

Exmoor National Park
Publication Draft
Local Plan Summary
June 2015



2011 - 2031





Exmoor National Park

Publication Draft

Local Plan Summary

A guide to the Local Plan process, key changes to the plan, and summary of the policies.

WHERE WE ARE IN THE LOCAL PLAN PROCESS

The current Local Plan was adopted in March 2005 and in recent years progress towards the preparation of a new Local Plan has been made, based on new national policy and guidance, new evidence, and engagement with the public, including the Your Future Exmoor events.

A Draft Local Plan was produced and consulted on in November 2013. We received 144 responses from 143 individuals and organisations which generated over 900 separate comments on the Plan. The majority of these comments were supportive of the Plan and we have considered other comments and suggestions that raised concerns about particular aspects or policies within the Plan.

We are currently consulting on the Publication Draft version of the Local Plan (further details can be found on the last page) where we ask organisations, communities and individuals for their views. Any comments received will be submitted with the Plan to the Secretary of State for examination. The examination will be held by an independent inspector to make sure the Plan is soundly prepared and legally compliant. The final stage is the adoption of the Local Plan as the development plan for Exmoor National Park.

LOCAL PLAN PREPARATION STAGES	DATES
Draft Local Plan Consultation	November – December 2013
Publication Draft Local Plan Consultation	15 June – 31 July 2015
Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State	Late 2015 / early 2016*
Examination of the Local Plan by an independent Inspector	During 2016**
Adoption of the Local Plan	Late 2016 / early 2017***

* *Indicative dates – timing dependent on the number and significance of consultation comments and whether further amendments and consultation are required*

** *Indicative dates – timing dependent on Planning Inspectorate availability*

*** *Indicative dates – timing dependent on the outcome of consultation and public examination*

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

The following table presents the key changes that have been made to the Local Plan following the Draft Local Plan consultation in November/December 2013. Some changes will be in response to comments received during the consultation, whilst other changes will reflect changes in national planning policy or updated evidence produced to support the Local Plan preparation.

Location	Change
Whole Plan	The Draft Local Plan has been reviewed to remove unnecessary duplication and cross referencing, and to ensure the policy approach in the Plan is clear.
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Additional explanation is included about the Duty to Cooperate which is how we work with neighbouring councils and other organisations to address cross boundary issues. – The spatial portrait is now included in this section and describes the important social, economic and environmental aspects of the National Park and its context in relation to the surrounding area.
2. Vision, objectives and strategic priorities	This section has been updated to include four strategic priorities or key aims of the Plan.
3. General Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Two policies deleted as already addressed in national policy or through other policies in the Plan. – One new policy on making the best use of land and existing buildings (split from an existing policy). – The settlements that are identified in the spatial strategy regarding where new development can take place have changed, due to changes in national policy, to include Local Service Centres, Villages, and Porlock Weir (a settlement at risk of coastal change). There is

Location	Change
	<p>no longer a tier of very small settlements called Rural Communities. However it is important to state that the policy approach in the Local Plan remains the same and new self build local affordable homes are still allowed in principle within small rural communities that have at least one of the following services: a shop, a pub or a community meeting place/hall.</p>
<p>4. Conserving and Enhancing Exmoor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A new policy relating to more detailed aspects of protecting landscape and seascape character. – Biodiversity and green infrastructure policies merged and updated with new evidence. – Historic environment policies updated. – Policies merged for the conversion of traditional and non-traditional buildings. – New policy relating to minerals safeguarding areas which protects sources of building stone such as old quarries (split from an existing policy in the Draft Plan).
<p>5. Responding to Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New policies relating to coastal change and the designation of the coastal change management area (CCMA) in Porlock Weir. – Policies set out what type of development can take place on the coast and within the CCMA.
<p>6. Achieving a Thriving Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The main housing policy HC-S1 Housing has been changed to incorporate the approach for permitting principal residence housing (open market homes that have a principal residence tie meaning that they cannot be occupied as a second home or holiday home), and the approach to new thresholds on affordable housing which particularly affects the change of use of existing and vacant buildings within Local Service Centres and Villages. – A new policy on achieving a balanced housing stock for Exmoor so that the right type of homes, which are needed by local communities, are delivered. – A new policy on custom/self build local need housing including in small rural communities

Location	Change
	<p>that have at least one of the following services: a shop, a pub or a community meeting place/hall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A new policy on the change of use of hotels and guesthouses to housing – particularly for those in the open countryside.
7. Achieving a Sustainable Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Policies generally changed to be clearer and reduce unnecessary cross-referencing and duplication. – SE-S4 Agricultural and Forestry Development policy amended as a result of a consultation response in terms of strengthening landscape considerations. Further tests and supporting text relating to isolated agricultural buildings in the open countryside.
8. Achieving Enjoyment for All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – RT-S2 Reinstatement of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway – this policy has been amended to reduce unnecessary duplication and repetition, and as a result of consultation responses received.
9. Achieving Access for All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New policy to address traffic and road safety considerations. – Traffic management and parking policies amended to update parking standards for cycles, motorcycles and disabled parking and include further routes on the Exmoor Route Network. – Policy amended on mobile telecommunications to address the siting of apparatus on existing masts.
10. Exmoor's Settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This section has been changed to reflect the changes to the identified settlements (Local Service Centres, Villages and Porlock Weir) as explained under section 4.
11. Monitoring and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This is a new section in the Plan which sets out how the Local Plan will be monitored and the indicators that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the policies. Monitoring the Plan helps to highlight when the Plan needs to be updated.

INTRODUCTION

This document presents a summary of policies in the Publication Draft version of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan, which is a statutory document that provides policies for development and use of the land and indicates what kind of development will be permitted in planning applications in Exmoor National Park to 2031.

