

Willand Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Written Evidence Base Report

ENERGY AND WASTE SECTION ONLY

Produced for: Willand Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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Energy and Waste

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 14 is concerned with *meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change*.¹

Planning for climate change

149. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures⁴⁸. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.
150. New development should be planned for in ways that:
- a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and
 - b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.

95. Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements by:
- a) anticipating and addressing possible malicious threats and natural hazards, especially in locations where large numbers of people are expected to congregate⁴¹. Policies for relevant areas (such as town centre and regeneration frameworks), and the layout and design of developments, should be informed by the most up-to-date information available from the police and other agencies about the nature of potential threats and their implications. This includes appropriate and proportionate steps that can be taken to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security; and
 - b) recognising and supporting development required for operational defence and security purposes, and ensuring that operational sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area.

¹ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/10-meeting-the-challenge-of-climate-change-flooding-and-coastal-change/>

151. To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:
- a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
 - b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
 - c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

⁴⁸ In line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008.

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152. Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.

National Planning Practice Guidance

To amplify the NPPF guidance, the National Planning Practice Guidance online resource includes guidance on the bigger picture of climate change, as well as renewable energy and low carbon development.

To set the context with climate change:

Guidance > Climate change > Why is it important for planning to consider climate change?²

001. In addition to supporting the delivery of appropriately sited green energy, effective spatial planning is an important part of a successful response to climate change as it can influence the emission of greenhouse gases. In doing so, local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment. Planning can also help increase resilience to climate change impact through the location, mix and design of development.

Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. To be found sound, Local Plans will need to reflect this principle and enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. These include the requirements for local authorities to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change in line with the provisions and objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008, and co-operate to deliver strategic priorities which include climate change.

² <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/climate-change/>

In addition to the statutory requirement to take the Framework into account in the preparation of Local Plans, there is a statutory duty on local planning authorities to include policies in their Local Plan designed to tackle climate change and its impacts. This complements the sustainable development duty on plan-makers and the expectation that neighbourhood plans will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises that responding to climate change is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

In terms of developing policies, it goes on to include the following advice:

007. Policies based on clear criteria can be useful when they are expressed positively (i.e. that proposals will be accepted where the impact is or can be made acceptable). In thinking about criteria the National Policy Statements published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change provide a useful starting point. These set out the impacts particular technologies can give rise to and how these should be addressed.

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 S9

Environment

Development will sustain the distinctive quality, character and diversity of Mid Devon's environmental assets and minimise the impact of development on climate change through:

- a) High quality sustainable design which reinforces the character and distinctiveness of Mid Devon's historic built environment, mitigates and adapts to climate change and creates attractive places;
- b) The efficient use and conservation of natural resources of land, water and **energy**, minimising pollution and preserving the quality and productivity of the best and most versatile agricultural land wherever possible;
- c) The provision of measures to reduce the risk of flooding to life and property, requiring sustainable drainage systems including provisions for future maintenance, guiding development to locations of lowest flood risk by applying a sequential test where appropriate, and avoiding an increase in flood risk elsewhere;
- d) Renewable energy development in locations where there is an acceptable local impact, including visual, on nearby residents, landscape character and wildlife, balanced with the wider sustainability benefits of renewable energy;
- e) The preservation and enhancement of the distinctive qualities of Mid Devon's natural landscape, supporting opportunities identified within landscape character areas. Within or adjoining the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks, the primary objective will be to protect the special **environmental** qualities of that landscape and its setting;
- f) The protection and enhancement of designated sites of international, national and local biodiversity and geodiversity importance. On both designated and undesignated sites, development will support opportunities for protecting and enhancing species populations and linking habitats, providing mitigation and compensation measures where appropriate; and
- g) The preservation and enhancement of Mid Devon's cultural and historic environment, and the protection of sites, buildings, areas and features of recognised national and local importance such as listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and local heritage assets.

Policy DM2

Renewable and low carbon energy

The benefits of renewable and low carbon **energy** development will be weighed against its impact. Proposals will be permitted where they do not have significant adverse impacts on the character, amenity and visual quality of the area, including cumulative impacts of such developments within the parish or adjoining parishes. Proposals must demonstrate that impacts are or can be made acceptable, and that the development will preserve:

- a) Landscape character and the character and setting of heritage assets;
- b) Environmental amenity of nearby properties and the wider locality;
- c) Quality and productivity of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a); and
- d) Biodiversity (avoiding habitat fragmentation).

[Devon Landscape Policy Group Advice Note No. 2: Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape](#)

The guidance promotes the good siting and design of wind and solar PV development that takes account of the special qualities and distinctive characteristics of Devon's landscape. It aims to show how these development types may be accommodated whilst minimising harm to Devon's landscape and protecting what people most value. It was produced by consultants for the Devon Landscape Policy Group and should be referred to and considered in greater depth if the neighbourhood plan considers allocating sites for wind and solar development.³

[Low-Carbon Neighbourhood Planning: A Guide to Creating Happier, Healthier, Greener Communities \(2018\)](#)

The Town and Country Planning Association, the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and Centre for Sustainable Energy have produced guidance⁴ for those producing neighbourhood plans on how to approach the development of neighbourhood plan content and policies with regard to low-carbon across a number of areas including efficiency generation, green infrastructure and flooding. It will be worth referring back to this guidance as the neighbourhood plan develops.

[Responsibilities for planning for minerals and waste planning](#)

Devon County Council (DCC) is the Minerals Planning Authority responsible for determining the following types of development: including mineral exploration, extraction, processing, tipping of mineral waste, construction or erection of plant or buildings at a minerals site, oil and gas exploration and development, variation 3 of conditions attached to a minerals consent,

³ See <http://www.devon.gov.uk/devon-guidance-v6-june-2013-final-report.pdf>

⁴ See <https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/community-energy/energy-advice/planning/renewables/low-carbon-neighbourhood-planning-guidebook.pdf>

consolidation of one or more planning permissions, review of old mineral permissions. As the MPA it also produces the Minerals Plan.

DCC is also the Waste Planning Authority responsible for determining the following types of development: including scrap yards, clinical and other types of waste incinerator, landfill and land raising sites, waste storage facilities, sewage treatment plants, dredging tips, recycling and waste reception centres, GRP kiosks which house equipment for sewage undertakers, composting schemes, waste processing and composting plant, concrete crushing and blacktop reprocessing facilities. As WPA it is also responsible for producing the Waste Local Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not have a remit to cover waste and minerals issues dealt with by the County Council through the above Plans.

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

Mid-Devon Renewable Energy Carbon Reduction and Air Quality Study 2014 -

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/103544/renewable-energy-carbon-reduction-and-air-quality-study-2014.pdf>

Recommendations for collecting local written evidence base

Possible further work for the Steering Group:

- Is there a low energy project that the community would support and actively try to deliver?