devon's rural locality;
- f) Supporting high quality communications infrastructure by supporting the expansion of telecommunications and high speed broadband throughout Mid Devon;
- g) Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes through a diverse housing mix and by meeting the housing needs of all sectors of the community including the provision of accessible housing for the elderly and disabled, those wishing to build their own home, affordable housing and gypsy and traveller pitches;
- h) Requiring good sustainable design that respects local character, heritage, surroundings and materials, creates safe and accessible environments, designs out crime and establishes a strong sense of place;

- i) Promoting healthy communities through the delivery of social, educational, recreational and cultural facilities and services, access to high quality open space, public rights of way, recreational trails and accessible land, and opportunities for sport and recreation and the designation of Local Green Space;**
- j) Meeting the challenge of climate change by supporting a low carbon future, energy efficiency, increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, managing flood risk and conserving natural resources. Encourage the effective use of land, taking into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land;**
- k) Conserving and enhancing the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes including the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks, providing accessible green infrastructure, and preventing significant harm to soil, air, water, noise and visual quality, in particular air quality as a local issue at Crediton and Cullompton;**
- l) Minimising impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity by recognising the wider benefits of ecosystems, delivering natural environment objectives, providing a net gain in biodiversity and by the protection of International, European, National and local designated wildlife sites; and**
- m) Conserving and enhancing the historic environment through the identification and protection of designated and non-designated heritage assets and assessing the impact of new development on the historic character of Mid Devon's landscapes and townscapes.**



## Policy S14

### Countryside

Development outside the settlements defined by Policies S10-S13 will preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. Detailed development management policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses, subject to the following criteria:

- a) Affordable and low cost housing to meet local needs, ~~gypsy and traveller~~ ~~accommodation~~; residential conversion of appropriate existing buildings, replacement dwellings, housing essential to accommodate a rural worker and accommodation ancillary to a dwelling;
- b) Appropriately scaled ~~retail~~, employment, farm diversification, tourism and leisure related development (including appropriate conversion of existing buildings);
- c) Appropriately scaled and designed extensions and other physical alterations to existing buildings;
- d) Agricultural and equestrian development;
- e) Community facilities, such as educational facilities, buildings associated with public open space, transportation and infrastructure proposals (including green infrastructure); and
- f) Renewable energy and telecommunications.

## Policy DM16

### Fronts of shops and business premises

Proposals for the alteration, replacement or construction of fronts for shops or business premises must be well proportioned and suited to the character of the building, adjacent buildings and the surrounding street scene. Where security measures such as grilles or shutters are proposed, these should be designed as an integral part of the building's front, maintaining the visibility of the building's interior and minimising visual impact. Independent ground floor access to the upper floors must be retained.

## Policy DM17

### Rural shopping

**Retail development will be permitted within defined villages, where it will meet local needs and is accessible by a range of transport modes.**

**Adjacent to defined villages and elsewhere in the open countryside, proposals for retail development must demonstrate that:**

- a) **The location and scale of the development would not harm the vitality and viability of town centre or village shopping facilities;**
- b) **The development would not lead to an unacceptable impact on the local road network; and**
- c) **There would not be an unacceptable adverse impact to the character and appearance of the countryside.**

[Other documents for consideration \(depending on degree of focus on topic in Neighbourhood Plan\)](#)

Mid-Devon Retail Study 2012 - <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/103524/retail-study-2012.pdf>

[Recommendations for collecting local written evidence base](#)

Possible further work for the Steering Group:

- Are there retail shops you want to try to protect from change of use (within the limitations set by permitted development regulations)?
- Are any shops considered as a local community asset that you might seek to protect in planning policy?