Although some policies have remained much the same as those in the adopted Local Plan 2001-2011, consultation and evidence have given rise to some new policies, whereas others have been reviewed and changed where considered appropriate. Compared with the adopted plan, this Local Plan widens the options to enable the delivery of local needs affordable housing in local communities, and provides more opportunities for entrepreneurship and flexibility for businesses, whilst continuing to conserve and enhance the National Park.

Please note, each policy is subject to national policy and interpretation, and the detailed criteria which are set out in full in the Publication Draft version of the Local Plan. This document is intended only as a guide to the policies in the Plan.

SUMMARY OF LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

The Local Plan contains policies on a wide range of issues including a continued focus on affordable housing, support for business and communities, responding to the challenges of climate change, encouraging access to broadband and telecommunications, as well as continued conservation and enhancement of Exmoor.

GENERAL POLICIES

The Local Plan contains five general policies which will apply to all development within Exmoor National Park. These policies should be read in conjunction with all other policies in the Plan.

ACHIEVING NATIONAL PARK PURPOSES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

National Park Purposes and Duty:

- TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE NATURAL BEAUTY, WILDLIFE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE AREA.
- TO PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYMENT OF ITS SPECIAL QUALITIES BY THE PUBLIC.

In doing so the National Park Authority has a duty “to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of the local communities.”

Policy GP1 provides criteria to ensure that all new development is consistent with National Park purposes and sustainable development. The policy defines sustainable development for Exmoor National Park in terms of meeting National Park purposes and, in so doing, fostering the social and economic wellbeing of local communities. A widely-used and accepted definition of sustainable development is: “development which meets the needs

of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs¹".

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

Policy GP2 provides for the Government's longstanding view that major development should not take place in National Parks save in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances include, that the development is absolutely necessary, in the national interest and that there is no practical alternative. Identifying whether development is considered to be 'major' will be a matter of planning judgement in terms of the scale, character and nature of the proposal and its potential to harm the National Park and its special qualities.

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Policy GP3 sets out where new development can be built. There is a list of settlements where development can take place – these settlements are split into categories (the Settlement Hierarchy) depending on the range and type of services and facilities they have and how wide an area they provide services to. The policy helps to ensure that new development is an appropriate size and scale that fits in well with the settlement.

Local Rural Centres and Villages: These settlements have a range of services and facilities and serve the immediate and surrounding communities to varying degrees according to the level of service provision. Both new build housing and employment development to help address local needs are considered to be acceptable, including new local services and community facilities.

Porlock Weir is identified in the settlement hierarchy as a settlement at risk of coastal change. The policy approach will provide for the replacement and relocation of buildings and facilities at risk of being lost to coastal change in addition to small scale provision of local affordable housing and business development that addresses the needs of the community.

Open Countryside: The reuse of buildings is encouraged for a range of uses including businesses - this helps to use older

¹ WCED (1987): Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: "Our Common Future"

buildings that may be empty or no longer needed and protects Exmoor’s important landscape.

There is provision in the Plan to enable new local affordable self-build housing in small rural communities that have at least one local service or community facility (shop, pub or community meeting place/hall) to provide further opportunities for local people to stay in their communities. Other new buildings in the open countryside should demonstrate that they are essential for the operation of rural land-based enterprises such as farms and forestry businesses.

SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY		
Local Service Centres	Dulverton Lynton & Lynmouth	Porlock
Villages	Barbrook Brendon Bridgetown and Exton Brompton Regis Challacombe Cutcombe and Wheddon Cross Dunster Exford Luxborough	Monksilver Parracombe Roadwater Simonsbath Timberscombe Winsford Withypool Wootton Courtenay
Porlock Weir		

THE EFFICIENT USE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS

Policy GP4 encourages the reuse of buildings and using land that has been previously developed. It also sets out the approach for the density of new housing development and protects the best and most versatile agricultural land.

SECURING PLANNING BENEFITS

Policy GP5 sets out criteria in relation to the circumstances where planning obligations will be used. These are legal agreements that can be used to make development acceptable. They should be directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. They may be used, for example, to ensure that local affordable homes are occupied by local people in affordable housing need over the long term, and to

obtain financial contributions for affordable housing in certain circumstances.

CONSERVING AND ENHANCING EXMOOR

LANDSCAPE

Exmoor's landscape has been defined in terms of its character by the Exmoor National Park Landscape Character Assessment which identifies the features and characteristics of certain areas and why they are different from neighbouring areas. A map defining these areas can be found in the Publication Draft Local Plan. The aim of policies CE-S1 and CE-D1 is to make sure that new development does not harm Exmoor's landscape character by adding to and/or retaining important landscape characteristics such as hedgerows, stone banks, woodland etc. The policy also identifies a range of other significant landscape attributes which development proposals should aim to conserve including important trees, orchards, historic field patterns, and the Heritage Coast.

PROTECTING EXMOOR'S DARK NIGHT SKY

Exmoor was designated the first International Dark Sky Reserve in Europe in 2011. Policy CE-S2 aims to protect the Dark Sky Reserve status of the National Park and minimise light pollution by ensuring that development proposals include good lighting management and design. The remote, open landscapes of the moorland have helped to define a 'core dark sky zone' within the National Park which will be protected from any form of external permanent lighting. The buffer zone around this core area will also have strict controls on external lighting and light-spill from buildings. A map defining these areas can be found in the Publication Draft Local Plan.

BIODIVERSITY AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Exmoor has many varied and important habitats, many of which are protected by international, national and local designations, and important wildlife species, some of which are legally protected. Policy CE-S3 ensures that Exmoor's wildlife, habitats and geology are protected from development which may cause harm, and that habitats and species are not lost overall.

Green infrastructure networks include a range of high quality natural, semi-natural, and other green spaces that can vary in scale from gardens, allotments and play areas to wide expanses of open moorland. Green infrastructure has many benefits for: wildlife, providing clean water, flood prevention, health and wellbeing, and recreation. Proposals are encouraged to create and improve the green infrastructure network across Exmoor and to encourage development proposals to provide elements of green infrastructure that will help to contribute to the wider network and make provision for wildlife – this helps to strengthen Exmoor’s ecological networks to make it easier for wildlife to adapt to change.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The historic environment covers a wide range of different features, buildings and areas that have an important historic, archaeological or architectural interest and are collectively called ‘heritage assets’. The most important are ‘designated heritage assets’ and examples of these on Exmoor include:

- Scheduled Monuments – includes sites and monuments considered to be of national importance e.g. Tarr Steps.
- Conservation Areas - historically important areas of villages and towns.
- Listed Buildings - historically important buildings and structures which are graded I, II* or II.
- Historic Parks and Gardens - includes Dunster Castle and Nettlecombe Court.

These designated heritage assets and all other heritage assets are recorded on the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record. Policies CE-S4 and CE-D3 ensure that Exmoor’s historic environment is protected from new development, encourages opportunities to improve it and manages development that may affect heritage assets.

CONVERSION OR STRUCTURAL ALTERATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

There is considered to be an important resource of existing buildings on Exmoor, some of which are no longer required for their intended use. Policy CE-S5 provides the principles for the conversion of both traditional and non-traditional buildings – other policies in the Plan will set out what type of building can be converted to other uses. Traditional buildings include a range of

traditional farm buildings, former industrial buildings and religious buildings. Non-traditional buildings across Exmoor include most post-war (WWII) buildings including agricultural buildings for certain uses, if no traditional buildings are considered suitable or are not available.

Most significantly the building should be structurally suitable for conversion and the proposed use or activity without significant reconstruction or alteration. For traditional buildings, proposals should retain as much of the building and its features as possible using traditional building materials and techniques.

DESIGN AND SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION PRINCIPLES

The aim of policy CE-S6 is to make sure that new development achieves high quality sustainable design that reflects and complements Exmoor's landscape and settlement character. If development is well-designed it makes places attractive, accessible and safe – therefore attention should be paid to:

- form - the shape, height, scale and bulk of the development,
- character - how it fits in with Exmoor's traditional buildings in the area and the landscape through use of materials, colours and architectural detailing, and
- layout - how the building mass is arranged, sited and orientated.

Materials play an important role in the overall success of the design therefore the policy favours traditional materials and natural sustainable materials, particularly where they can be obtained locally. Examples include: slate, clay pantiles, thatch, timber shingles and green (vegetation i.e. sedum) roofing materials; other building natural/traditional local materials include building stone, timber, wool (insulation), cob and lime mortar/plaster. In some situations corrugated metal sheeting may also be considered to be an appropriate material.

Other important factors relating to achieving high quality design overall are street design and landscaping schemes whilst retaining important landscape features on the site such as hedgerows, trees and stone walls.

The policy encourages sustainable construction methods which may be in the form of the materials used, the way the building is designed to use resources such as water and energy efficiently, minimising waste, incorporating passive design methods and renewable energy technology, and ensuring that buildings are not at risk of flooding.

Policy CE-D4 sets out the criteria for new additions or extensions to existing buildings.

MINERALS

Policy CE-S7 provides for small-scale extraction of stone for building and roofing materials within the National Park and ensures that opportunities are in place for local building stone to be obtained for new development or the repair of traditional buildings - either through the re-working of former quarries or working of new small-scale quarries. The policy ensures there are a number of measures in place so that a supply of local building stone can be made available through the working of the quarry without causing harm to the National Park, people's health and local amenity.

Policy CE-S8 safeguards important areas for the extraction of building stone. These locations are generally derelict building stone quarries.

Policy CE-S9 provides that large scale mineral extraction will not be permitted in the National Park unless in exceptional circumstances – this would need to meet the policy tests for GP2 Major Development such as being in the public interest and of national significance.

RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The Local Plan can only influence development and land use aspects of adapting to the impacts of climate change and mitigation measures. Policy CC-S1 therefore sets out the Authority's approach to climate change, both in terms of mitigating the impacts of climate change through reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and building resilience by adapting to climate change effects that are already

happening. All climate change mitigation measures will need to have regard to the energy hierarchy through firstly reducing the need for energy, then using energy more efficiently, and finally using low carbon and renewable energy (including through sustainable design and construction).

FLOOD RISK

Policy CC-D1 sets out the National Park's approach to managing flood risk from all sources, and applies a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid and where possible, reduce flood risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change.

WATER CONSERVATION

Policy CC-D2 aims to conserve water resources on Exmoor through incorporating water conservation measures into development, enabling opportunities for water storage on farms, and preventing proposals which would lead to increased demand for water where existing supplies are inadequate.

COASTAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Policy CC-S2 makes sure that new development at the coast is located in a named settlement or requires a coastal location, and should avoid areas known to be at risk of coastal change. Development should be compatible with the latest Shoreline Management Plan and be appropriate to the setting and character of the coastline.

Policy CC-S3 designates a coastal change management area (CCMA) at Porlock Weir to enable this community to adapt to coastal change such as erosion, sea level rise and increased flood risk. Within the CCMA development will be managed specifically to enable adaptation of buildings, temporary uses less vulnerable to coastal change, and key community infrastructure which is required to be sited in the CCMA. The policy also provides for the production of a strategy for Porlock Weir, an area known to be at risk from sea level rises, to enable adaptation and relocation.

Policy CC-S4 sets out the criteria for the replacement of development at risk of being lost to coastal change within the CCMA.

LOW CARBON AND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

The Authority is supportive, in principle, of small scale renewable energy technologies which meet domestic, community or business energy needs. A range of renewable energy technologies may be possible including hydro, small scale wind, woodfuel, solar panels and combined heat and power systems (some of which do not require planning permission). Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have undertaken measures to reduce the need for energy and improve energy efficiency before considering renewable energy.

Policy CC-S5 sets out a range of criteria for renewable energy proposals. Applications will need to ensure that the technology is compatible with the surrounding area. This will include consideration of cumulative landscape effects arising from other existing schemes, structures and development. The visual impacts will depend on where they can be seen from and who will see them. Some of the effects may be minimised through siting and design. To protect the natural beauty of the National Park, large scale renewable technologies will not be permitted.

Impacts on the natural and historic environment, tranquillity, rights of way and local amenity will also be considered. Equally a proposal for renewable energy may provide an enhancement or community benefits.

Policies CC-D3 and CC-D4 provide further detailed criteria for small scale wind turbines and freestanding solar arrays. The potential for wind turbines is limited by the need to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the National Park. Proposals will need to be appropriate in scale to the property being served and should generally be in the range of 10m-15m to rotor tip. Occasionally a maximum height of 20m to rotor tip may be permitted.

WASTE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Exmoor National Park Authority is the Waste Planning Authority for the Exmoor National Park and is therefore responsible for any development associated with waste management.

Facilities for the disposal of domestic, industrial and commercial waste are not appropriate in the National Park and the Authority has therefore not allocated any sites for new waste facilities. Instead, waste arising from the National Park, including domestic, industrial and commercial, will be accounted and planned for through the Somerset Waste Core Strategy and the Devon Waste Plan. However, policy CC-S6 acknowledges the value of very small scale facilities for local communities for reuse, recycling or community composting providing there is no adverse impact on local communities, or the National Park. Measures are also in place to ensure that construction and demolition waste from developments is minimised and sustainably managed. Small scale anaerobic digesters will be permitted where they use locally arising waste sources.

Policy CC-D5 sets out the criteria for new or extended sewage infrastructure for both public and private types of infrastructure.

POLLUTION

The planning system can only control pollution in so far that it can determine whether the development, use of the land and any impacts arising are acceptable. There are various types of pollution including air, soil, water, light and noise. Policy CC-S7 provides that proposals should first seek to avoid pollution where possible but where pollution cannot be avoided, then it will need to be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable adverse impacts either individually or cumulatively.

HOUSING

The housing policies are within Section 6 Achieving a Thriving Community, and aim to address the housing needs of the National Park's local communities whilst ensuring that the level of housing development is compatible with the conservation of Exmoor (policy HC-S1). The policies aim to meet the needs of all sections of the local community through the provision of housing of the appropriate size, type and affordability so that it will help create balanced, living and working communities with a better mix of houses (policy HC-S2). The key focus is on affordable housing to address the needs of those people who live and work in the area.

LOCAL NEEDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Policy HC-S3 aims to meet the housing needs of local communities by providing affordable housing for people with a proven local connection to the National Park, through new build development within the named settlements (policy HC-D2) or conversions in the settlements, or within farmsteads and hamlets (policies HC-D1 and HC-D7). The policy approach will be to aim to deliver 100% affordable housing on rural exception sites² unless the scheme is clearly demonstrated to be unviable (see Principal Residence Housing below).

The local connection criteria for affordable housing are similar to those in the adopted Local Plan – although an additional criterion has been added to allow a continuous 10 year local connection within any parishes in the National Park. Further flexibility has been introduced for local affordable dwellings owned by a Registered Provider, and for privately owned dwellings should they become vacant, to allow a local person's local occupancy to reduce to 5 years in the parish or adjoining parish(es) should there be no local persons meeting the initial criteria. Policy HC-S3 provides that you may qualify for affordable housing if you are in housing need, you

² Rural Exception Site – small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity in areas where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection (National Planning Policy Framework).

cannot afford to buy or rent in your area, and you meet one or more of the criteria below:

- you have lived in the area for a minimum of 10 years permanent residence out of the last 30, and/or
- you need to live close to your place of work on Exmoor, or
- you have a need to live close to a person due to medical reasons, who has lived in the area for 10 continuous years or more, or
- affordable housing becomes available and you have lived in the area for 5 continuous years or more and no local persons meet the criteria outlined above.

PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE HOUSING

Policy HC-S4 sets out the circumstances where there is flexibility in terms of the provision of some market housing to enable the delivery of local affordable housing (in schemes where a Registered Provider or Community Land Trust is involved). However, a principal residence condition will be attached to any market housing to ensure that they can only be lived in by a person as their principal residence – this means that it cannot be used as a second or holiday home. Principal residence conditions are also attached to any grant of planning permission for additional units created through the subdivision of existing dwellings and where hotels and guesthouses meet the policy criteria to revert to a single dwelling.

Whilst thresholds relating to the provision of affordable housing are in existence under planning practice guidance, the change of use of existing and vacant buildings (or the redevelopment of vacant buildings) in Local Service Centres and Villages to principal residence housing will be permitted, including provision for commuted sums towards local affordable housing in certain circumstances.

See: Policy HC-S1 clause 4, policy HC-D1 clause 3(j), and policy HC-D2 clause 2(b).

SPECIALIST HOUSING FOR EXMOOR'S COMMUNITIES

Policy HC-D3 provides for Specialist Housing for older and more vulnerable people with a 10 year local connection (not in affordable

housing need), that can be provided as part of a wider scheme to deliver affordable housing, and where there is evidence of a local need for this type of housing.

EXTENDED FAMILY DWELLINGS CRITERIA

Policy HC-D4 enables the provision of homes for close family members through the conversion of existing buildings either on farmsteads or within the curtilage of existing dwellings in the named settlements. Either the occupants of the existing dwelling or those of the new extended family dwelling should have a 10 year local connection.

CUSTOM/SELF BUILD HOUSING

Policy HC-D5 encourages custom build housing (i.e. a builder being contracted by a home owner to create a 'custom built' home) or where a private individual builds their own home as a 'self-build' where this meets a local affordable housing need. This may be within the named settlements as a new build or conversion, in the open countryside as conversions in hamlets or on farmsteads, or as a new build in rural communities which have a local service such as a shop, pub or community meeting place/hall.

THE CHANGE OF USE OF SERVICED ACCOMMODATION TO HOUSING

Policy HC-D6 applies to hotels and guesthouses that have demonstrated that they are no longer viable and are seeking the partial or complete change of use to housing. This policy ensures that proposals should provide for affordable housing. However, there is flexibility for some principal residence housing to be provided to help deliver the affordable housing or in circumstances where a scheme would deliver more affordable homes than are needed in the area.

HOMES IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

Policies provide for homes to meet a proven essential need for rural workers in land-based businesses such as agriculture and forestry (HC-D8 and HC-D9), including greater flexibility for the provision of a second dwelling on farms to make it easier for the farm to pass from one generation to the next (succession farm dwellings HC-D10). Measures are in place to ensure that the requirement for a new dwelling in the open countryside is justified.

For newly established rural land-based businesses a residential caravan or other temporary dwelling may be permitted for a temporary period to enable the business to establish viability (HC-D11). Permissions will be subject to a condition to ensure the occupancy is only for persons with a proven essential need for the accommodation. Policy HC-D12 allows the occupancy tie to be replaced with a legal agreement limiting the occupancy to a local person in affordable housing need, if it cannot be occupied as a rural worker's dwelling.

REPLACEMENT OF HOLIDAY OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS AND EXTENDED FAMILY OCCUPANCY TIES

Policy HC-D13 provides flexibility to change the occupancy of some types of residential buildings. Self-catering units can be used as extended family dwellings or local needs affordable housing. There are also opportunities for extended family dwellings to be used as self-catering or local needs affordable housing. The occupancy of the dwelling will be able to revert to the original occupancy.

SUBDIVISION OF EXISTING DWELLINGS

Sub-division of existing dwellings is a flexible approach that can help provide a solution to Exmoor's long term housing needs through providing smaller more affordable homes within the National Park. Policy HC-D14 ensures that any additional home created by subdivision has a principal residence tie.

RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS & OUTBUILDINGS

Policies HC-D15 and HC-D16 aim to ensure that extensions or outbuildings are proportionate to the size of the dwelling, are well sited, designed, and do not reduce the level of amenity space (garden and/or parking areas) around the dwelling to an unacceptable level. Extensions to the residential curtilage should not adversely impact the local landscape or settlement character.

REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS

Replacement dwellings are provided for in circumstances where the building adversely affects the landscape or built character of the area. Additional measures ensure that the residential use has not been abandoned and the dwelling is not historically or

architecturally important and worthy of conservation. (Policy HC-D17)

TRAVELLING COMMUNITIES

In planning for traveller accommodation in the National Park, the approach is to work collaboratively with neighbouring local housing authorities to seek to establish and positively address the accommodation needs of traveller communities. Because no demonstrable need has been identified within the National Park, the Plan includes a criteria-based policy (HC-S5) with no targets for delivering traveller pitches or sites.

SUMMARY OF HOUSING POLICIES BASED ON LOCATION AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT		
LOCATION	NEW BUILD	CONVERSION
Local Service Centres and Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local affordable housing schemes – provision for principal residence housing to enable delivery where viability is clearly demonstrated. Specialist homes for local older and more vulnerable people permitted as part of any principal residence housing required to deliver affordable housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversions of buildings in the settlement permitted for affordable housing – if the building can accommodate more than one dwelling some principal residence housing may be permitted if the scheme is demonstrated to be financially unviable*. Extended family dwellings within the curtilage of an existing dwelling.
Porlock Weir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% local affordable housing only to meet a need within the parish. No principal residence housing permitted to enable delivery. Replacement of those dwellings lost to coastal change within the Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA) through relocation elsewhere in the settlement or in nearby settlements. 	<p>Area outside the CCMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversions of buildings in the settlement permitted for local affordable housing. Extended family dwellings within the curtilage of an existing dwelling.

SUMMARY OF HOUSING POLICIES BASED ON LOCATION AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT

LOCATION	NEW BUILD	CONVERSION
<p>Open Countryside: Farmsteads and small rural communities including hamlets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New build (or temporary residential structures) only permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is an essential need for a rural land-based worker, or a need for a succession farm dwelling. • Self build local affordable homes in rural communities with a shop, pub or community meeting place. 	<p>Conversions of buildings within a group of buildings on a farmstead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rural worker dwelling, • succession farm dwelling, • extended family dwelling, or • a local affordable dwelling. <p>Conversions of buildings in a hamlet to a local affordable dwelling.</p> <p>Conversion of hotels in the open countryside to local affordable housing unless it is demonstrated that it is not financially viable where principal residence housing could enable delivery, or it delivers more affordable housing than required – then a financial contribution will be sought to deliver affordable housing elsewhere in the National Park.</p>
<p>Anywhere</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement dwellings – where the existing dwelling is not of historical/architectural importance and the building adversely affects the landscape or built character of the area. • Subdivision of existing dwellings – where the additional unit created will be a principal residence home. 	
<p>*Whilst thresholds for affordable housing are in existence within planning practice guidance - conversions of existing and vacant buildings (or the redevelopment of vacant buildings) within Local Service Centres and Villages to principal residence housing will be permitted including commuted sums for the provision of local affordable housing in certain circumstances (policies HC-S1, HC-D1 and HC-D2).</p>		

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LOCAL COMMERCIAL SERVICES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Policy HC-S6 aims to help communities across the National Park and benefit visitors, by enabling provision of local commercial services and community facilities. The policy covers a range of uses including local commercial services such as shops, Post Offices, pubs, restaurants, and banks; and community facilities such as schools, libraries, public open spaces, village and town halls, and places of worship. The focus of the policy is the improvement of existing services and facilities and encouraging new provision through using existing buildings. New build services and facilities will be considered in the Local Service Centres and Villages.

LOCAL COMMERCIAL SERVICE PROVISION

Policy HC-D18 addresses the provision of local commercial services such as shops, cafes, pubs and takeaways across the National Park. In the named settlements these services may be provided through conversions, extensions to existing premises, or new build development. In the 'open countryside' these services can be provided through the reuse of existing buildings where they are small scale and relate to the sale of goods produced at the premises or are ancillary services to farms, visitor facilities or camping/caravan sites.

SAFEGUARDING LOCAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Policy HC-D19 aims to retain existing local services and facilities – therefore a change of use will not be permitted unless it can be shown that the service or facility is no longer needed or a replacement service has been provided.

In terms of proposals for the change of use of commercial services, there should be evidence to show that they cannot be continued and made viable over the longer term – through effective marketing and demonstrating that there were no other opportunities for diversification, grant funding or community interest in the service on a volunteer/not-for-profit basis. There is some flexibility in the Local Service Centres to allow changes between the A use classes

(some are already permitted development) such as shops, banks, cafes, pubs and takeaways.

IMPORTANT VISUAL AMENITY SPACE

Policy HC-D20 identifies land of visual amenity value within and adjoining settlements, through recognising the significance these green areas have to the setting of buildings and their importance to the character of a settlement. These areas are protected from development that may harm their visual amenity value.

RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS

Policy HC-S7 supports the reuse of existing buildings across the National Park as residential institutions. This may include residential care homes and nursing homes that could help address a local need for specialist accommodation, given the increase in the proportion of Exmoor's population over retirement age, or residential educational facilities to promote the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park and its special qualities. Measures are in place to ensure that the location is sustainable in relation to the level of services and facilities that may be required to support the proposed use.

THE ECONOMY

A SUSTAINABLE EXMOOR ECONOMY

The policies within this section provide a basis for the flexible release of appropriate sites and buildings for business development in response to emerging needs rather than to allocate land for employment use.

Policy SE-S1 seeks to encourage a range of appropriate new business and employment development to address the needs of the National Park's local communities and to strengthen and diversify the Exmoor economy. New employment development or the growth/intensification of existing businesses should not conflict with the National Park statutory purposes.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN SETTLEMENTS

Policy SE-S2 encourages the reuse of existing buildings or brownfield land and by providing scope for new sites and buildings

within the named settlements. Business development should be of a type, scale and design appropriate to the local and National Park context. In all cases, consideration should first be given to the re-use of existing traditional buildings or if no suitable building exists, then the re-use of non-traditional buildings or previously developed sites will be considered. If these opportunities are not available the replacement of non-traditional buildings or a new site/building may be considered. The development should be well related to existing buildings and conserve and enhance the character of the area.

In relation to Porlock Weir, any new build development should be small-scale and compatible with industries associated with the settlement.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE

In the open countryside, Policy SE-S3 provides opportunities for business development through the extension of existing employment sites or buildings and the reuse of existing traditional buildings in farmsteads or hamlets. Where farm diversification is concerned other 'non-traditional' buildings may be considered for business use. The erection of new business premises in the open countryside will not be permitted.

SAFEGUARDING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT LAND AND BUILDINGS

Policies SE-S1 and SE-D2 protect against the change of use of existing employment sites and premises, given the finite supply of employment land in the National Park, and the limited supply of greenfield land for development within and adjoining settlements.

HOME BASED BUSINESSES

The National Park Authority encourages entrepreneurship and home based businesses. Policy SE-D1 enables the use of a residential property, small extensions to homes, the conversion of existing buildings, or new small-scale outbuildings where there are no existing buildings, for home based businesses.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		
Where	New Build Development	Change of Use/Conversions
Local Service Centres and Villages	<p>Where the conversion of an existing traditional building, or non-traditional building is not achievable, then within or well related to the settlement, new build will be considered for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The replacement of a non-traditional building OR • The redevelopment of a previously developed site OR • New business buildings/sites on greenfield sites. 	<p>The change of use and conversion of existing traditional buildings within or well-related to the settlement is preferred. Or the conversion and change of use of a non-traditional building.</p>
Porlock Weir	<p>As above, but any new business development should be compatible with industries based at Porlock Weir outside the Coastal Change Management Area (see Inset Map for Porlock Weir in the Local Plan).</p>	<p>As above, and: Temporary uses may be considered in the Coastal Change Management Area where buildings are identified as at risk from coastal change.</p>
Open Countryside	<p>No new build business development is permitted in the countryside unless it is an extension to an existing business that is well-related to an existing building group - on a farmstead or in a hamlet.</p>	<p>The change of use and conversion of existing traditional buildings well-related to an existing building group - on a farmstead or in a hamlet.</p>

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		
Where	New Build Development	Change of Use/Conversions
Farms	As above	As above, and: In the case of farm diversification proposals the conversion and change of use of non-traditional buildings where they are well-related to existing buildings on the farmstead.
Anywhere	New outbuildings within the curtilage of a residential dwelling for home-based business opportunities.	The conversion of a building within the curtilage of a residential dwelling for a home-based business.
	Extensions to an existing dwelling for home-based business opportunities – consistent with the residential extensions policy.	In certain circumstances a building well related to the curtilage may be considered.
	A condition may be attached to any planning permission to enable the conversion/new outbuilding/extension to be used for a home-based business or domestic ancillary use.	

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

The use of land and existing buildings for agricultural or forestry purposes does not require planning permission. For certain buildings or structures it may be necessary to obtain prior approval from the Authority (as to the siting, design and external appearance) before carrying out permitted development.

Where a proposal does require planning permission, policy SE-S4 provides that consideration should be given to the functional need of the proposal, the siting, design, level of activity, any adverse impacts and landscaping. Proposals for new buildings in isolated locations in the open countryside will only be considered under exceptional circumstances relating to an overriding functional need.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Policy RT-S1 is an overarching policy that ensures that people living in and visiting Exmoor have opportunities to understand and enjoy the National Park that will improve their health and wellbeing through providing for appropriate tourism and recreation developments.

This includes:

- providing for a range of holiday accommodation that will help to meet a variety of visitor needs and budgets;
- ensuring that development in relation to outdoor recreation activities takes into account the quiet enjoyment and appreciation of Exmoor's special qualities; and
- ensuring the access network (rights of way and access land) and the routes of former railways are safeguarded.

Specific measures are in place to ensure that developments can be accessed safely.

VISITOR ACCOMMODATION

Serviced accommodation: Policy RT-D1 provides that serviced accommodation such as hotels and guesthouses, can be developed through the change of use and conversion of existing buildings provided that the traditional character of the building(s) is conserved and ensuring there are no adverse effects on road safety and local amenity. For residential properties changing use to a hotel, there will be some flexibility so that the property can either operate as a hotel or be occupied as a residential dwelling.

Staff accommodation: Policy RT-D2 enables the provision of staff accommodation through a small-scale extension to the existing hotel or the conversion of a building within the curtilage of the premises. If this accommodation is no longer needed the accommodation can become part of the guest accommodation, a holiday let or a local affordable dwelling.

Safeguarding existing hotels on Exmoor is important as they provide an economic benefit to the local economy and commonly also provide social and community facilities such as a public bar. Policy RT-D3 allows for existing hotels to change to another employment use, including residential institutions (e.g. nursing

homes). Where the hotel was formerly a single dwelling, it can revert back to a residential dwelling if the policy tests are met. In all other circumstances, it needs to be shown that the hotel cannot be made viable over the longer term and that the property has been marketed at a reasonable value for a minimum of 12 months with no willing buyers, before a change of use of part or the entire hotel will be considered. There are a range of uses the hotel can change to including self-catering apartments. Proposals for the change of use to housing will need to accord with policy HC-D6 Change of use of Serviced Accommodation to Housing (see the Housing section).

Non-serviced accommodation: Self-catering holiday lets are a popular form of visitor accommodation. Policy RT-D4 provides for the change of use and conversion of buildings to self-catering accommodation where: an additional unit is created on an existing self-catering complex; through the change of use of a hotel that is no longer viable; the reuse of a redundant building associated with a hotel/guesthouse premises; or relating to the diversification of a rural land-based business.

Small-scale tented campsites are considered to be acceptable in principle where they are sited near a settlement, hamlet or farmstead and there is safe access. The site should not adversely affect the landscape, wildlife or historic features and any on-site facilities should be provided through the conversion of existing buildings or as an extension to an existing building.

Camping barns: Camping barns can be provided through the conversion of traditional buildings within existing building groups where utilities and services can usually be provided without detrimental impacts on the building and its setting. The conversion of isolated buildings close to rights of way and access land may also be allowed where a camping barn only provides basic facilities (e.g. a 'stone tent') to avoid harm to the landscape setting of the building and its historic character.

Caravan sites: Small-scale certificated caravan sites (up to 5 touring caravans) can be provided in well screened locations with good access and not in areas of flood risk. Policies RT-D7 and RT-D8 state that new touring caravan sites, static caravan sites or

extension/increase in pitches to existing sites will not be permitted in the National Park due to the adverse impacts these sites can have in terms of colour, materials, siting, and uniform layout on the landscape. Static caravan pitches may be replaced by more appropriately designed 'caravan' type accommodation such as camping pods or single storey timber chalets (see below).

Alternative camping accommodation: Policy RT-D9 supports a diversity of visitor accommodation; this includes structures such as timber camping pods, micro-lodges, traditional Romany caravans, shepherd huts, tree-houses, yurts, wigwams and teepees. Such structures should have a low impact and limited physical connection to the ground so that they can be moved or easily dismantled. Proposals for this accommodation should be small scale and in locations where they support the diversification of hotel businesses, self-catering complexes, camping/caravan sites or rural land-based businesses. They may also be allowed where they replace existing static caravan pitches.

RECREATION

Recreational development: Policy RT-D10 enables activities that encourage the quiet enjoyment of the National Park. Such facilities should make the best use of existing buildings and should focus on areas adjoining the named settlements.

In the open countryside, a clear justification will be needed to demonstrate that the location of the recreational development is essential, and the proposal will enhance the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park. Development should ideally be located with existing recreational development or as diversification of a land-based business.

Equestrian development: The traditional and popular activities of owning and riding horses on Exmoor is recognised. Policy RT-D11 applies to a wide range of horse-related development including stables, exercise arenas, indoor schools, and changing the use of land to equestrian/recreational use. Development should be located where it is well-related to existing buildings, and the reuse of buildings is also encouraged. A land management plan is required for this type of development to ensure that the proposed development and activity arising from it addresses factors including the management of waste and grazing land.

Access land and rights of way are defined as the access network. Policy RT-D12 seeks to retain this valuable network and ensures that development proposals will not adversely affect it. If there are adverse impacts on the network from development proposals then the applicant should demonstrate that the overall outcome of the development will be of benefit to the network.

FORMER RAILWAYS

Policy RT-D13 seeks to safeguard the historic former railway routes of the West Somerset Mineral Line and the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway from development that would prevent their use as part of the access network (rights of way), or would prevent the reinstatement of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway.

Policy RT-S2 sets out the requirements for any proposal to reinstate the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway. Proposals are required to replicate the former narrow gauge railway and reuse existing buildings, including original buildings associated with the railway, in the first instance. Any new buildings and associated infrastructure should reflect the traditional character and appearance of the original railway.

ACHIEVING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

It is recognised that due to the rural nature of Exmoor, the majority of people will continue to rely on their car to access jobs, services and facilities; however the key aim is to locate most development within the named settlements to help these settlements maintain a level of self-sufficiency without leading to a severe increase in traffic movements. Policy AC-S1 provides that the National Park Authority will work with the Highways and Transport Authorities, and transport providers to encourage sustainable transport for residents and visitors through encouraging public and community transport services, accessibility, opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding, and minimising emissions of greenhouse gas emissions.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Many of Exmoor's roads, bridges and fords are historic and attractive features in their own right. Hedgerows, trees, fingerposts, traditional bus shelters and other roadside features also add to the character of Exmoor's road network. Policy AC-S2 sets out how the National Park Authority will work with others to ensure that works to roads and associated infrastructure reflect local character, and retain existing infrastructure wherever possible. New roads are not considered to be appropriate except where they would result in an environmental gain or a community benefit.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In terms of new development, Policy AC-D1 ensures that proposals will take account of accessibility particularly in relation to sustainable transport such as foot and cycle paths, cycle parking and storage, rights of way improvements or linkages and electric charging points. If development is likely to generate significant levels of traffic then a Transport Assessment or Statement will need to be prepared and a Travel Plan to demonstrate the measures that will be taken to ensure that any impacts arising from increased traffic movements will be acceptable.

TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Policy AC-D2 sets out criteria to make sure development is of an appropriate scale so it can be safely serviced by the existing road network.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND PARKING

The Exmoor Route Network is made up of A Roads which are the principal transport routes, B Roads and access roads. In terms of HGV movements, a small section of the A399 which passes through the National Park is identified as a county freight route, whilst other roads across Exmoor are identified as local freight routes. These routes are collectively shown on the Policies Map in the Publication Draft Local Plan as the Exmoor Route Network, which provides the basis for traffic management to ensure that traffic uses roads most suited to the purpose of the journey.

Policy AC-D3 provides a guide to parking standards for cars, motorcycles, cycles, and disabled parking provision in developments. Provision will not be made to meet peak parking

demand, however policy AC-D4 provides opportunities for temporary parking solutions where there would be no adverse impact on the local environment and/or the amenity of local communities.

ELECTRICITY AND COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS

The communications infrastructure in the National Park needs to be fit for purpose so that it remains a viable place for businesses and communities to thrive. It is likely that a mix of communication technologies will play a role in providing improved and superfast broadband in remote rural areas. This will help provide benefits across Exmoor for individuals to access services and opportunities to enhance existing businesses, enable new businesses to start up, and give greater flexibility for people to work from home.

Policy AC-S4 is an overarching policy, which supports improvements to the telecommunications network (fixed lines, masts and satellite antennae) and electricity infrastructure; particularly in terms of improving access to high speed broadband that will help sustain Exmoor's communities and the economy, and reduce the need to travel by car. Measures are in place to ensure the location, scale and design of this infrastructure will not have adverse impacts on the National Park, and to encourage operators to work together and share infrastructure where possible. It will also be required that any infrastructure is removed if it becomes redundant.

RADIO AND MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy AC-D5 provides tests for masts and associated equipment to extend the coverage of the mobile phone network across Exmoor with safeguards to ensure that impacts on landscape, visual amenity, and the amenity of nearby residents and visitors are effectively minimised through siting and high quality design.

FIXED LINE TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy AC-D6 applies to fixed electricity and telephone (telecommunication) lines that are usually seen as a network of overhead lines and poles, however in some cases they are underground. The policy approach aims to ensure that all new transmission lines are underground except in cases where this

could harm wildlife or important landscape and historic features – in such circumstances overhead lines may be permitted as long as the visual impact on the landscape is minimised. There is also provision to accommodate grid connections to off-shore renewable technologies, where there will be no unacceptable impact on the National Park.

SATELLITE ANTENNAE

Policy AC-D7 gives provision for the installation of satellite antennae and wireless broadband equipment (where planning permission is required) – such equipment can be installed where it is carefully sited and harm to historic buildings, landscape or settlement character is avoided.

EXMOOR'S SETTLEMENTS

This section sets out information that applies to named settlements within the National Park (Local Service Centres, Villages and Porlock Weir). For each settlement there is an inset map and written statement. The written statement outlines the key aspects of each settlement in relation to its setting, built environment and local services. Where they have been prepared, parish and other community-led plans (including neighbourhood plans) have also been taken into account. In some cases there are policies relating to the safeguarding of land for community facilities.

The inset maps associated with each settlement identify particular areas or features, which are needed to interpret and apply Local Plan policies at a settlement level, which include areas at risk of flooding, wildlife designations and Conservation Areas.

SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Policy ES-S1 aims to support local communities that have identified priorities and plans for development they need for their settlements over the longer term.

LYNTON & LYNMOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Neighbourhood Plan for Lynton & Lynmouth came into force in December 2013 and will be used to decide planning proposals within the Lynton & Lynmouth parish. Policy ES-S2 ensures that the policies within this Neighbourhood Plan will continue to be used to determine proposals in the Lynton & Lynmouth parish and they

will not be invalidated by the development management policies in the Local Plan once it is adopted unless it is silent, indeterminate or out of date.



Porlock Weir

How to get more information and make comments

Visit one of the places below to look at a reference copy of the Publication Draft Local Plan and make comments:

- Exmoor National Park Authority Reception, Exmoor House, Dulverton
- West Somerset District Council Reception, West Somerset House, Williton
- North Devon District Council Reception, Lynton House, Barnstaple
- National Park Visitor Centres at Dulverton, Dunster and Lynmouth
- Local libraries

Or access it online at: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Contact the Policy & Community Team on 01398 323665 or email localplan@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Please ensure your response is returned to Exmoor National Park Authority by

4.00pm on Friday 31st July 2015

Post to: Policy & Community Team, Exmoor National Park Authority, Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset TA22 9HL.

Or Email: localplan@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk