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WEST DEVON RESOURCES COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2014

Agenda, Reports and Minutes for the meeting

Agenda No Item

1. **Agenda Letter** (Pages 1 - 4)

2. **Reports**

Reports to Resources:

- a) Item 5 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2013/14 - Quarter 3 (Pages 5 - 20)
- b) Item 6 - Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2014/15 to 2017/18 (Pages 21 - 42)
- c) Item 7 - Authorisation for RIPA applications to Magistrates Court (Pages 43 - 48)
- d) Item 8 - East of Okehampton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (Pages 49 - 132)

3. **Minutes** (Pages 133 - 138)

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Agenda Item 1

A G E N D A – RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28th JANUARY 2014

PART ONE – OPEN COMMITTEE

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting.

If Councillors have any questions relating to predetermination, bias or interests in items on this Agenda, then please contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

3. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

To consider those items which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by the Meeting as matters of urgency (if any).

	Page
4. Confirmation of Minutes Meeting held on 10 th December 2013 (previously circulated)	
5. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2013/14 – Quarter 3 Report of the Chief Accountant	1
6. Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2014/15 to 2017/18 Report of the Head of Finance & Audit and Chief Accountant	12
7. Authorisation for RIPA applications to Magistrates Court Report of Head of ICT and Customer Services	31
8. East of Okehampton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document Report of the Strategic Planning Officer	36

PART TWO ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT EXEMPT INFORMATION IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSED (if any).

If any, the Committee is recommended to pass the following resolution:

“**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that exempt information may be disclosed as defined in the paragraphs given in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act”.

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STRATEGIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Reports to Members

Members will be aware of the requirement to take account of strategic risk in decision making. This note is designed to support Members consider strategic risks as part of the assessment of reports from officers.

There are an increasing number of issues that we have a statutory requirement to take into account which affect all aspects of the Council's policies and service delivery (e.g. Human Rights Act). There are also discretionary issues we choose to highlight in our reports (e.g. Financial Implications, and Impact on Council Priorities and Targets). Common Law duty requires Local Authorities to take into account all things they need to take into account! The Courts hearing Judicial Review applications make this their starting point in deciding whether any decision is reasonable.

Officers have a responsibility to assess the implications of recommendations to Members. Members should ensure that before making a decision they have undertaken a similar consideration relating to the risks associated with the report.

Examples of risk to be considered:-

Statutory Requirement :

- Equalities and Discrimination, particularly Race Equality. (Consider the impact on each of the following equality areas: Race, Religion and Belief, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Age)
- Human Rights
- Crime and Disorder
- Health and Safety
- Employment Legislation
- Data Protection
- Freedom of Information
- Corporate activity with an impact on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and biodiversity

Corporate Requirement :

- Impact on Council's Reputation
- Impact on Priorities, Cross-Cutting themes, Targets and / or Commitments
- Impact on Standing Orders / Financial Regulations
- Impact on Council's Assets
- Financial Risks
- Compliance with National Policies and Guidance
- Impact on Sustainability

Members' attention is drawn to the Risk Assessment section within each report. Members are encouraged to consider whether the report has satisfactorily identified all likely negative impacts and mitigating action that will be taken. Members also need to consider the opportunities presented by actions, noting that any change entails an element of risk. The challenge is to effectively manage that risk.

RISK SCORING MATRIX

Impact/Severity		Target impact	Stakeholder impact	Finance impact
1	Insignificant	Low impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Low stakeholder concern	Low financial risk
2	Minor	Minor impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Minor stakeholder concern	Minor financial risk
3	Moderate	Moderate outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Moderate stakeholder concern	Moderate financial risk
4	Serious	High impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	High stakeholder concern	High financial risk
5	Very serious	Very high impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Very high stakeholder concern	Very high financial risk
Likelihood/Probability		Risk	Opportunity	
1	Very low	Negligible chance of occurrence; has not occurred	Possible opportunity yet to be investigated with low likelihood of success	
2	Low	Low chance of occurrence; has occurred infrequently but within internal control	Opportunity being investigated with low likelihood of success	
3	Medium	Equal chance of occurrence or non occurrence; could occur more than once and be difficult to control due to external influences	Opportunity may be achievable with careful management	
4	High	More likely to occur than not occur; has occurred more than once and difficult to control due to external influences	Good opportunity which may be realised	
5	Very high	Very high chance of occurrence but not a certainty; has occurred recently	Clear reliable opportunity with reasonable certainty of achievement	

Risk score = Impact/Severity x Likelihood/Probability

Likelihood	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Impact						

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Resources
DATE	28 th January 2014
REPORT TITLE	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2013/14 – Quarter 3 – 31st December 2013
Report of	Chief Accountant
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

To give Members an indication of the potential year end financial position of West Devon Borough Council for the revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14 and to bring to Members' attention any significant variance from the revenue and capital budgets set. This report enables Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budgets for 2013/14.

Financial implications:

This report details the latest financial position of the Council's revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14, as at the end of December 2013.

Currently there is predicted to be a revenue underspend of £140,000 at the year end. This is comparing the predicted revenue outturn of £7,640,000 against the net budget set of £7,780,000.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Members are asked to note the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2013/14 financial year for the revenue budget.
2. Members are asked to note the progress on the capital programme to 31st December 2013.

Officer contact: Jackie Waites, Chief accountant Jackie.waites@swdevon.gov.uk

1. REVENUE BUDGET OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The gross service expenditure budget for 2013/14 was set at £27 million (£7.8 million net).

Actual revenue expenditure and income is expected to be under budget by £140,000 when compared against the total budget set for 2013/14.

Table 1 below provides an analysis of the projected variances against budget.

TABLE 1: 2013/14 BUDGET FORECAST

	Budget 2013/14	Budget variations increase/ (decrease)		Note
	£000	£000	£000	
APPROVED BUDGET			7,780	
Reduced expenditure/additional income				
Business Rates	1,493	(25)		A
Discretionary Rate Relief	50	(50)		B
Budget Scoured Savings (Appendix B)	n/a	(200)		C
Swimming Pool	373	(22)		D
Other small underspends		(20)		E
<i>Sub total</i>			(317)	
Increased expenditure/reduced income				
Homelessness	75	15		F
Reserve Bids in year	n/a	10		G
Reserve spend in the 13/14 financial year (report to resources Sept 2012)	0	12		H
Planning Income and Agency Staff (including Land Charges)	500	30		I
Investment income	45	20		J
Potential additional pension cost	140	20		K
Street cleaning contract inflation	435	20		L
Parish Funding – Public Conveniences	45	25		M
Travel over spend on all services	56	15		N
TIC additional income not achievable	30	10		O
<i>Sub total</i>			177	
PROJECTED OUTTURN			7,640	
PROJECTED UNDERSPEND			(140)	

Notes

- A. **Business Rates** – The Government introduced the Business Rates Retention Scheme on the 1 April 2013. This system enables the retention of a proportion of the business rates revenue generated in a local area by the relevant local authorities. Business rates now form a major element of the local government finance funding. Current indications are that the income from business rates may exceed the Government “baseline” grant figure. Although the system carries with it a significant risk of volatility, it is considered appropriate to include an additional £25,000 in the forecast. These figures are constantly changing and regular monitoring of the position will be undertaken.

- B. **Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR)** – New accounting arrangements have been introduced which mean that the charge previously made to the General Fund is no longer required. The costs of DRR will now be met from the Business Rates Retention Scheme (see note A above).
- C. **Budget Scoured Savings** - The Council is predicting to have saved all of the scoured savings in the year, amounting to £200,000. Please see Appendix B for details.
- D. **Swimming Pool** – The Council is still on track to make the anticipated budget savings of £22,000.
- E. **Small Underspends** – Through thorough budget monitoring at the end of December, it is anticipated that small under spends will occur on a few cost centres resulting in a £20,000 year end underspend.
- F. **Homelessness** – The increase in temporary accommodation is a result of a combination of factors. Namely that a local, cheaper supplier went into administration, meaning alternative, more expensive accommodation had to be sourced. More people are being accommodated under the Government’s No Second Night Out initiative to bring Rough Sleepers indoors and there has been a small decline in the numbers of social housing lets which has meant longer stays in temporary accommodation. There have also been staff shortages and issues with continuity of officers in the team which meant that the level of early intervention and prevention work was temporarily reduced.
- G. **Reserve Bids in the year** – A bid to reserves in the year totals approximately £10,000. This is for work in Planning with respect to a specialist viability appraisal.
- H. **Reserve spend in the year** – Members agreed to reserve bids in September 2012. Some of these reserves were not fully spent in the financial year 12/13 and the result is a spend of £12,000 in the financial year 13/14.
- I. **Planning and local land charges income** – It is anticipated that the combined reduction in income and the higher cost of temporary agency staff, will result in an over spend of £30,000 by the end of the financial year.
- J. **Investment Income** – As with last year due to the low interest rates, investment income is expected to be under target. However the return on the investments is 0.64%, still higher than the benchmark of 0.39%.
- K. **Additional pension cost** – Due to the reduction in staff in the past few years the additional amount required to fund the scheme has increased.
- L. **Street Cleaning Contract** – There is a small overspend predicted on the contract in relation to Street Cleaning and Fly Tipping.

M. **Parish Funding** – The income budget for contributions from Parishes towards Public Conveniences has historically been set at £45,000 whereas actual levels achieved are around £20,000. A cost pressure of £25,000 has been built into the budget process for 2014-5 to realign the income budget with actual income achievable.

N. **Travel expenses** – The budget for travel was reduced by half from £116,000 in 2012/13 to £56,000 in 2013/14. This was following a proposal to amend the Council’s approach to essential car user allowance which was restricted to those staff for which a car was absolutely essential. The reimbursement of mileage expenditure was reduced to introduce the HMRC mileage rates (currently 45p per mile) from April 2013. The proposals for the removal or reduction in the lump sum allowance were phased in over the financial year, following negotiations with the Union. The budget of £56,000 is currently predicted to be overspent by £15,000 to reflect the transitional period and also that the budget was overspent by 15% in 2012/13 before the budget reduction was implemented.

O. **TIC** – The total budget increase predicted for TIC income was £30,000. The TIC’s expect to achieve £20,000 of this leaving a short fall of £10,000 which is not expected to be achieved. See Appendix C.

2. Savings expected to be achieved to balance the budget for the financial year 2013/2014 totalled £304,310, (Report to Resources 29th January and February 2013). **Appendix C** shows if these will all be achieved by the end of the year.

3. **INCOME AND RESERVES**

Income monitoring is an integral part of financial management. Current income forecasts are as follows:

Service	Budgeted Income for 2013/2014 to Dec 2013 £'000	Actual Income for 2013/2014 to Dec 2013 £'000	Budgeted Income for 2013/14 £'000	Projected income for 2013/14 £'000
Car Parks	572	660	858	858
Employment Estates	160	170	240	240
Land Charges	62	54	93	93
Planning	259	283	389	389
Investment Income – see note J in Table 1 above	30	16	45	25
TOTAL	1,083	1,183	1,625	1,605

The decision on the level of balances and reserves is taken during the formulation of the annual budget and the medium term financial strategy. As a matter of prudence the Council has set aside various amounts in reserves to cover future liabilities and items of expenditure and these are attached as **Appendix A**.

4. CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW

- 4.1 The Chief Accountant has consulted with officers and has used the financial position at 31st December 2013 to establish the position at the end of the third quarter. The Capital Programme was set at £1.4 million as at 1st April 2013 and the spend to 31st December 2013 was £317,000 as shown in **Appendix D**.

PROJECT PROGRESS

- 4.2 **Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project** was completed on 31st March 2013. There is a small balance of just over £30K of external funding to be spent in 2013/2014 which has all been committed. The spend to 31st December 2013 is £15,410.
- 4.3 **Leisure Contract** - At Council on 16th April 2013, Members agreed to an extension of the Leisure Contract. In line with this report, at this stage it is felt prudent to retain the existing budget. As at 31st December 2013 no monies have been spent.
- 4.4 **Disabled Facility Grant (DFG)** has a statutory duty under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) to fund adaptations to properties to enable people to live independently within their home. To 31st December 2013 £276K has been spent on DFG's against a total budget for 2013/14 of £480K of which £178K is funded through a government grant. As a statutory requirement for the Council it continues to be a large part of the capital programme resource requirement.
- 4.5 **Affordable Housing** funding of £350K has not yet been spent. This budget is required to support the development of a pipeline of affordable housing schemes. Significant progress has been made and the financial support required by each scheme is now being quantified. In addition to investing in development projects, the money will also be used to support other strategic housing priorities. A report will come to Members setting out in detail how the Affordable Housing budget should be allocated to schemes and other strategic projects.
- 4.6 **Private Sector Renewal Grants (PSRG)** no longer receive any Regional Housing Pot funding (Decent Homes Grant). The money provides funding to support the delivery of the Homes Strategy through the provision of recyclable loans aimed at reducing fuel poverty, bringing empty properties back into use and securing safe and healthy homes in line with the Council's duties under the Housing Acts. It was recommended that any under spends be rolled forward to deal with fluctuations in demand and build up a sustainable loan fund. It was also recommended that repaid grant money from historical PSRG activity are recycled into the budget for future use. In light of this it was recommended that the capital budget for PSRG be reduced by £100,000 to a budget of £127,341 for 2013/14.
- 4.7 **Village Hall and Community Project grants** – The budget for these two grants total £60,539 (being £31,008 for village halls and £29,531 for community projects). Against these total budgets, current applications total £51,500 and £10,000 has been spent. Both budgets totalling £60,539 are expected to be fully committed at the end of the financial year.

4.8 The progress on the Strategic Asset Review will be monitored quarterly along with the current capital programme.

5. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

5.1 The prudential code indicators are included in the Third Quarter Treasury Management Monitoring Report (this will be presented to members of the Audit Committee on 11th February). The indicators are monitored during the year through the normal revenue and capital monitoring processes. Any exceptions are reported to the Resources Committee together with any remedial action or revision required. To date all Treasury Management limits have been adhered to.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	Sound financial management underpins all of the Council's corporate priorities.
Statutory powers:	Local Government Act 1972, Section 151 Local Government Act 2003, Section 28
Considerations of equality and human rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Biodiversity considerations:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Sustainability considerations:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Crime and disorder implications:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Background papers:	Resources Committee 17 th September 2013 Resources Committee 10 th December 2013
Appendices attached:	Appendix A - Reserves Appendix B – Budget Scouring Savings Appendix C – Budget Savings Appendix D – Capital Programme – spend as at 31 st December 2013

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

Page 11

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Budget Variances	The financial standing of the Council is put at risk through variations in income and expenditure that are not detected at an early stage.	4	2	8	↔	Continual budget monitoring at all levels within the Council ensures early identification of variances. Reporting to the Resources Committee provides an opportunity for Members to identify and instigate remedial action where appropriate.	Heads of Service
2	Resource Planning	The Council must demonstrate that it sets budgets in line with corporate priorities and provides value for money.	4	2	8	↔	Consideration of revenue budget variances provides a mechanism for the identification of cost pressures and income opportunities that can be reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Head of Finance and Audit
3	Capital Budget Variances	To update Members on the current progress with each Capital Project and allow funding to be carried forward into the new financial year.	3	1	3	↔	When projects are completed the remaining balances can be released back into the Council's capital programme for future projects.	The Head of Finance and Audit
4	Capital Resource Planning	The main operational risk faced by the Council is the financial planning and control of the Council's capital resources.	4	1	4	↔	The accounts are drawn up in strict accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2013/14 which is recognised by statute as representing proper accounting practice.	The Head of Finance and Audit

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔

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RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES			
	Opening balance	Projected Balance	
	1 April 2013	31.3.2014	Comments
	£000	£000	
EARMARKED RESERVES			
Specific Reserves - General Fund			
Rev & Bens	(30)	0	
Okehampton Depot (Waste Man budget)	(40)	(40)	
Housing Needs Survey and extension of homefinder direct	(8)	0	
LABGI	(43)	0	
PDG (ICT) Earmarked Reserve	(11)	0	
Car Parking Maintenance	(183)	(183)	
Habitats Earmarked Reserve	(50)	(40)	Planned future use over 5 years
Housing revenue element of the PDG for 08/09	(2)	0	
Landscape Maintenance	(20)	0	
Personal Search Fee S31 Grant	(34)	(34)	Ringfenced for Gov. Legislation
Housing Enabling	(8)	0	
New Homes Bonus	(53)	(119)	Includes uncommitted balance for 13/14 of £66K. This will be reduced by the amount allocated in relation to the DNPA
County Election	(73)	0	
Devon County Council - (Localism Support officer)	(4)	0	
RIEP - Localism Projects	(10)	0	
DCC - TAP funds	(5)	0	
New Burdens Money CLG - Right to Challenge	(8)	(8)	
New Burdens Money CLG - Assets of Community Value	(5)	(5)	
Fifth Wave Neighbourhood Front Runners	(20)	0	
DCLG	(10)	0	
World Heritage Key Site	(5)	0	
Cannons Meadow	(27)	(20)	Committed over future years. Annual transfer to cover planned revenue expenditure
Millwood Homes	(15)	(10)	
T18 Programme - Invest to Save reserve	0	(600)	£400K NHB and £200K general reserves
TOTAL - Earmarked Reserves	(664)	(1,059)	
GENERAL FUND UNEARMARKED RESERVES	(1,103)	(970)	As per Budget Update report for 2014/15 to 2017/18 - Section 6
TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES	(1,767)	(2,029)	

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Environmental Health and Housing	
Rationalisation of Vacant Posts	£22,670
Reduction in Home Improvement Agency Specialist Advice	£21,500
Reduction in Civil Contingencies Act budget	£12,000
Finance	
Rationalisation of Vacant Post	£15,800
Reduction in Cost of Finance Ledger System	£5,500
Assets	
Reduction in Swimming Pool Subsidy	£12,600
ICT & Customer Services	
ICT Infrastructure Savings	£22,000
Environmental Services	
Waste Collection Operating Costs	£12,100
Waste Collection Depot Costs	£35,000
Street Cleaning Operating Costs	£4,000
Landscape Maintenance Savings	£13,300
Corporate Services	
Committee Administration	£5,000
Reduction in Media Costs	£5,000
Planning, Economy & Community	
Rationalisation of Vacant Posts	£29,000
Sub Total	<u>£215,470</u>
Additional Net Additions to Budget	<u>(£15,827)</u>
Budget Scouring Net Total	<u>£199,643</u>

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SERVICE	£	COMMENTS
Community		
Additional income for TIC's	30,000	achieve £20,000
Reduce Community Engagement activities	15,000	achieved
Cease Non-statutory Localism work	13,000	achieved
Reduce Economic Development Grants	10,250	achieved
	68,250	
Financial Services		
savings on audit fees	15,000	achieved
	15,000	
Environment Services		
Grounds maintenance saving	15,000	achieved
Allow traders to use Council car parking land	2,000	not achieved
Cease Parish grants for graveyards	2,600	achieved
	19,600	
Estates Services		
additional income from Estates	10,000	on target to be achieved
Reduce Countryside service	23,600	achieved
Reduce Sports Development	4,560	achieved
Okehampton BIP	10,000	achieved
Tamar Valley Line discretionary grant	2,300	achieved
	50,460	
ICT		
IT savings - software, maintenance & licensing	22,000	on target to be achieved
	22,000	
Corporate		
Other small savings	24,000	achieved
Revised scheme for essential allowances and mileage rates	55,000	See Note N in the main report for an explanation. £40,000 of the £55,000 is predicted to be achieved
	79,000	
Planning		
Additional income from planning pre-application advice	20,000	To date, £13,384 has been received out of a total budget of £28,000
Additional income from planning	30,000	achieved
	50,000	
TOTAL	£304,310	

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME - Spend as at 31st December 2013

Project	Budget 1 April 2013	Spend to Quarter 3	Externally funded	Budget remaining	Comments
On-going projects					
202003 Community Project Grant Scheme	29,531	10,000		19,531	
202004 Village Hall Grant Scheme	31,008	0		31,008	
203002 Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities	306,728	0		306,728	
203057 Affordable Housing	350,000	0		350,000	
203067 Tenants Incentive Schemes	15,000	3,000		12,000	
203092 Guildhall Public Toilets	23,340	5,637		17,703	Further expenditure will occur in Quarter 4 of 2013/14
203119 Waste Management Project Set Up Costs	27,402	3,843		23,559	Half of this budget will be required in 2013/14 to purchase new waste containers and the rest will be requested to be rolled forward into 2014/15
203123 New Web Site	10,143	3,500		6,643	This budget will be spent in full by the end of the year
203124 Lync	23,770	0		23,770	Spend will occur in Quarter 4 and the budget will be fully spent by the end of the year
203182 Alder Road, Bishopsmead Flood Alleviation	2,000	0		2,000	
203400 Tamar Valley (no budget - externally funded)	0	15,410	15,410	0	
203220 Members ICT	1,996	0		1,996	
209000 Improvement Grants (PSRG's and DFG's)	607,909	275,658		332,251	
203125 Old Mill Site	25,000	0		25,000	
Contingency budget for unexpected items	26,173	0		26,173	
Total	1,480,000	317,048	15,410	1,178,362	
CAPITAL FUNDING					
Capital Receipts Reserve	1,055,000				
Disabled Facilities Grant	178,000				
New Homes Bonus	205,000				
Minimum Revenue Provision funding	42,000				
Total Capital Resources	1,480,000				

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AGENDA
ITEM
6

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA
ITEM
6

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Resources
DATE	28 January 2014
REPORT TITLE	Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2014/15 to 2017/18
Report of	Head of Finance & Audit and Chief Accountant
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report: To provide an updated forecast of the budget situation for the year 2014/15 and an updated forecast for the four years to 2017/2018. The forecast is intended to provide a framework within which decisions can be made regarding the future service provision and council tax levels whilst building an approach that guarantees West Devon Borough Council's longer term viability.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The main points arising from this report are:

- The gap for 2014/15 is £304,413 (if Council Tax is increased by 1.9%) or £334,697 (if Council Tax is frozen)
- The Government settlement was modestly better than anticipated due to the recognition that sparsely populated rural authorities, such as West Devon, are currently underfunded compared to urban authorities. This added approximately £50,000 to the base budget.
- The Government funding in 2013/14 was £3.649 million and this is being reduced to £3.168 million which is a reduction of £481,000 (13.2%). In 2015/16 there is a further reduction of £488,000 (15.4%) to £2.68 million
- Unearmarked revenue reserves were agreed by Council to be maintained at a level of over £750,000. The Council is predicted to have £970,000 of reserves remaining, even after allocating £200,000 of reserves for the Transformation Programme (T18) investment
- In order to balance the budget for 2014/15 it is proposed to:
 - secure savings of £381,000 as detailed in Appendix A
 - increase Council Tax by 1.9% (7p per week at Band D) or take the Council Tax Freeze Grant and freeze Council Tax for 14/15
 - use more New Homes Bonus, in the short term, to bridge the budget gap

- The Council has made significant progress in also balancing its 2015/16 Budget. In 2016/17 the significant savings from the Transformation Programme (T18) are realised.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are requested to recommend to Council:

- (i) That in order to set a balanced budget for 2014-15:

EITHER*

- an increase in Council Tax of 1.9% is agreed (which equates to a Band D council tax of £204.50 for 2014/15, an increase of £3.81 per year or 7 pence per week). This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £3,923,435 (as shown in Appendix B1)

OR

- A Nil increase in Council Tax is agreed (the Band D Council Tax for West Devon Borough Council will remain at £200.69 for 2014/15) and the Council will accept the Council Tax Freeze Grant of 1% being offered by the Government. This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £3,850,338 (as shown in Appendix B2)

- (ii) That the financial pressures in Appendix A of £350,000 are accepted
- (iii) That the proposed savings of £381,553 set out in Appendix A are adopted
- (iv) That an additional £304,413 (if council tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1) or £334,697 (if council tax is frozen as per Appendix B2) of New Homes Bonus Grant is used to balance the 2014-15 Budget. (This is in addition to the £353,076 of New Homes Bonus already built into the budget assumptions to be used for 2014-15).
- (v) To approve the 2014/15 Capital Programme projects totalling £841,000 as per 7.1.
- (vi) To finance the 2014/15 Capital Programme of £841,000 by using £555,000 of New Homes Bonus funding, £186,000 of Government grant and £100,000 of Capital Resources (as per 7.1).
- (vii) That the Council transfers £18,688 of its allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2014/15 to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park', to be applied for and drawn down by Dartmoor National Park as required. This amount is a one-off payment and the position will be considered annually by the Council as part of the budget process. The condition is that this is for use within the boundaries of the Borough Council only.

* The modelling is based on 0.1% below the threshold for Council Tax increases, which is currently 2%. The final threshold for 2014-15 is expected to be announced after the Financial Settlement has been finalised at the end of January.

- (viii) That the Council Tax Support Grant of £103,138 be passed onto Town and Parish Councils. (This is a reduction of 13.66% from 2013/14) as per 4.3.

- (ix) That the minimum level of the Unearmarked Revenue Reserves be maintained to at least £750,000 as per Section 6.1
- (x) That the level of reserves as set out within this report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted. This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003.

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 On 17 September 2013, the Resources Committee considered a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2014/15 to 2017/18 and resolved that;

Members recommend to Council that;

- The Financial Strategy is accepted as a foundation document for the Council’s budget setting process.
- The Council’s policy should be to set a minimum level of unearmarked general revenue reserves of £750,000

1.2 Members have provided a set of “minded to” views in order to guide the 2014/15 budget process;

- a) On the level of Council Tax Support Grant to be passed on to Parish and Town Councils (being the percentage reduction in the Council’s government funding for 2014/15 – currently over 13%)
- b) To increase Council Tax by 1.9%.

2 GOVERNMENT FUNDING

2.1 Our Adjusted Government Grant in 2013/14 was £3.649 million and this is being reduced to £3.168 million which is a reduction of £481,000 (13.2%). In 2015/16 there is a further reduction of £488,000 (15.4%) to £2.68 million.

2.2 The Finance Settlement (December 2013) has announced the following provisional funding position for the Council for 2014/15 and 2015/16 (figures will be confirmed by the Government around the end of January 2014):-

	2014/15(£m)	2015/16 (£m)
Provisional 14/15 settlement	2.960	2.477
Homelessness Prevention Funding	0.049	0.049
Efficiency Support for Services in Sparse Areas	0.054	0.054
Other items	0.105	0.101
Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)	3.168	2.681

2.3 The finance settlement has given figures for two years, 14/15 and 15/16. In the financial modelling, 15% reductions in the Settlement Funding Assessment have been assumed for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

- 2.4 **Spending Power** - The Minister announced **that local authorities will face an overall reduction in spending power of 2.9%**; and that no local authority would experience a decrease of more than 6.9%. In a similar manner to the previous three years, the government's headlines focus on comparative figures concerning a local authority's "revenue spending power" are shown below:-

Spending Power analysis for WDBC	2013-14	2014-15	%change
Council Tax requirement	3,797,000	3,839,000	+1.1%
Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant (Settlement Funding Assessment)	3,649,000	3,168,000	-13.2%
New Homes Bonus	1,026,000	1,249,000	+21.7%
Other items	265,000	302,000	+14.0%
Total reduction in Spending Power	8,737,000	8,558,000	-2.04%

West Devon's Spending Power figure has decreased by 2.04%. This is less than the 13.2% reduction in Government funding (Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant) due to the fact that Council Tax funding and the New Homes Bonus are included in the Spending Power calculation and these are increasing.

- 2.5 The Government has accepted that based on available evidence, rural areas have been comparatively under-funded. The government has now made an adjustment to recognise the additional costs of delivering services in rural areas and have provided an efficiency support for sparse areas grant worth £9.5 million for the most rural local authorities. For West Devon this represents approximately an additional £50,000 (ESSSA grant – Efficiency Support for Services in Sparse Areas). Unlike previous years, this grant will now form part of the base budget.
- 2.6 In 2014/14, ESSSA will be worth an average of 86p per head in predominantly rural authorities, which is a very small fraction of the gap of £172.68 per head in Government Funded Spending Power between rural and urban authorities.

3. OVERALL POSITION – BUDGET GAP

- 3.1 Appendices B1 and B2 illustrate the overall financial forecast for the forthcoming four years. Although the Council's Net Budget is in the region of £7.8 million, the Gross Expenditure of the Council is around £27 million.

- 3.2 A Summary forecast is shown below of the potential budget situation if all of the budget pressures and the savings and income generation in Appendix A were approved. It also shows the different situation if the Council Tax is increased by 1.9% (shown in Appendix B1) and if the Council Tax Freeze Grant is taken and Council Tax is frozen (shown in Appendix B2).
- 3.3 The report sets out an anticipated budget gap for 2014-2015 of **£304,413** if Council Tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1. The budget gap increases to **£334,697** as per Appendix B2, if the Council Tax freeze grant is taken instead and Council Tax is frozen for 2014/15.

<i>Budget Gap if Council Tax is increased by 1.9% for 14/15</i>	Amount (£)
Net Base Budget for 2014/2015	7,798,625
Total projected income	(7,494,212)
CURRENT BUDGET GAP (Appendix B1)	304,413

<i>Budget Gap if Council Tax is frozen for 14/15</i>	Amount (£)
Net Base Budget for 2014/2015	7,798,625
Total projected income	(7,463,928)
CURRENT BUDGET GAP (Appendix B2)	334,697

- 3.4 The table of New Homes Bonus in 5.2 shows that there is currently £340,718 of New Homes Bonus funding available to fund the Budget Gap for 2014/15. This is the amount before any share of NHB is agreed for the Dartmoor National Park, so any amount agreed for the DNP will reduce the remaining balance of £340,718 by this amount.

4. MEDIUM TERM CHALLENGE AND CLOSING THE 2014/15 BUDGET GAP

- 4.1 The table in **Appendix A** details the budget gaps for the 2014/15 to 2017/18.
- 4.2 **Council Tax Reduction Scheme** – Following Council Tax Benefit being abolished, Council in December 2013 approved the implementation of a cost neutral local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15. This scheme is a discount scheme rather than a state welfare benefit and means that working age claimants will pay a minimum of 20% towards their Council Tax bill. There will be an exception hardship fund to help those claimants experiencing severe financial difficulties.
- 4.3 **Council Tax Support Grant to Town and Parish Councils.** Last year the Government provided £119,453 of Parish Council Tax Support. In 13/14, this has been passed in full to the parish and town councils. However, this grant has now

been aggregated with all Government funding and the latest figures show a reduction of over 13% for 2014/15 (see 2.1). By maintaining the same level of parish grant as 2013/14 the Council would be effectively subsidising by over 13% of this support. The Council is proposing that this reduction will be passed on to the Towns and Parishes and their council tax support grant will be reduced by this amount. Town and Parish Councils have been consulted on this proposal.

- 4.4 **Triennial Pension Revaluation** – The Council's Pension Fund is valued every three years by actuaries. A revaluation was undertaken in March 2013 and the results have now been received. The valuation has resulted in a decrease to the rates the Council is required to pay. An estimate of £30,000 savings has been built into the 2014/15 budget. The financial effect of the T18 Transformation Programme has been factored into the business case but the actual effect will only be clarified as the programme proceeds.
- 4.5 **Price Inflation** – To be able to produce a meaningful resource plan, a number of assumptions have to be made regarding prices. Consumer Price Index (CPI) in November 2013 was 2.1% (Retail Price Index was 2.6%). A budget pressure of £15,000 has been included within Appendix A to allow for inflation on expenditure, in particular, premises costs.
- 4.6 **Parish contributions to public conveniences** – A cost pressure of £25,000 has been included to realign the public conveniences budget to be in line with the expected income from parishes. This is due to the budget from previous year's budget setting being over optimistic.
- 4.7 **Swimming Pool contract inflation** – The swimming pool contract was renegotiated in 2013 and the management fee reduced by £22,000. Indexation will not be applied until 1st April 2014.
- 4.8 **Walk and Talk Programme** – Devon County Council are looking to continue the Health Walks scheme across Devon for the next 3 years, concentrating on need and areas of deficiency, which will be good news in terms of service delivery in West Devon. Devon County Council are looking for a single lead provider through a tender process which they hope to have in place by May/June 2014. The existing budget of £2,700 is sufficient to cover this timescale and no cost pressure would be required.
- 4.9 **Pay Inflation** – For budgeting purposes the Council has modelled a 1% pay offer for 2014/15. This offer is currently being negotiated with the unions. An estimate of £50,000 has been included in Appendix A as a cost pressure.
- 4.10 **Housing Benefit Administration subsidy** – On 13 November 2013, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) issued HB circular S9/2013 and the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a Revised Council Tax policy information note. These provided details of the distribution of subsidy grant in 2014/15, for what had previously been housing benefit/council tax benefit administration subsidy. A budget pressure of £40,000 has been included within Appendix A for this reduction.

4.11 **Business Rates** – The Government introduced the Business Rates Retention Scheme on the 1 April 2013. This system enables the retention of a proportion of the business rates revenue generated in a local area by the relevant local authorities. Business rates now form a major element of the local government finance funding. Current indications are that the income from business rates may exceed the Government “baseline” grant figure. Although the system carries with it a significant risk of volatility, it is considered appropriate to include an additional £50,000 in the forecast for each financial year.

4.12 **Devonwide Business Rates Pool** – A report was presented to Council on 17 December 2013 regarding the Devonwide Business Rates pool. A decision was made under delegated authority by the Head of Finance and Audit, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Senior Management Team to remain in the Pool for 2014/15.

The membership of the Devon pool consists of the eight District Councils in Devon and Devon County Council, Torbay Unitary and Plymouth Unitary, with Plymouth acting as the Lead Authority for the pool. Pooling gains have not been budgeted for by the Council in 2014/15 due to the current level of uncertainty.

4.13 **Transformation Programme (T18)** - Because of the unprecedented scale of financial challenges demonstrated in this report, Members have been considering a Transformation Programme (T18) which is viewed as the primary driver to achieve the savings required over the next few years. This is a joint transformation programme with South Hams District Council with whom the Council has been sharing services with since 2007.

Both Councils have now made the decision to proceed with the programme (Council 4 November 2013) and the major financial implication the Council has agreed to, is to “Approve an investment budget of £1.9 million for the T18 Programme (WDBC’s share of the overall budget of £4.85 million), to be released at three key milestones, to deliver annual recurring revenue savings of £1.3 million (WDBC’s share of the savings of £3.8 million)”.

The Programme will be self-financing from the end of year 2 (2015/16) onwards. The payback period for the Programme is 2 years. The costs have been calculated to ensure that each Council pays its own share.

4.14 The business case demonstrated that T18 can deliver a major contribution to the budget gap faced by the Council to 2018. Making reasonable assumptions, based on current knowledge, the results from this are included in the financial model seen in Appendix A.

4.15 **Interim arrangements for the Chief Executive** – The Council will temporarily not be replacing the shared Chief Executive who retires in March. Instead, West Devon and South Hams will be piloting an executive director model of working which is already in use in some single authorities nationally but not currently used by councils in a shared services arrangement. This is a radical new management structure. The move will save up to £80,000 between the two

Councils over a full year. No savings have been built into the 2014/15 budget as this is an interim measure.

COUNCIL TAX

- 4.16 **Council Tax** – The last two years' Council Tax is detailed below.

	2012/13	2013/14
DCC	1,116.36	1,116.36
WDBC	196.95	200.69
Police	159.73	162.92
Fire	73.92	75.39
Parishes & Towns	54.24	55.62
	1,601.20	1,610.98

- 4.17 In Appendix B1, a Council Tax increase of 1.9% for 2014/15 is assumed. This would result in the West Devon element increasing to £204.50. This would be an increase of £3.81 per year.

- 4.18 In Appendix B2, it is assumed that the Council will freeze Council Tax and the West Devon element of the Council Tax will remain at £200.69 for 2014/15.

- 4.19 **Council Tax Freeze Grant** - On 15 January the Government issued the guidance for the Council Tax Freeze Grant Scheme for 2014-15. The key aspects will be:-

(i) It will be voluntary

(ii) Any authority which freezes or reduces their basic amount of council tax in 2014/15 will be eligible to receive the grant (equivalent to a 1% of the basic amount of council tax – this is £42,813 for West Devon)

(iii) The grant for the 2014-15 freeze will be paid to authorities in the financial years 2014-15 and 2015-16 – so if an authority freezes in 2014-15, it will also receive a grant in 2015-16 in respect of the freeze decision taken in 2014-15

(iv) Ministers have agreed that the funding for 2014-15 (including 2015-16) freeze grant **should** be built into the spending review baseline. This gives as much certainty as possible at this stage that the extra funding for freezing council tax will remain available.

- 4.20 **Council Tax Referendum limit** - The Minister has stated that the council tax referendum threshold principles will be announced separately in the New Year. However it is thought that this may not be until the end of January or early February. The government has indicated that it is open to representations on how these will operate and **that the government is particularly open to suggestions that some lower threshold be applied to all or some categories of authorities**. In 2013/14 the referendum threshold was 2% and Town and Parish Councils were not subject to the referendum threshold. It is not known whether the referendum limit in 2014/15 will apply to Town and Parish Councils.

- 4.21 In September 2013, Members provided a set of “minded to” views in order to guide the 2014/15 budget process and one of these views was that Members were minded to increase the level of the West Devon element of the Council Tax by 1.9% for 14/15.

5. NEW HOMES BONUS (NHB)

- 5.1 The table below shows an estimate of New Homes Bonus for the next five years. The Chancellor has confirmed in December that no top-slice will now apply from 2015/16 onwards, following responses to the Government consultation.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
2011/12	323,920	323,920	323,920	323,920	323,920	
2012/13	568,622	568,622	568,622	568,622	568,622	568,622
2013/14		133,255	133,255	133,255	133,255	133,255
2014/15			222,997	222,997	222,997	222,997
2015/16 – estimated 184 properties				210,631	210,631	210,631
2016/17 – estimated 329 properties					376,617	376,617
2017/18 – estimated 374 properties						428,130
Forecast NHB	892,542	1,025,797	1,248,794	1,459,425	1,836,042	1,940,252

5.2 NEW HOME BONUS (NHB) – PROPOSED USE OF NHB

The table below shows the proposed use of New Homes Bonus:

	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Amount receivable	892,542	1,025,797	1,248,794	1,459,425	1,836,042	1,940,252
Less:						
T18 allocation (Council 4 th Nov)		(400,000)				
To fund current Revenue Budget	(200,000)	(353,076)	(353,076)	(353,076)	(353,076)	(353,076)
Dartmoor National	(40,250)	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA

Park (as per 5.3)						
To fund the Capital Programme (as per 7.1)	(600,000)	(205,000)	(555,000)	(462,000)	(462,000)	(462,000)
Balance remaining (not committed)	52,292	67,721	340,718	644,349	1,020,966	1,125,176
Memorandum						
Amount of NHB needed to fund Budget Gap cumulatively, if Council Tax is increased by 1.9% (Appendix B1)	Nil	Nil	304,413	665,970	243,857	458,460
Amount of NHB needed to fund Budget Gap cumulatively, if Council Tax is frozen (Appendix B2)	Nil	Nil	334,697	729,143	311,508	530,450
Dartmoor National Park provisional allocations see 5.3	12,912	5,776	20,362	8,714	26,981	111,227

5.3 **Dartmoor National Park (DNP)** – DNP have requested a share of the New Homes Bonus to reflect new homes delivered within the park. DNP would like NHB money to be used to support a local community fund and, for example, joint work through the rural housing enabler. The New Homes Bonus legislation says that Councils are expected to negotiate with National Park Authorities to recognise their role as the sole local planning authority for their area in granting planning permissions and that the Councils should reach an agreement and split the funding from NHB at a locally determined rate.

It is suggested that the following system is put in place:-

- A one off payment is agreed on an annual basis based on actual completions.
- The allocation received by DNP is spent only within those parishes falling within the boundaries of the Borough Council.
- The agreed sum is transferred to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park' and the DNP make applications to draw down funds as required in line with the process agreed for that fund.

On this basis the share of NHB due for DNP based on completed properties is summarised below:

It is recommended that £18,688 (£12,912 + £5,776) representing the entitlement for 2012/13 and 2013/14 is paid from the Council's 2014/15 NHB allocation.

	Payable for 12/13	Payable for 13/14	Forecast for 14/15	Forecast for 15/16	Forecast for 16/17	Forecast for 17/18	Forecast for 18/19
Share of award	12,912	5,776	20,362	8,714	26,981	111,227	92,870

6. EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES

6.1 The Council's policy is to retain Unearmarked Revenue Reserves of £750,000.

The Unearmarked General Fund Revenue Reserve balance at 31st March 2013 was £1,030,000 as per the Final Accounts for 2012-13. However, there are current commitments against this balance as shown below:-

The budget monitoring report (another item on this Agenda) predicts the under spend at the end of the financial year, to be £140,000. The table below shows that the level of general reserves would then stand at £970,000.

6.2

	£
General Reserves balance as at 31 st March 2013	1,030,000
Use of Reserves for T18 Investment (Report to Council 4 th November 2013)	(200,000)
Predicted underspend for 13/14 – See Revenue Budget Monitoring report also on this agenda	140,000
Predicted balance of reserves to carry forward	970,000

6.3 **Specific Earmarked Reserves** The level and commitments for each reserve are kept under review each year to make sure the uncommitted balance is adequate for its purpose. The Earmarked Reserves were reviewed as part of the “budget scouring” exercise in early 2013. A schedule of Earmarked Reserves is attached to the budget monitoring report at Appendix A (Item 5 on this Agenda).

7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 to 2017/18

7.1 The table below shows the proposed Capital Programme for 2014/15 and projected figures to 2017/18:

	2014/2015	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Tenants Incentive Scheme (TIS)	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Village Halls and Community Projects	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000
Affordable Housing (see Note 1)	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Estates Management (see Note 2)	40,000			

T18 Investment (as per Council 4 Nov 13)	100,000	100,000	-	-
Disabled Facilities Grants (see Note 3)	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	841,000	801,000	701,000	701,000
Suggested method of funding the Capital Programme:				
Government Grant funding towards Disabled Facilities Grants (see Note 3)	(186,000)	(239,000)	(239,000)	(239,000)
Less anticipated slippage on the capital programme (Capital resources)	(100,000)	(100,000)	-	-
Potential funding from New Homes Bonus (Required to fund the Capital Programme)	555,000	462,000	462,000	462,000

Note 1 - The Council is working towards becoming self funding for Affordable Housing from commuted sum receipts (financial contributions from developers). It is anticipated that there could be sufficient commuted sums within the next two years not to require any additional capital contributions. In the above table allocations of £200K have been made for the next four years and the situation will be reviewed to ensure we have accumulated sufficient receipts to negate the need for the allocations in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Note 2 – An amount of £40,000 is required for capital improvements for the Council's employment estates programme.

Note 3 – From 2015/16, the funding for Disabled Facilities Grants will be from the Better Care Fund held by Devon County Council and funding will be passported to District Councils. Provisional allocations for 15/16 show an increase in contributions to £239,000.

8. CONCLUSION AND OPTIONS TO CLOSE THE BUDGET GAP

8.1 As previously concluded, the Council can remain financially viable through careful financial management and a focus on the Transformation Programme. This is not to understate the considerable financial pressures that the Council will face through the continuing reductions in Government Funding.

8.2 The Council's well above average performance in terms of New Homes Bonus provides an essential 'stop gap' in funding, which allows the Council to deliver significant transformation savings via a well managed programme of change which aims to minimise any reductions to services.

8.3 The strategy for closing the 2014/15 budget gap will be to use New Homes Bonus.

	Budget Gap for 2014/2015
If Council Tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1	£304,413
If Council Tax is frozen and the Freeze Grant is taken as per Appendix B2	£334,697

8.4 The table of New Homes Bonus in 5.2 shows that there is currently **£340,718** of New Homes Bonus funding available to fund the Budget Gap for 2014/15. This is the amount before any share of NHB is agreed for the Dartmoor National Park, so any amount agreed for the DNP will reduce the remaining balance of £340,718 by this amount.

8.5 **The strategy for closing the 2015/16 budget gap of between £362,000 to £394,000**, will be to use New Homes Bonus, income generation, growth of business rates income and the temporary use of reserves, in light of the significant T18 savings which would be delivered in 2016/17.

8.6 As shown in 5.2, there is £644,349 of New Homes Bonus available in 2015/16. Between £304,000 and £334,000 of this will be needed to further increase the amount of NHB required to fund the 2014/15 Budget Gap. The remainder of between £340,000 and £310,000 would be available to fund the 2015/16 Budget Gap of between £362,000 to £394,000. The modelling shows that the Council is in a good position to balance its 2015-16 Budget, although any amounts of NHB agreed for the Dartmoor National Park will reduce the £644,349 available.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 In accordance with the Council's Delegation Scheme, the Resources Committee is responsible for recommending to Council the budgetary framework. The Council is required to adopt the revenue budget.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	A balanced budget underpins the Council's capacity to delivers its corporate priorities.
Statutory powers:	Local Government Act 1972, Section 151
Considerations of equality and human rights:	A 360 degree assessment of the equality implications has been carried out and is available on request.
Biodiversity considerations:	None directly related to this report.
Sustainability considerations:	None directly related to this report.

Crime and disorder implications:	None directly related to this report.
Background papers:	Report to Resources Committee 10 December 2013 – Budget Update for 2014/15 to 2017/18 Council 4 November 2013 – Transformation Programme 2018 Resources Committee 17 September 2013 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18
Appendices attached:	Appendix A – Budget Pressures and Savings for the five years Appendix B1 (Council Tax Increase of 1.9% for 2014-15 assumed) – Five Year Cumulative Budget Gap Appendix B2 (Council Tax Freeze for 14/15 assumed) – Five Year Cumulative Budget Gap

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Robustness of medium term financial strategy and service blue-prints	Not achieving financial savings as anticipated	5+	3	15	↔	Corporate engagement in the development of the medium term financial strategy.	H of Finance & Audit
		External change to the national economic environment which may impact on our funding expectations. Implications of changes to the funding of local government through locally collected business rates and revenue support grant. Effect of the localisation of council tax. Achieving anticipated income targets in the current financial climate.					Service commitment to business planning processes. Robust horizon scanning to monitor changes in Government policy. The Council responded to the consultation on the localisation of business rates and will carry out regular monitoring during the financial year to ascertain the effect of the new scheme on the Council's finances. (see Risk No. 2 below) Monitoring of corporate income streams and revenue budgets.	Corporate Director (TW) Corporate Director (AR) H of F&A H of F&A
2	Income from Business Rates	The figures for income from Business Rates are best estimates at this date (the NNDR1 return forecasts Business Rates for the forthcoming year). Predictions could vary by £100,000. The figures are subject to	5	3	15	↔	The position will be monitored by the Head of Finance and Audit. The quarterly Revenue Budget Monitoring reports will monitor Business Rates income against projections. Any variances will be highlighted to Members at an early stage. The Council is part of a Devonwide	H of F&A

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
		volatility both from business rating appeals and the economic climate.					Pooling arrangement for business rates.	
3	Setting a lawful budget	Failure of the Council to set a lawful budget	5	1	5	↔	The Budget is compiled in accordance with best practice guidelines issued by CIPFA and the Government. The final budget report includes an assessment from the Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of the Council's reserves and the robustness of the estimates made. The budget process is laid down in the Council's Constitution. Resources Committee and Council meetings are timetabled to meet the Statutory deadlines for setting the Council Tax.	Head of Finance and Audit
4	Corporate Priorities	Failure to target budgets to service priorities	5	3	15	↔	Service priorities will be reviewed. Budget reductions include a section on their impact on council priorities and a risk assessment. Adequate levels of appropriately trained staff. Thorough planning and monthly monitoring of performance to management, quarterly to the Resources Committee.	Head of Finance and Audit

BUDGET PRESSURES AND SAVINGS

APPENDIX A

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

	BASE 2013/14 £	Yr1 2014/15 £	Yr2 2015/16 £	Yr3 2016/17 £	Yr4 2017/18 £
BUDGET PRESSURES					
Triennial Pension revaluation	0	0	40,000	20,000	20,000
Inflation on the waste collection, recycling and cleansing contract (estimate)	40,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Inflation on the street cleaning and public conveniences	0	20,000	0	0	0
Parish contribution to Public Conveniences	0	25,000	0	0	0
Inflation on the swimming pool contract (profiled fee)	30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Investment Income	0	5,000	0	0	0
Inflation on goods and services	50,000	15,000	15,000	60,000	60,000
Reduction in Housing Benefit administration subsidy	15,000	40,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Civil Parking Enforcement	0	30,000	0	0	0
Increase in salaries - increments and pay and grading	50,000	75,000	0	0	0
Increase in salaries - pay increase at 1%	50,000	50,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Actuarial strain payments	60,000	0	0	0	0
Leisure Centres - increase in the provision for repairs and maintenance	30,000	0	0	0	0
Subsidy changes from the replacement of Council Tax Benefit with Council Tax Support	45,930	0	0	0	0
Reduction in investment income	20,000	0	0	0	0
Reduction in car parking income	30,000	0	0	0	0
Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project Legacy Plan	15,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL IDENTIFIED BUDGET PRESSURES	435,930	350,000	200,000	225,000	225,000
SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION IDENTIFIED					
Additional income from estate management	10,000	0	0	0	0
Additional planning fee income	30,000	0	0	0	0
Reduction in the economy service	0	20,000	0	0	0
IT savings - software, maintenance & licensing	22,000	0	0	0	0
Grounds Maintenance saving	15,000	15,000	0	0	0
Savings on TIC	15,000	50,000	0	0	0
Actuarial revaluation savings	0	30,000	0	0	0
Savings on audit fees	15,000	0	0	0	0
Savings on Ring and Ride Scheme	0	3,000	0	0	0
Reduction in provision for Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project Legacy Plan	0	6,000	9,000	0	0
Discretionary Rate Relief	0	54,910	0	0	0
Budget Scouring Savings (see Appendix B on the Budget Monitoring report on this agenda)	0	199,643	0	0	0
Savings on Past Pension Strain	0	0	120,000	0	0
Other savings identified	24,000	3,000	0	0	0
Transformation Programme savings from 2015/2016 (Council 4 November 2013)	0	0	80,000	930,000	230,000
TOTAL SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION	131,000	381,553	209,000	930,000	230,000

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FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Line No.		Base 2013/14 £	Yr1 2014/15 £	Yr2 2015/16 £	Yr3 2016/17 £	Yr4 2017/18 £
	B1 - Council Tax is increased by 1.9% for 2014-15					
1	Base budget brought forward (line 10)	7,529,105	7,830,178	7,494,212	7,123,656	6,840,768
2	Budget pressures (as per Appendix A)	435,930	350,000	200,000	225,000	225,000
3	Savings already identified (as per Appendix A)	(131,000)	(381,553)	(209,000)	(930,000)	(230,000)
	Council Tax Support - Parish element	119,453				
	Homelessness Prevention - funded by a specific grant	50,000				
	Further Savings Identified	(173,310)				
4	Projected Net Expenditure:	7,830,178	7,798,625	7,485,212	6,418,656	6,835,768
5	Localised Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant (SFA - see 2.2)	3,604,119	3,167,701	2,680,836	2,278,711	1,936,904
6	Council Tax income - Council Tax increase of 1.9% has been modelled for 2014-15 and future years (TaxBase in 14/15 = 19,185.50)	3,797,214	3,923,435	4,039,744	4,158,981	4,281,186
7	Collection Fund surplus	75,769	0	0	0	0
8	Business Rates additional income		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
9	Funding from New Homes Bonus	353,076	353,076	353,076	353,076	353,076
10	Total Projected Income	7,830,178	7,494,212	7,123,656	6,840,768	6,621,166
	Budget gap per year					
12	(Projected Expenditure line 4 - Projected Income line 10)	0	304,413	361,556	-422,112	214,602

Cumulative Budget Gap (if savings are made as predicted in the Transformation Programme)

0 304,413 665,970 243,857 458,460

An assumption of an additional 200 Band D equivalent properties per year has been included in the TaxBase and modelling above

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FINANCIAL STRATEGY

APPENDIX B2

Line No.		Base 2013/14 £	Yr1 2014/15 £	Yr2 2015/16 £	Yr3 2016/17 £	Yr4 2017/18 £
<u>B2 - Council Tax is frozen for 2014-15</u>						
1	Base budget brought forward (line 10)	7,529,105	7,830,178	7,463,928	7,060,482	6,773,116
2	Budget pressures (as per Appendix A)	435,930	350,000	200,000	225,000	225,000
3	Savings already identified (as per Appendix A)	(131,000)	(381,553)	(209,000)	(930,000)	(230,000)
	Council Tax Support - Parish element	119,453				
	Homelessness Prevention - funded by a specific grant	50,000				
	Further Savings Identified	(173,310)				
4	Projected Net Expenditure:	7,830,178	7,798,625	7,454,928	6,355,482	6,768,116
6	Localised Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant (SFA - see 2.2)	3,604,119	3,167,701	2,680,836	2,278,711	1,936,904
7	Council Tax income - A Council Tax freeze for 2014-15 has been modelled with an assumption of a 1% freeze grant in 15/16 also and 1.9% increase thereafter in 16/17 and 17/18 (Taxbase 14/15 = 19,185.50)	3,797,214	3,850,338	3,890,476	4,005,235	4,123,100
	Council Tax Freeze taken for 14/15 and built into the baseline thereafter		42,813	42,813	42,813	42,813
	Council Tax Freeze taken for 15/16 and built into the baseline thereafter			43,281	43,281	43,281
8	Collection Fund surplus	75,769	0	0	0	0
9	Business Rates additional income		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
10	Funding from New Homes Bonus	353,076	353,076	353,076	353,076	353,076
11	Total Projected Income	7,830,178	7,463,928	7,060,482	6,773,116	6,549,174
	Budget gap per year					
12	(Projected Expenditure line 4 - Projected Income line 11)	0	334,697	394,446	-417,635	218,942

Page 41

Cumulative Budget Gap (if savings are made as predicted in the Transformation Programme)	0	334,697	729,143	311,508	530,450
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An assumption of an additional 200 Band D equivalent properties per year has been included in the TaxBase and modelling above

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

EXEMPT INFORMATION – Paragraph 2 – Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (applies to Appendix A only).

AGENDA
ITEM

7

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA
ITEM

7

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Resources Committee
DATE	28 January 2014
REPORT TITLE	Authorisation for RIPA applications to Magistrates Court
Report of	Head of Customer Services and ICT
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

The purpose of the report is to advise members of the mandatory change in procedure in authorising covert investigation techniques in pursuance of potential investigations.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Resources Committee recommends to Council that the nominated officers listed in (exempt) Appendix A are authorised to represent the Council in applying for judicial approval to use covert techniques in the pursuance of a potential investigation

Officer contact: Darren.Cole@swdevon.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 In the course of enforcement work, it is sometimes necessary for West Devon Borough Council to carry out surveillance to fulfill our statutory duties. Some examples of when covert surveillance is used are as follows:

- Observe individual(s) who are suspected of benefit fraud
- For illegal fly-tipping investigations which may also require the covert use of CCTV
- Enforcement action relating to Planning restrictions.

- 1.2 Under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) Local Authorities were empowered to authorise their own covert operations provided the authorising officer was of a sufficiently senior level and had undergone the necessary training to understand what was being proposed, and why it was necessary and proportional to the investigation.
- 1.3 On 01/11/2012 changes to this procedure were introduced by sections 37 and 38 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- 1.4 The new procedure from 01/11/2012 is that, for covert operations to be appropriate, the offence under investigation has to be potentially punishable by a 6 month or more term in prison and the authorisation of the covert operations has to have judicial approval prior to their use. The only exception to this is offences relating to the underage sale of alcohol and tobacco.
- 1.5 Guidance from the Home Office has stated that it is good practise that the nominated officer attending court to apply for judicial approval is the same officer who will be pursuing the investigation and using the covert techniques. The reason for this is that the officer will have a good understanding of the case and the reasoning behind the need to use covert investigation techniques.
- 1.6 Local Authority investigators do not automatically have the right to appear in court on behalf of the council and so need to have member approval under section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972 in order to represent the LA in court.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 In the interim period since the change in procedure came into effect on 1st November 2012 the council's solicitor has represented the Council in court however it is considered this may present a conflict of interest should this practise continue in the long term. It is considered that the RIPA application is part of the investigation process and therefore should be distinct from the legal evaluation and final decision making process in determining whether the case should proceed to prosecution.
- 2.2 Over the past 12 months the Council has made 1 application to the Magistrates Court for benefit fraud purposes.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The requirement for members to approve nominating designated officers to attend magistrates court to apply for judicial approval to use covert investigation techniques in pursuance of potential fraudulent investigations is governed by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Protection of Freedom Act 2012.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications related to these changes apart from a more efficient use of the Corporate Solicitors time.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	All
Considerations of equality and human rights:	These are considered on a case by case basis in considering whether covert surveillance is necessary and appropriate
Biodiversity considerations:	None
Sustainability considerations:	None
Crime and disorder implications:	These are considered on a case by case basis in considering whether covert surveillance is necessary and appropriate
Background papers:	Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 – changes to provisions under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)
Appendices attached:	(Exempt) Appendix A – List of Officers to be authorised

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Adherence to Legislation	Breach of Mandatory Regulations. Any evidence collected through covert surveillance would be inadmissible as evidence	4	2	8	↑	Appropriate officers nominated and authorised to represent the Council at court to request permission to implement covert operations to investigate potential fraudulent behaviour	Head of ICT & Customer Services

Page 46

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NAME OF COMMITTEE	Resources Committee
DATE	28 January 2014
REPORT TITLE	East of Okehampton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Report of	Strategic Planning Officer
WARDS AFFECTED	All Okehampton wards

Summary of report:

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared to provide guidance for the development of the allocated development sites to the east of Okehampton. Members of the public, development industry and statutory consultees were invited to comment on a draft version of the SPD for a statutory four week consultation period.

Members are asked to adopt the SPD to use as a material planning consideration when determining applications for development on the allocated sites to the east of Okehampton.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial costs arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

- Members adopt the *East of Okehampton Masterplan SPD* to use as a material planning consideration when determining applications for development on the allocated sites to the east of Okehampton.
- Any inconsequential changes considered necessary to the SPD are delegated to the Head of Planning, Economy and Community in consultation with the Chairman of Resources Committee.

Officer contact:

Rebecca Black
Strategic Planning Officer
01822 813556 | rjblack@westdevon.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's Adopted Core Strategy (2011) allocates two areas of land for development to the east of Okehampton. These are referenced in the Core Strategy as SP22A and SP22B. Maps showing the locations of these sites are included within the Masterplan in Appendix A. The sites are allocated for a mix of uses, including housing, community and education facilities, open space, and employment units.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy allocations sit either side of an existing Local Plan allocation (ED2) which was designated for employment in the 2005 saved Local Plan policies. This area of land remains largely undeveloped except for the Okehampton Business Centre. It is important to ensure that this development is brought forward in an effective manner on this site and as such it has been included within the masterplan.
- 1.3 During the preparation of the Core Strategy, it was agreed to prepare a masterplan for the development of the allocated sites to ensure that a high quality development could be achieved. The production of a masterplan was therefore included as a policy requirement under Strategic Policy 22 of the Core Strategy which states that *"the development of land to the east of Okehampton should be developed in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan"*.
- 1.4 During the summer 2013, Officers prepared a draft version of the East of Okehampton Masterplan SPD. The masterplan sets out the principles for the overall development and design of the allocated sites, building on the work of specialist design consultants undertaken in 2011 and the aspirations of the community.
- 1.5 The Resources Committee agreed at a meeting on the 17th September 2013 to publish the draft SPD for a four week consultation period. The consultation ran from 26th September to 25th October 2013. 43 responses were received from a range of individuals and organisations.
- 1.6 Following the consultation, a final version of the document has been prepared. This is provided in Appendix A and it retains its own pagination. This document has been prepared in a "tracked changes" version which shows all of the amendments that have been made as a result of the consultation. The tracked changes version shows amendments as follows:
- Deleted text – ~~this text has been deleted~~
 - Additional text – this text has been added

Please note that the tracked changes are shown for the purposes of the Committee to allow Members to see where changes have been made. Once the amendments have been agreed by Committee and the document adopted, the tracked changes will no longer be shown.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 The consultation has generated a number of responses which have been summarised and recorded in the Statement of Consultation (Appendix B) which is available to view on the Council's website (<http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/3621/East-of-Okehampton-Masterplan>). This includes the changes that the Council is proposing to make to the final version of the masterplan to respond to concerns raised where it is appropriate to do so.

2.2 The main issues raised include:

- The principle and scale of development proposed. However, this is established in Core Strategy Strategic Policy SP22 and cannot be amended through the masterplan;
- The timing of when road and primary education infrastructure will be provided;
- Overall viability of new development and associated infrastructure;
- Concerns relating to increased traffic in the town and how this would be managed.

2.3 The Council has taken into account all of the responses and, subject to the changes recommended in Appendices A and B, the masterplan is considered to be an appropriate and sufficiently flexible framework to enable the development of the allocated sites to the east of Okehampton.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The masterplan is a policy requirement of the Council's adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document. It is therefore essential that the masterplan is prepared in order for the development sites to the east of Okehampton to come forward and achieve key housing, employment and local facilities in the town.

3.2 The masterplan has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework which places a strong emphasis on high quality design, stating that: *"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people"*.

3.3 The *"Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012"* set out the procedures which govern the process of preparing a Supplementary Planning Document. This SPD has been prepared in conformity with these regulations.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community Life; Housing; Environment; Economy
Statutory powers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 • National Planning Policy Framework • Adopted Core Strategy 2011
Considerations of equality and human rights:	The masterplan seeks to ensure that all members of the community are equally able to enjoy and use the development and there are no aspects which have any direct impacts on human rights.
Biodiversity considerations:	The masterplan makes provision to conserve and enhance biodiversity through promoting the protection of key landscapes, the retention of boundaries, the use of sustainable urban drainage systems and the promotion of green corridors.
Sustainability considerations:	The masterplan sets out a framework to deliver a large-scale development project in a sustainable manner. The plan seeks to deliver a range of objectively identified needs. These will be of benefit to both existing and future residents of Okehampton, Okehampton Hamlets and the surrounding area.
Crime and disorder implications:	The masterplan promotes options to design out crime and enhance opportunities for natural surveillance.
Background papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Draft East of Okehampton Masterplan SPD – Consultation Version</i> - <i>East of Okehampton Design Brief (October 2012)</i>
Appendices attached:	<p>Appendix A: <i>East of Okehampton Masterplan SPD</i></p> <p>Appendix B: <i>Statement of Consultation (available on web site)</i></p>

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

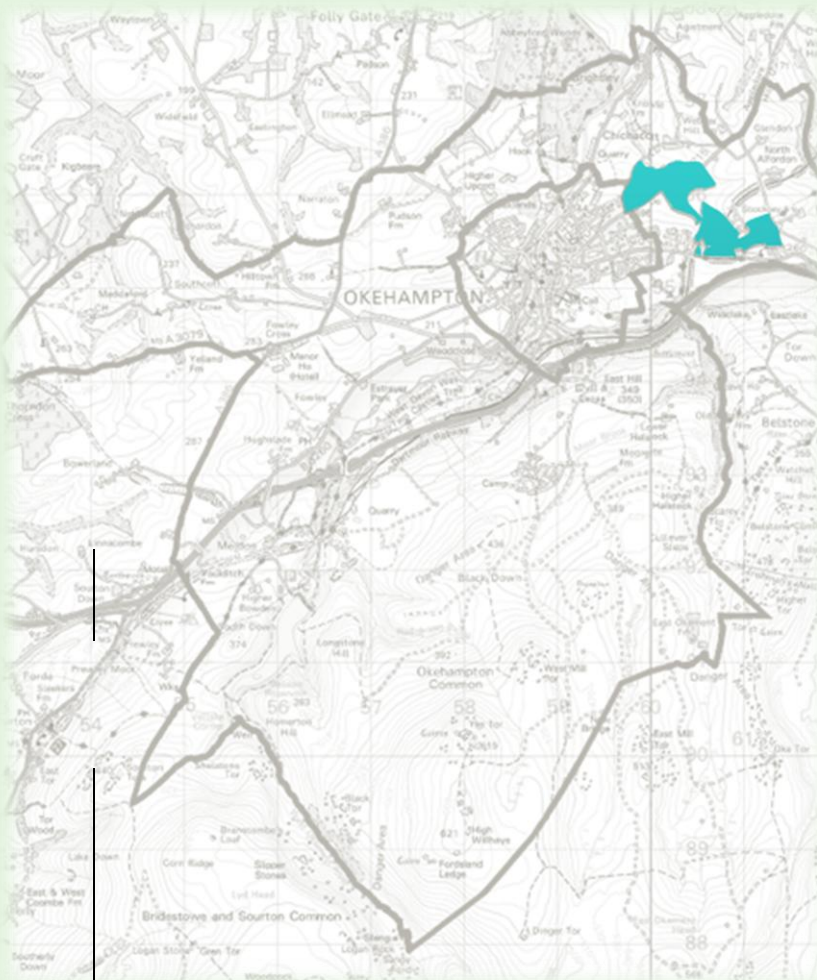
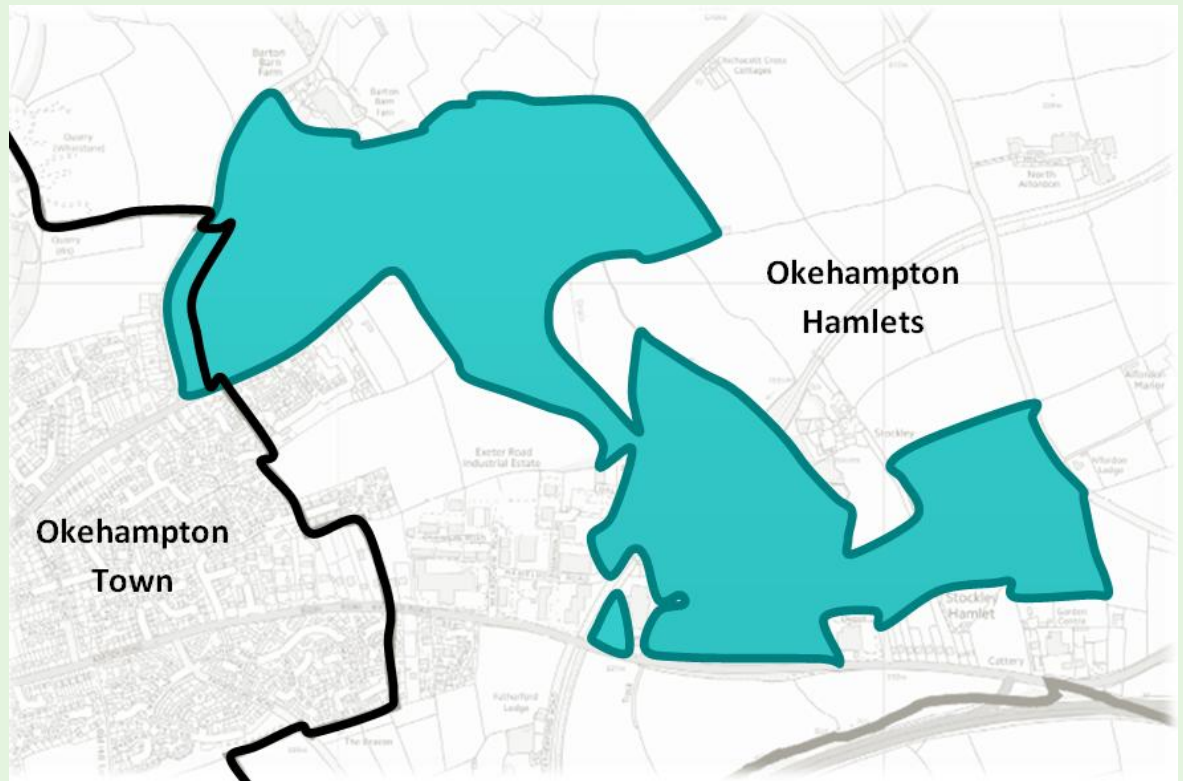
No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	There is no masterplan to support Core Strategy Strategic Policy 22	<p>The masterplan is a policy requirement of the Core Strategy. It requires new development on the allocated sites to be delivered in accordance with it. If the masterplan is not in place, it could lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications for development not in keeping with the Council's and community's aspirations; • A delay in the delivery of housing, employment and other key development and infrastructure needs in the town. 	4	3	12	↑	Adopt the masterplan to use as a material consideration when determining applications on the allocated sites.	Strategic Planning

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West Devon
Borough
Council



West Devon
Borough Council

East of Okehampton
Masterplan

~~Draft~~ Supplementary
Planning Document

~~September 2013~~

January 2014 –

Consultation

Committee version

This document can be made available in large print,
Braille or tape format on request.

~~Consultation Committee~~ version ~~September 2013~~ January 2014

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1. Introduction	Page 5
a. What is a masterplan?	
b. Why are we preparing a masterplan for new development in Okehampton?	
c. What will this masterplan look at?	
d. What is the status of the masterplan and how should it be used?	
e. How can you comment on this masterplan?	
f. Consultation arrangements	
2. Masterplan background	Page 9
a. About Okehampton and the Hamlets	
b. Planning policy context	
c. Environmental designations	
d. <u>Boundaries of the allocation</u>	
3. Priorities for new development	Page 14 3
a. Community engagement	
b. Local council engagement	
c. Infrastructure provider engagement	
4. The allocations	Page 19 18
Parcel 1: Opportunity Okehampton	
Parcel 2: North of Crediton Road	
Parcel 3: South of Crediton Road	
Parcel 4: East of Stockley Valley	
Parcel 5: North of Stockley Hamlet	
5. Design principles	Page 50 45
a. Access and street layout	
- Vehicle	
- footpaths and cycleways	
b. Biodiversity	
c. Boundaries	
d. Broadband connections	
e. Building materials and style	
f. Character areas and development densities	
g. Open space provision	
h. Orientation	
i. Parking	
j. Properties and their usability	
k. Public transport	
l. Site entrances	
m. <u>Sustainable construction</u>	
n. Sustainable energy	

- o. Sustainable Urban Drainage
- p. Street furniture

| 6. Delivering the development

Page ~~7164~~

| 7. Glossary

Page ~~7769~~

| 8. **Next steps**

Page ~~70~~

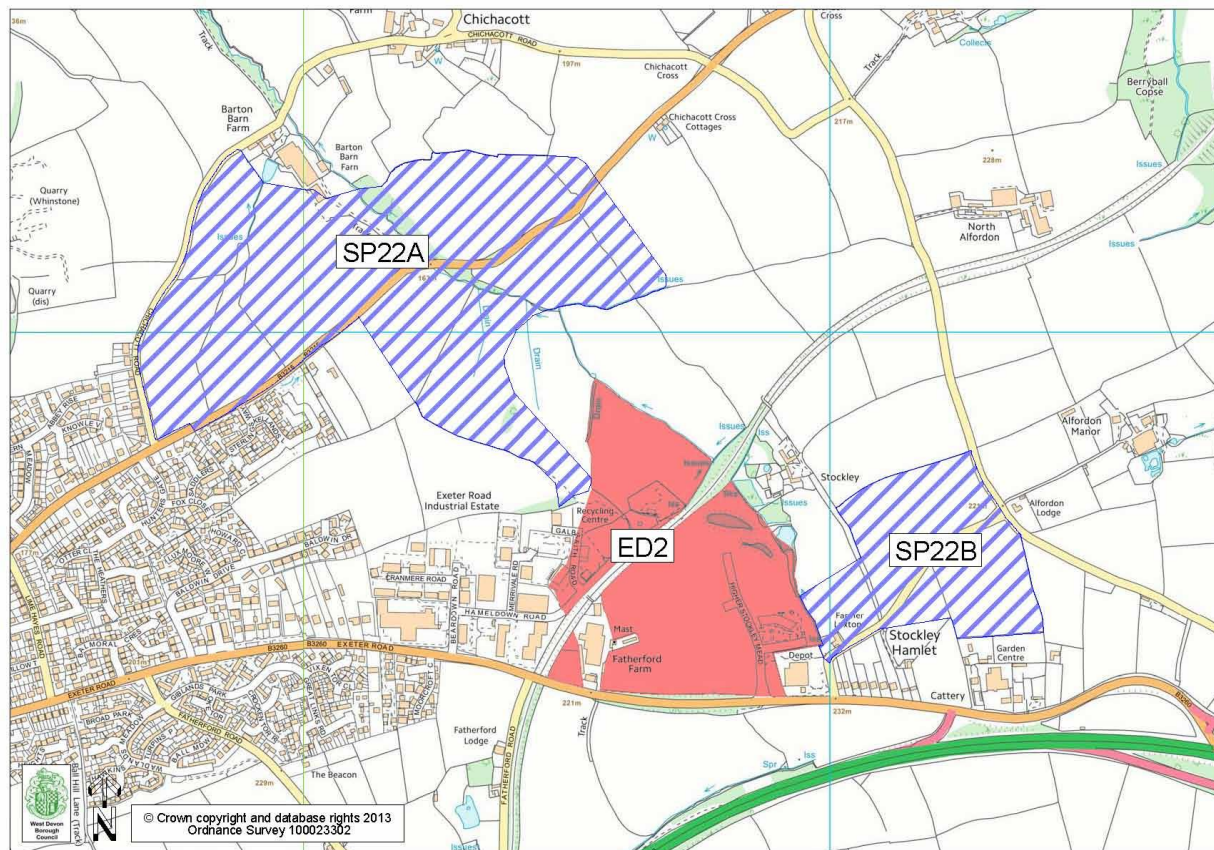
1 | Introduction

a. What is a masterplan?

The purpose of a masterplan is to provide guidance on proposals for development. They are usually used in relation to large or strategic sites where there is a need to establish the overall context in which a development should be delivered. Masterplans can consider a range of topics including the design of buildings, the layout of development, the types of uses to be provided, the infrastructure requirements and the timescales for delivering the development.

b. Why are we preparing a masterplan?

The Council adopted its Core Strategy in 2011. The Core Strategy is a plan which sets out where and how development will take place in West Devon between 2011 and 2026. As part of the Core Strategy, two areas of land to the east of Okehampton, situated within the parish of Okehampton Hamlets, were allocated for development. For ease of reference, these are described in the Core Strategy as SP22A and SP22B and are shown on the map below. The two allocations sit either side of another existing allocation (ED2) which was designated for employment development in the 2005 saved Local Plan policies. This area of land remains largely undeveloped, except for the Okehampton Business Centre. An effective development of this site is equally important as the development of SP22A and SP22B and therefore, for the purposes of this masterplan, all three sites will be considered.



Along with housing land, the allocation includes provision for other uses, including employment, community facilities, a road linking Exeter and Crediton Roads, a primary school, some small neighbourhood retailing and public open space. The development is also linked to the provision of a town centre access road as part of the wider strategy of growth to be accommodated in the town. The specific requirements of the allocation are set out in Chapter 4.

The Core Strategy explains that more detailed guidance around the design and implementation of the allocation will be set out in a 'comprehensive masterplan'. This document forms the masterplan and provides the necessary guidance.

c. What will the masterplan look at?

The overall aim of this masterplan is to set the context in which any applications for development across the sites SP22A, SP22B and ED2 will be considered. The specific objectives of the masterplan are to:

- Provide detail to Strategic Policy 22 of the Core Strategy and ED2 of the saved Local Plan which sets out the key requirements of the development;
- Set a vision for the new development which reflects the aspirations of the local community;
- Create a set of overarching design principles to achieve a high quality, locally distinctive and well-integrated development for Okehampton and the Hamlets;
- Determine the main features of the development, including the major land uses to be accommodated, the associated infrastructure requirements and the phasing of development alongside infrastructure;
- Put in place a framework to ensure a consistent approach to design and development across all aspects of the allocation.

This masterplan establishes the context for development through the following sections:

- **The allocations:** Sets out the main types of development to be included within the allocation and guidance about how they should be distributed across the site.
- **Design principles:** Sets out key design principles to guide the development of the site. This framework includes information about highway, footpath and cycle links, building materials, development layout and landscape features. It also sets out good practice guidance for energy efficient design, sustainable construction and opportunities for low carbon and renewable energy.
- **Delivering the development:** Sets out how the different elements of the sites will link together and the broad timescales for delivery.

These sections are designed to set clear principles for how the Council expects the sites to be brought forward and to ensure that the development is comprehensively planned across the whole site. They each contribute to the achievement of sustainable growth and should be considered collectively as part of any application for development within the allocations.

d. What is the status of this masterplan and how should it be used?

This masterplan is being prepared as a 'Supplementary Planning Document'. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) have a high level of 'weight' in the decision-making process as they must be prepared in accordance with national planning policies and have to go through a statutory consultation process. ~~Once this SPD has been adopted by the Council, it~~ The SPD will be used as a material consideration in determining applications for new development in the east of Okehampton.

The preparation of the masterplan has been informed by consultation with the Okehampton Hamlets and Town Councils, elected Members of West Devon Borough Council and the Okehampton Vision Steering Group, ~~thereby adding weight to the status of the document. Full weight will be given following formal consultation and adoption.~~ Further information is contained in Chapter 3.

This masterplan has been prepared taking into account the following:

- *The East of Okehampton Design Brief*: this Design Brief has been prepared by specialist design consultants. The community was invited to be involved in this work and has helped to shape its content. The Design Brief does not set any policies but is being used as part of the evidence base supporting this SPD. It is available on the Council's website at <http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/3621/East-of-Okehampton-Masterplan>.

- Existing evidence:

Okehampton Hamlets Parish Plan: This was published in 2012 and provides a 'snapshot' of the Parish and the numerous hamlets within the area as well as an action plan. One of the priorities identified seeks to ensure that the Parish Council are involved in development issues, particularly on large sites.

Okehampton Town Design Statement: The Town Design Statement was published in 2004 by the Okehampton Town Design Group. It provides a helpful analysis of the character of the town, including part of the Hamlets, with the aim of having a positive influence on future development by encouraging carefully considered and sympathetic development.

~~Until this SPD is adopted, it will be used as emerging policy guidance to assist the Council in making decisions on proposals for new development on either ED2, SP22A or SP22B that may be submitted during this time. Any applicants wishing to submit an application during this time should be mindful of the guidance set out in this masterplan.~~

This SPD is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and any applications will be considered alongside this as well as West Devon's Core Strategy Strategic Policy 22 and Local Plan Policy ED2.

Any developer wishing to submit an application for development on the allocated sites within Okehampton are encouraged to commence early pre-application discussions with the Council. Information on the pre-application service offered by the Council can be found on the website www.westdevon.gov.uk.

e. How can you comment on this masterplan?

You can comment on this masterplan between **Thursday 26th September and Friday 25th October 2013**. Remember, the principle of this development taking place has already been agreed, so we are now looking for your views on whether you think the uses proposed are suitable, whether you agree with our design aspirations and whether you think the infrastructure has been planned for appropriately.

f. Consultation arrangements

You can get involved in this consultation in a number of ways:

Community Exhibition – Wednesday 16th October

- 10am – 2pm at the Charter Hall, Okehampton
- 5pm – 8pm at the Okehampton Business Centre

Drop-in Surgery – Tuesday 8th and Tuesday 22nd October

- 10am – 2pm at the Okehampton Customer Service Centre
Please contact the Strategic Planning Team to book an appointment

On-line Consultation

You can view this document, a set of frequently asked questions, an outline presentation and the exhibition material on the Council's website at:

<http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/3621/East-of-Okehampton-Masterplan>

Send us your comments!

You can comment on this document by writing to us or using the response form available on our website. Please return all comments by **Friday 25th October** to the Strategic Planning Team at:

- Strategic.planning@westdevon.gov.uk
- WDBC Strategic Planning, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, PL19 0BZ

2 | Masterplan background

a. About Okehampton and the Hamlets

- 2.1 Okehampton is the second largest market town in West Devon. Situated in the north of the Borough, the town is home to around 7,5600 people (Patient and Practitioner Services Agency 2012)¹ as well as being an important service centre for many of its surrounding rural communities.
- 2.2 Lying on the northern boundary of Dartmoor National Park, Okehampton is an important gateway to the moor and the town's setting is heavily influenced by this green and expansive landscape.
- 2.3 The majority of the present day town centre lies between the west and east Okement rivers. Here, the architecture displays features of Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian eras, creating an attractive and interesting historic core. Over the last century, the town has grown around this centre, with more recent development being focused to the east. Here there have been more opportunities for homes to be built in areas which are most suitable for development.
- 2.4 The different parts of the town meet at the key town centre junction of West Street, Market Street, Fore Street and George Street. This historic road arrangement is under increasing pressure as the town continues to grow, particularly as the town's only primary school and three supermarkets are all accessed by this junction. Without intervention, development will continue to add to the traffic problems in this area and it is therefore critical to the future sustainable growth of the town that identified infrastructure requirements are delivered alongside new residential development in the town. There are three key elements to this, which comprise of the construction of a second primary school in the east of the town, a link road between Exeter and Crediton Road and the implementation of a town centre access road. The requirements for these and the mechanisms for their delivery are explained in more detail later in the masterplan.
- 2.5 Okehampton is very well located for easy access to the A30 strategic road network, connecting the town with the city of Exeter and the M5. Its location enables good opportunities for business and commercial development, as well as tourism, and the town can usefully promote itself in this way. Plans to introduce regular passenger services to the town's rail network and open a new station in the east of the town will further boost the attractiveness of the town for visitors and inward investment.
- 2.6 Unfortunately, several large employers have been lost in the town over recent years as a result of difficulties in the wider economy. Planned new development in the town provides opportunities for new economic and job growth and the masterplan looks to facilitate this in a way that supports Okehampton in the future.

1

http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/improving_our_services/facts_figures_and_statistics/factsandfigures/thepople/peoplestandproj/peoplepeestimates/peoplepopulationstandproestimatesokehampton.htm

- 2.7 The town itself is tightly wrapped within the town council boundary, meaning that most opportunities for new growth spread into the adjoining Okehampton Hamlets parish. Here, the landscape reflects the more traditional agricultural practices, with small farmsteads, rural buildings, country lanes and hamlet developments being characteristic of the area.
- 2.8 This transition between urban and rural will play a key part in considering how development is designed and located within the allocated sites. Notwithstanding the importance of the administrative boundary, the Council considers it important to recognise how the town and its rural fringes work together as a whole and consider equally how new development blends with the existing built-up area and the surrounding countryside.

b. Planning Policy Context

- 2.9 The strategic planning policy context in which this SPD is being prepared is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework and the Council's adopted Core Strategy 2011. The relevant policies are set out below.
- 2.10 The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) 2012 sets out the framework to guide new development in England. The framework provides relevant policies which must be considered in the context of this SPD and any subsequent development of the allocation to the east of Okehampton.
- 2.11 The key principles in relation to the development include:
- A presumption in favour of sustainable development, which means positively planning to meet the needs of the area.
 - Planning for a range of housing types, tenures and sizes that reflect local demands and contributes to achieving sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.
 - Promote high quality design, recognising that it is a "key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people".
 - Facilitate social interaction and support the development of places which achieve, amongst other things, opportunities for meeting spaces, safe and accessible environments, clear paths and cycleways and high quality public space.
 - Meeting the needs of retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses and making sure these are not compromised by limited site availability.
 - Having full consideration to flood risk and water supply and ensure that development is designed and located in ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Protect, enhance and minimise impacts on valued landscapes, geology and soil conditions, ecosystems and biodiversity.
 - Encourage a positive approach to the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and an appreciation of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that can arise from the conservation of the historic environment.
 - Ensure sufficient flexibility is included within plans and policies to respond to changing economic circumstances and facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of mixed uses within the same unit.
 - Promote the use of sustainable transport options and the provision of viable transport infrastructure to support sustainable development.

- To encourage less use of the private car, locate new development close to key facilities, such as schools and local shops.

2.12 Saved policy ED2 of the Local Plan sets out the requirements for the site as set out below.

Proposal ED2

Land as shown on the Proposals Map to the north east of Fatherford Farm, to the north west of Mole Avon and land adjacent to Exeter Road will be allocated for B1, B2 and B8 employment purposes. In considering proposals for development on this land the Council will seek to encourage the provision for rail access.

2.13 Strategic Policy SP22 of the adopted West Devon Core Strategy 2011 sets out the key requirements of new development on land to the east of Okehampton. This policy is outlined below.

SP22 Okehampton

1. Land to the east of Okehampton is allocated for a mixed use development and will include:
 - i. Approximately 900 dwellings, predominantly within SP22A
 - ii. Approximately 10 hectares of employment land, predominantly within SP22B
 - iii. Appropriate levels of open space
 - iv. Appropriate education facilities
 - v. Improved public transport links
 - vi. Provision of (or contributions to) on-site or off-site infrastructure requirements associated with the development, including the provision of a town centre access road.
2. The Proposals Map shows the boundaries of the strategic allocation.
3. The development of land to the east of Okehampton should be developed in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, along with the following site-specific development principles:
 - a. Create distinctive, safe, sustainable, high quality development.
 - b. Integrate new development within the landscape, minimising and mitigating landscape impacts on the natural environment.
 - c. The development should have regard to the close proximity of Dartmoor National Park and mitigate for any impacts on it.
 - d. The development should be well integrated with new and existing services and facilities in the town.
 - e. Increase travel choices for people to reduce their reliance on the private car.
 - f. Provide new connections for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians between the proposed development and the existing town to support and help ease traffic flows in the town.
 - g. Provide an appropriate level of affordable housing in accordance with SP9, subject to the overall viability of the development.
 - h. The provision of local and strategic green infrastructure, for public sport, recreation and play, and to include open space networks for wildlife and water management.

- i. A sustainable water strategy that includes minimising use of water, recycling grey water, has integrated sustainable drainage systems and provides flood water retentions where appropriate.
- j. The development should incorporate the latest sustainable development principles available during the period of development and should maximise energy efficiency and the use of energy from renewable sources.
- k. The development should include the provision of neighbourhood retailing and other facilities to meet the additional needs of the expanded community, subject to the nature and scale of development being justified by need and there being no adverse impact on the town centre.
- l. The development should support and not prejudice the provision of a new railway station in the east of the town and the potential to reintroduce a full rail passenger service from Okehampton.
- m. The development should support and not prejudice the delivery of a road linking Crediton Road and Exeter Road.

c. Environmental considerations

2.14 The Core Strategy is accompanied by a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report which assess direct and indirect impacts on internationally and nationally designated sites. Of relevance to the development to the east of Okehampton is the Dartmoor Special Area of Conservation (SAC). However, as no development is proposed within the SAC, there will not be a direct effect on the integrity of the site. The HRA notes the potential for some indirect impacts as a result of increased recreational use of the moor, surface water run-off and traffic based pollution. However, it has been demonstrated through the HRA that these impacts can be adequately mitigated through other adopted planning policies and management plans.

2.15 The Council has undertaken a Screening Report of this SPD to establish whether or not a full Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) is required. This Screening Report concludes that a separate SA/SEA is not required as the SPD does not result in any additional significant effects to those already identified in the higher level SA/SEA. This Screening Report is available on the Council's website alongside the masterplan. ~~Natural England will be consulted on the Screening Report as part of the consultation process~~ Natural England has been consulted on the Screening Report and has confirmed that it agrees with the conclusions drawn by the Council.

d. Boundaries of the allocation

2.16 The boundaries of the allocation are shown on the Proposals Map which accompanies the 2011 Core Strategy. These boundaries define the extent to which development can take place and should be regarded as firm edges to the development, unless in exceptional circumstances it can be demonstrated that a degree of flexibility would result in:

- A higher quality of design and overall development;
- Reduced impact on the landscape; and/or
- Securing requirements of the development which would not otherwise be viable.

2.17 This element of flexibility should not lead to an excess of development significantly above that set out in Core Strategy Strategic Policy SP22.

2.18 In such circumstances where an application for development extends beyond the boundaries as shown on the Proposals Map, the application will be advertised as a departure from the adopted Development Plan. This will enable those who support or oppose the application to engage in a robust decision-making process.

3 | Priorities for New Development

3.1 The development of the Okehampton allocations is needed to secure new homes and job opportunities to support a growing community into the future. The Council appreciates the large scale nature of the allocation and wishes to promote a development that adds value to the town and its surrounding communities in a way that respects the character of the area and is supported by the infrastructure and facilities that are needed.

3.2 In preparing this masterplan, we have involved the community, local councillors and our infrastructure partners so that we can deliver an effective and comprehensive development of this nature.

a. Community Engagement

3.3 In terms of community engagement, local residents, [community groups](#) and businesses were invited to attend two workshops to discuss the development of the sites as part of the preparation of the East of Okehampton Design Brief. These workshops generated a range of ideas and aspirations from the community and have been summarised below:

Table 1: Community aspirations for new development to the east of Okehampton

An attractive living environment	<p>New development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be designed in a way that makes it suitable for people in all stages of their lives. • Encourage sustainable and renewable energy provision using natural assets of the town. • Integrate trees and hedgerows within well defined streets and spaces. • Maintain a continuous network of wildlife corridors within the development which link to the surrounding countryside.
Community links	<p>New development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consistent access to facilities, open spaces, the school and the town centre through a network of footpaths and cycleway. • Provide a range of local facilities within the new development to support basic needs whilst still promoting trips to the town centre. • Aim to keep the town and hamlets as distinct areas of Okehampton. • Encourage neighbourliness by allowing a mix of uses and facilities to enable an active and social community.
Business growth and job support	<p>New development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the access opportunities offered by the A30. • Integrate suitable businesses with housing to better connect home and work life. • Make provision for small, flexible business units with space to grow. • Consider providing guest accommodation to help the local economy take advantage of tourism opportunities.
Traffic improvements	<p>New development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bus and rail options to reduce reliance on the private car. • Provide a network of streets capable of taking the pressure off the existing road network in the town, including a town centre access road and a link between Crediton and Exeter Roads.

b. Local Council Engagement

3.4 Following on from this, the Council has worked with Okehampton Town Council, Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council and the Okehampton Vision Steering Group to develop these priorities into a vision for development in the town:

New development in the east of Okehampton will become a sustainable and well connected part of this thriving and historic market town. It will create a high quality living environment designed to support people in all ages and aspects of their lives. This will be achieved by...

High quality well planned development that meets the day to day needs of all users

Well defined and connected streets with appropriate planting and attractive, functional and accessible open space	Attractive design which reflects the distinctive characteristics of both the hamlets and the traditional urban centre
Properties that contain appropriate storage, private spaces, parking facilities and good sized gardens	High quality design and sustainable construction methods which use locally distinctive materials
Integrated uses of homes, workspace, community facilities, local shops and open spaces, enabling an active, social and sustainable community	A development that becomes part of the wider community and continues to have the town centre as its focus for activities and retailing needs

Maintain the attractive environments and landscape settings of the area

Strong physical and visual connections between the different areas of land and to the surrounding countryside and Dartmoor National Park	Wetlands and water courses providing spaces for recreational, ecological and sustainable drainage
Sustainable and renewable energy provision in keeping with the natural assets of the town	Continuous networks of wildlife corridors within the development, between individual parcels and outwards to the surrounding countryside. Existing landscape features including hedgerows, Devon banks, trees and the Stockley Valley should be retained.
Planting of native species complementing existing hedgerows, Devon banks and the Stockley Valley	

Supporting job and business growth in the town

Capitalise on business opportunities by promoting the A30 transport links and by securing rail links in the future	Small, flexible business units with space to grow
Provide opportunities for economic development which supports and enhances the existing town centre	Businesses based on the service and tourism sector which make the most of the towns natural assets and promote Okehampton as a gateway to the moor
A range of job opportunities which enable people to live and work within the town	

Delivering appropriate infrastructure at the right time to support new development

A modern, fit for purpose primary school which acts as a community focus in the east of the town	A network of streets capable of taking pressure off existing roads, including a link between Exeter and Crediton Road and the town centre relief road
Safe, secure and attractive footpaths and cycle ways connecting the development to the services and facilities in the town and the surrounding countryside	Bus and rail links to reduce the reliance on the private car
High speed broadband connections to ensure Okehampton is a competitive centre	Affordable housing for local people

Consultation question 1:

Do you agree with the vision for new development to the east of Okehampton?

c. Infrastructure Provider Engagement

- 3.5 Throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy, the Council worked with local service and infrastructure providers to identify what new facilities would need to be provided and where improvements may need to be made as a result of new development in the town. This engagement has continued with the preparation of this Masterplan and more details about the infrastructure that will be needed to accompany new development are set out in this document. It is important that development on all parts of the allocation contribute proportionally to the key elements of infrastructure required as part of the allocation where the infrastructure concerned benefits the site as a whole.
- 3.6 All parts of the development will be expected to provide standard servicing and utilities infrastructure as set out in Chapter 6. In addition to this, there are some key items of **critical** infrastructure which the residential elements of the allocation will be expected to either make provision for on-site or make financial contributions towards their delivery. These have been identified as follows:

Table 2: Critical infrastructure items

Infrastructure Item	Description
<p>Link road between Exeter Road and Crediton Road, <u>including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Provision of a right hand turn lane on Exeter Road into Exeter Road Industrial Estate (Beardown Road)</u> • <u>Roundabout access on Crediton Road</u> 	<p>The development is located on either side of Crediton Road. It will be important that traffic from the new development does not have an unacceptable impact on the town highway network, especially if the journey is not to the town centre. A link road will mean that traffic can avoid the Barton Road/East Street light controlled junction. The first section of this road has been delivered as part of the development of the H4 site. The remainder of the road is expected to come forward as early as possible as part of the overall scheme for the development of the allocations.</p> <p><u>A right hand turn lane from Exeter Road leading to the Exeter Road Industrial Estate/Beardown Road is required alongside the delivery of the link road between Exeter and Crediton Roads. This will serve as a functional improvement to the southern end of the link road.</u></p> <p><u>An access should be provided via a new roundabout from Crediton Road, the design and location of which supports and does not preclude the delivery of the link road between Exeter and Crediton Road.</u></p>
<p>Education provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 1.7 hectare site for primary school within SP22A • Enhancements / extensions to Primary School provision • Enhancements / 	<p>A need for a new primary school in the town has been identified to meet the needs of the existing and new community. Land is required to be identified for this facility as part of the masterplanning process.</p> <p>Additional capacity will be required at Okehampton College to accommodate the additional pupils arising from the new development.</p>

extensions to Secondary School provision	
Town centre access road	As a result of further development in Okehampton, there is a requirement for a second road to access the main town centre car park and supermarkets, enabling traffic to avoid the main shopping areas of the town. A town centre access road would also avoid adding to the air quality problems in Market Street. <u>Evidence relating to the need for this access road is provided in the Okehampton Town Centre Access Road – Traffic Analysis and Issues Report, August 2010 produced by Devon County Council. There are a number of constraints which impact on the timing and delivery of the road, including the crossing of a watercourse, the acquisition of third party land, access via South Lodge (a Grade II Listed Building), the potential need for rock cutting and the likely need to obtain external funding. As a result of these constraints, it is anticipated that the access road will not be delivered until later in the plan period.</u>
Primary healthcare provision (to meet the needs of the increase in local residents)	Financial contributions from residential development in the town will be required to ensure there is sufficient capacity in primary healthcare provision to meet the needs of the new residents.
Age appropriate equipped play and recreation areas	Appropriate play and recreation areas are required to be provided alongside new development. The location, design and layout of such facilities should be determined through the pre-application process.
Provision of bus service to serve new development	Improvements to bus services are required to provide links between the new development and the town centre, as well as between Okehampton and Exeter. The proposed link road between Exeter Road and Crediton Road will help to improve the route of bus services.
Enhancements to / additional provision of playing pitches	New development in the town will generate a need for additional provision of playing pitches. Through the masterplan, consideration will be given to the best way this can be delivered to meet the needs of the town. The town already has a number of pitches and proposals are being developed for additional training pitches elsewhere in the town. Depending on the capacity of existing pitch provision, it may be appropriate to seek financial contributions towards enhancing or increasing existing facilities.
<u>Site for</u> East of Okehampton Railway Shelter <u>and car park</u>	There is an aspiration to deliver daily passenger services between Okehampton and Exeter <u>using the existing railway line</u> . Subject to franchise and other agreements, this could be implemented using the existing station in the south of the town. Should these passenger services be delivered successfully, there is potential to increase usage of the train by putting in place a more accessible station for residents in the east of the town, particularly given the large scale

	development which is planned for this area. This station would benefit residents as well as helping to attract businesses and inward investment as part of the comprehensive development of the ED2 allocation. It is envisaged that this will take the form of a small shelter and platform that will be accessed from the ED2 Opportunity Okehampton site. <u>Car parking provision for around 60-70 vehicles will be required in association with the station.</u>
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3.7 More details about the timescales and mechanisms for the delivery of these items of infrastructure are provided in Chapters 4 and 6 of this Masterplan.

4 | The Allocations (Parcels 1-5)

- 4.1 The allocations of ED2 and SP22 cover a large area to the east of Okehampton. In order to achieve a consistent approach to design and development across all aspects of the allocation, it is important that the masterplan considers how the major land uses can be distributed effectively across the area, ensure that the overall requirements of the development are reflected across the entire site and understand and address the cumulative impact of the development on the town's infrastructure.
- 4.2 In this way, the Masterplan will put in place a framework to guide the development of the whole allocation. However, because the allocation is dispersed across a wide area and is segmented by a number of boundaries, including roads, valley corridors, a railway line and existing development, it is considered necessary to look at the different parcels of land which make up the allocation. These parcels need to be planned for individually, as well as having regard to the overall framework in which development should be considered.
- 4.3 This Chapter therefore looks at the different parcels which comprise the allocation and sets out the site specific context in which development should be considered. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the overall design principles for new development and the Council's approach to managing infrastructure provision and viability considerations.
- 4.4 The following table and map identify five individual parcels which comprise the overall allocation:

Table 3: Parcels of land to the east of Okehampton

Parcel	Site Size (ha)	Page Reference
1: Opportunity Okehampton	11.2	<u>2120</u>
2: North of Crediton Road	14.7	<u>2623</u>
3: South of Crediton Road	13.7	<u>3430</u>
4: East of Stockley Valley	9.8	<u>4036</u>
5: North of Stockley Hamlet	9.3	<u>4540</u>

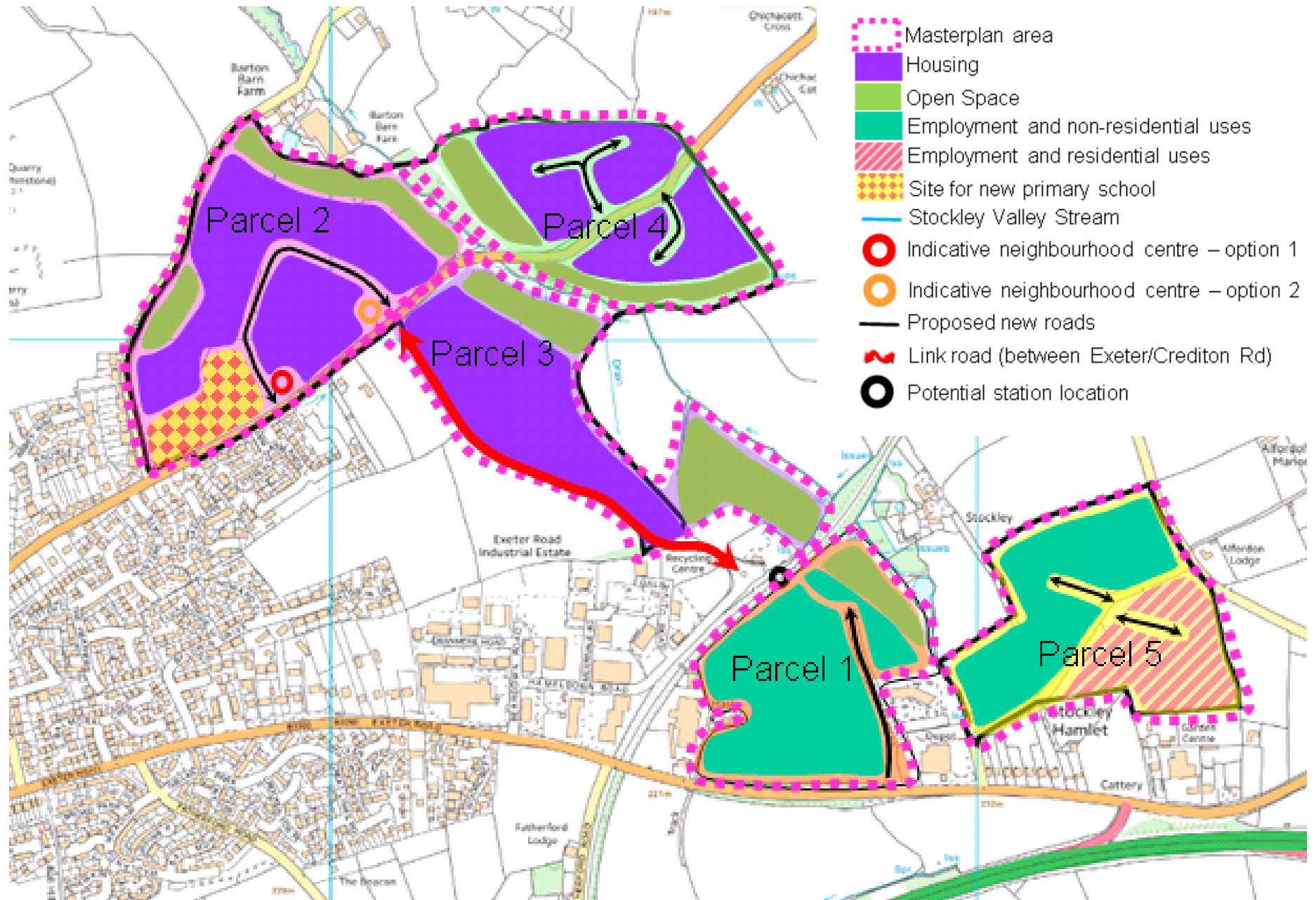


Figure 1: Parcels of land to the east of Okehampton

Parcel 1: Opportunity Okehampton

4.5 Parcel 1 relates to the land within ED2 to the south of the railway line (referred to as ED2 South).

4.6 Parcel 1 is approximately 11.2 hectares in size and is partially developed with key road infrastructure already in place, which also serves the existing Okehampton Business Centre located in the south eastern corner of the site.

4.7 A large part of the remainder of the site is subject to a planning application that is expected to be submitted later in 2013. The Council is working with all relevant parties to develop the application for this area.



Constraints

4.8 ~~There are no major constraints to development in this area.~~ The following constraints will need to be taken into account during the design and layout of new development. These are explained in the table below and shown on the accompanying map.



Table 4: Parcel 1 constraints

<u>Ground conditions</u>	<u>A former landfill site is located north of the railway and is classified as contaminated land. Investigation work is needed, in the form of gas monitoring and a full contamination assessment, to determine the suitability of development within 250m of the landfill site prior to any application being submitted. Consideration will need to be given to the types of development that are appropriate in this location.</u>
<u>Watercourse</u>	<u>The watercourse and the woodland which surround it are important habitats for local biodiversity. An appropriate buffer will need to be in place to help conserve and enhance the natural habitats in this area.</u>
<u>Visual sensitivity</u>	<u>Areas of Parcel 1 are visually prominent, particularly in views from Dartmoor National Park, which is exacerbated by the physical separation from the existing urban area of Okehampton. Development in this parcel will need to mitigate against any potentially negative visual impacts from Dartmoor and the surrounding landscape.</u>

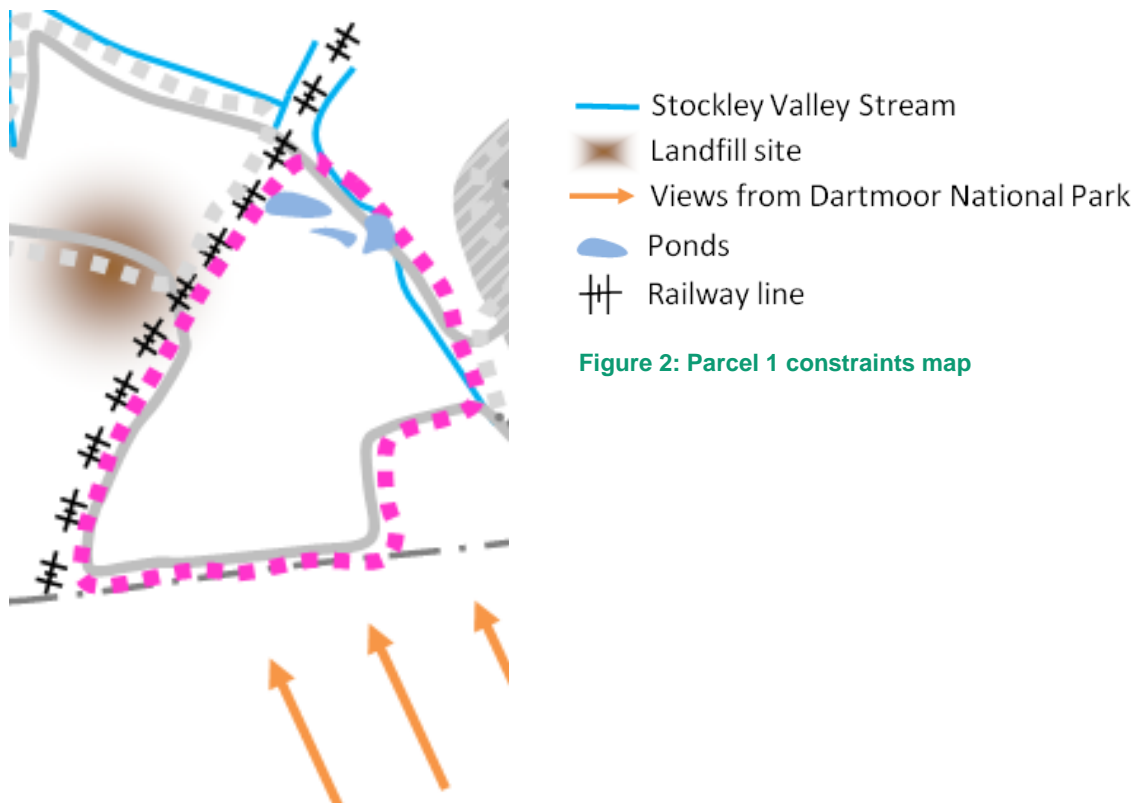


Figure 2: Parcel 1 constraints map

Access

4.9 Vehicle access is already in place from Exeter Road. No other access points are required to facilitate the development of this site.

4.10 All parts of the development should have safe and desirable footpaths and cycle ways throughout the development, to other town destinations and to existing rights of way. In particular, a pedestrian and cycle link should be provided to the Devonshire Heartlands Way and opportunities should also be explored to achieve a link to Hameldown Road across the railway line.

Land Use

4.104.11 The focus of this site is to achieve a development which supports local business growth, increases job opportunities and promotes high quality employment uses.

4.114.12 In the current conditions, it is accepted that achieving more traditional employment uses poses a significant challenge due to the costs of funding serviced land and associated infrastructure requirements. The Council is therefore prepared to take a flexible approach to the types of uses which come forward in Parcel 1, providing the focus is on achieving a range of high quality employment opportunities. This is supported by the NPPF (paragraph 22) which requires land allocations to be kept under review and where there is no reasonable prospect of a site coming forward, to consider alternative uses. Proposals for development that do not fall within the requirements of policy ED2 of the Local Plan will be advertised as a departure from the adopted development plan to allow discussion on the suitability of alternative uses through a robust decision making process.

4.124.13 This area of land will be more suitable for larger businesses, particularly those that require and/or generate significant lorry/HGV movements, as most of the supporting infrastructure is in place and access already exists on to Exeter Road.

4.134.14 Proposals for other uses in addition to B1, B2 and B8 will be considered where it enables the delivery of the rest of the site, offers high quality employment opportunities, does not have a significant adverse impact on the town centre and is compatible with the surrounding employment uses.



4.144.15 Any proposals for alternative uses (such as retail, leisure, commercial and service industry development) will need to be carefully considered in respect of their impact on the historic and natural environment, landscape character and viability and vitality of the town centre. ~~to ensure that there is no significant adverse impact on the town centre.~~ It is not within the remit of this masterplan to determine whether or not such uses will be acceptable. Any proposals for such development within this site will need to be assessed against the policies of the NPPF, the Council's Core Strategy and Local Plan. Any proposals for retail development will need to also have regard to ~~and~~ the adopted SPD on Assessing the Impact of New Retail Development in West Devon.

4.154.16 The development of Parcel 1 should not preclude the future delivery of a railway station and associated parking provision for around 60-70 vehicles. It will also be vital to ensure pedestrian and cycle connections are made between Parcels 1 and 3. Opportunities should also be explored to achieve a link to ~~the existing rail over bridge to Hameldown Road~~ are provided across the railway line. ~~Connections to the overbridge~~ This could come forward prior to the delivery of the railway to ensure improved linkages between the various parcels of development.



4.17 There is an aspiration in the town to secure coach parking facilities to support tourism through day trips to the town. Various options are currently being explored but there are limited opportunities within the town centre to accommodate this. The Council would encourage further dialogue between the County Council as landowner of the site and the community to explore options for providing coach parking alongside parking for the railway station. It is acknowledged that this would reduce the land available for employment development and could affect the viability of the overall development of the site. However, it is considered that there would be significant benefits for the town in exploring this further.

4.164.18 The site is located along one of the main entrances to Okehampton. As such, a well defined and high quality frontage along Exeter Road should be achieved where topography allows. Buildings should be of high quality design that builds on the character of Okehampton Business Centre. In this way, development of this parcel should reflect the principles in the Employment Character Area set out in Chapter 5 section (f).

Infrastructure

4.174.19 Parcel 1 will be expected to deliver all required servicing and utilities infrastructure as set out in Chapter 6. In addition to this, the development will also need to ensure that the following is provided:

- Sufficient space and access for a railway shelter and associated parking (including a minimum of 60-70 vehicle spaces, cycle parking and bus stop) should development come forward ahead of the delivery of passenger services;
- Pedestrian and cycle links between Parcels 1 and 3.

Opportunities for accommodating coach parking on the site should also be explored.

~~, the provision of a railway shelter within the development has been identified as a critical piece of infrastructure to be delivered in association with the potential extension of passenger services. Should the site be delivered ahead of services becoming available, sufficient space and access should be provided along with provision for parking for approximately 60-70 vehicles, cycle parking, a bus stop and coach parking to enable a transport interchange in the area.~~

Indicative Phasing

4.184.20 Development of this parcel is expected to commence between 2014 and 2018.

Indicative Layout

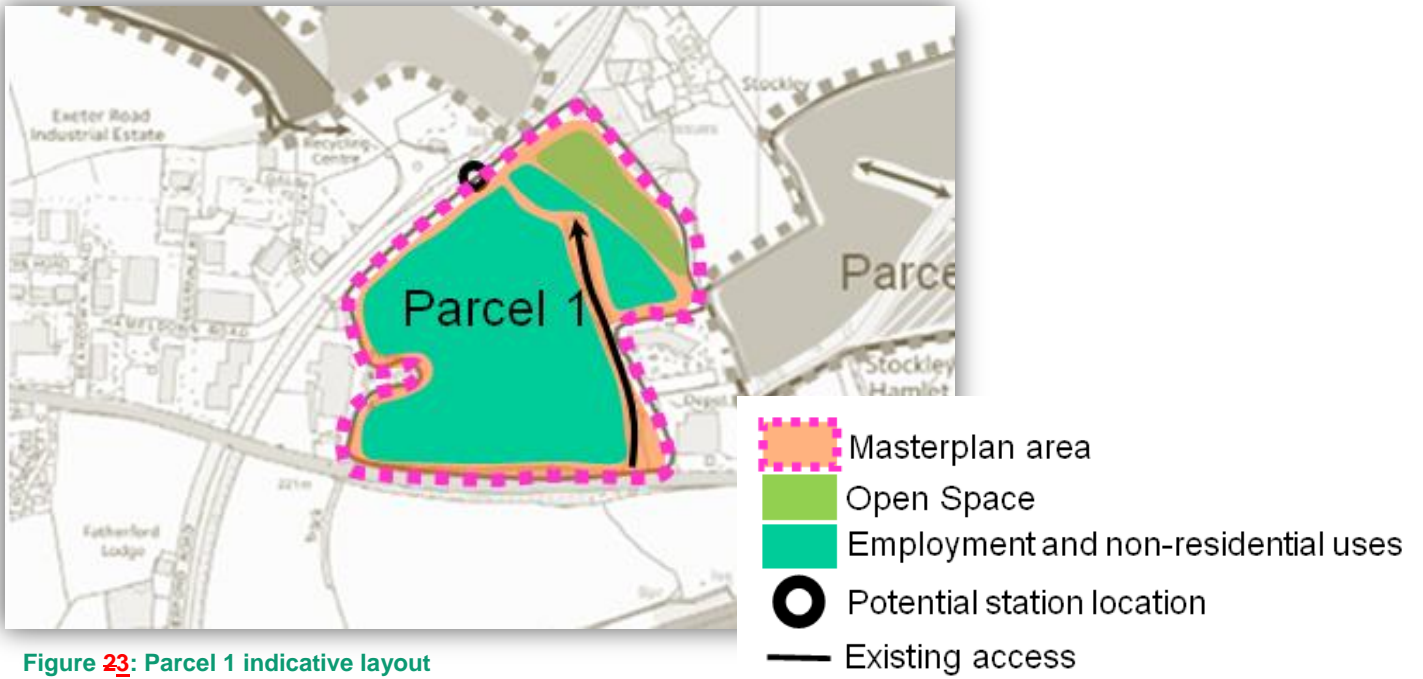


Figure 23: Parcel 1 indicative layout

Consultation question 2:

Do you agree with the proposals for Parcel 1 (Opportunity Okehampton)?

Parcel 2: North of Crediton Road

4.194.21 Parcel 2 relates to land within SP22A north of Crediton Road and to the west of the Stockley Valley (referred to as north of Crediton Road).

4.204.22 This area of land is approximately 14.7 hectares in size. It is mainly in agricultural use for grazing and is bordered to the east by the dense woodland of the Stockley Valley. There are a number of important hedgerows running through the site which are important habitats for local wildlife.

Constraints

4.214.23 There are various constraints within Parcel 2 which will need to be taken into account during the design and layout of new development. These are explained in the table below and are shown on the accompanying map:

Table 45: Parcel 2 constraints

Local heritage and archaeological assets	To the west of Parcel 2 on the boundary of Chichacott Road is a Roman Fort, which is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). <u>This is a nationally significant asset.</u> Some evidence of the fort is still available on the ground and as such the visual setting of this important heritage feature will be an important consideration in the layout of new development. Further archaeological investigations and geophysical surveys will be required to determine if there is a Roman Road running out of the eastern gate of the fort. An appropriate buffer will be required to provide suitable protection to this archaeological asset.
Stockley Valley	The Environment Agency has identified a flood zone through the Stockley Valley. This is classified as flood zone 3, which is considered to be at high risk of flooding. As such, residential development in this area is considered to be 'more vulnerable' and should not be located here. It is therefore proposed that no development takes place within the identified flood zones in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 21. <u>There is also a minor watercourse in the northern part of the parcel.</u> The watercourses and the woodlands which surrounds them are important habitats for local biodiversity and by virtue of the flood zone, an appropriate buffer will be in place to help conserve and enhance the natural habitats in this area.
Woodlands, hedgerows and trees	The Stockley Valley forms a dense area of woodland and runs along the eastern boundary of Parcel 2. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is present here. These woodlands should be retained in development proposals. There is also a network of locally distinctive hedgerows present on this parcel which should be retained wherever possible and enhanced through proposals for new development.
Visual sensitivity	Parcel 2 can be viewed from the northern boundary of the Dartmoor National Park. However, this area of land is relatively low lying and

relates both physically and visually with surrounding built up development.

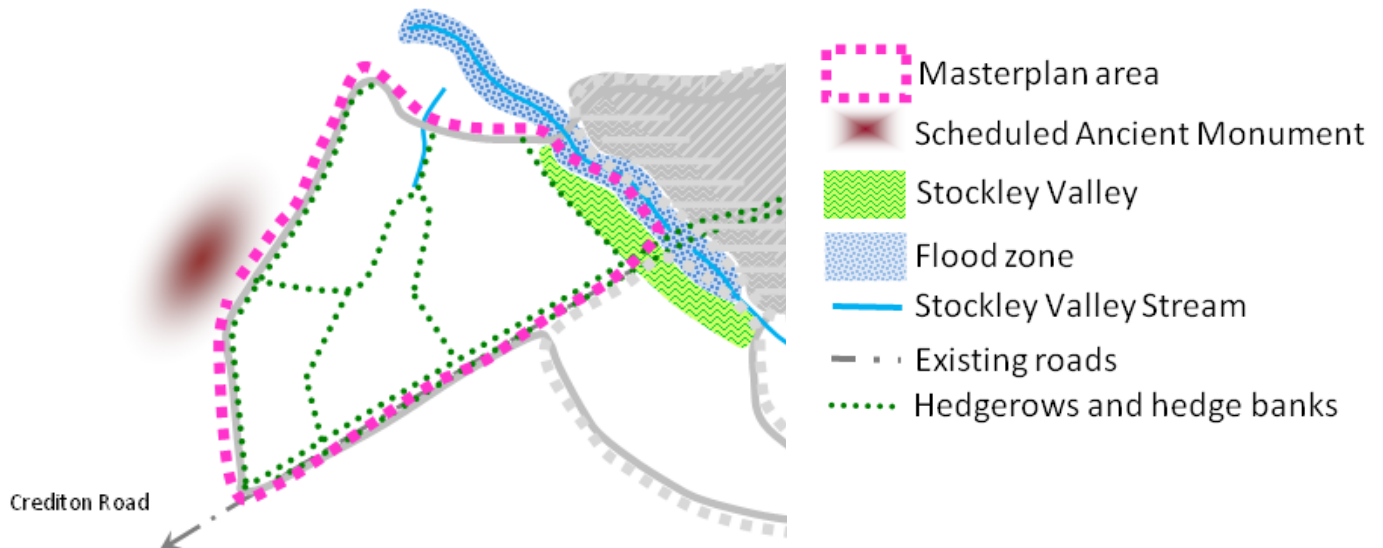


Figure 34: Parcel 2 constraints map

Access

4.224.24 Suitable access to Parcel 2 can be achieved from Crediton Road. Two access points will be required to serve this part of the development and to allow traffic movement of traffic through the site. One access is required towards the western boundary of the site. A further access is required via a new roundabout from Crediton Road, the design and location of which supports and does not preclude the delivery of the link road between Exeter and Crediton Road. Specific arrangements about the location of the access points and junction arrangements should be discussed with Devon County Council in the early stages of preparing an application, giving due consideration to existing junction arrangements and the planned link road between Exeter and Crediton Road.



4.234.25 The need for this future link road between Exeter and Crediton Road was identified in relation to the development of site H4 in the previous Local Plan. With this development currently under construction, the pressures on the existing road network are increasing.

4.244.26 It has been confirmed by Devon County Council that any further development in the east of the town will require the completion of the link road as early in the development as can be viably achieved as part of the development of Parcel 3. However, the Highways Authority will explore options of providing this earlier if the necessary funding and consents mean that it is achievable in advance of the development of Parcel 3. There are currently significant traffic pressures at particular traffic junctions in the town and this masterplan identifies the requirement of this link road as a critical item of infrastructure needed to accommodate the development.

4.254.27 The requirement for the link road stems from the need to relieve traffic pressures on the Barton Road junction and Limehayes Road and to create more sustainable vehicle links between the residential and employment areas of the planned development. This link road, together with the delivery of the new primary education facilities within Parcel 2, should have a positive effect on managing some of the traffic problems which already exist.



4.264.28 The first phase of this link road has been implemented as part of the H4 development which is currently under construction. The route of the link road should run between the H4 site and Parcel 3.

4.29 All parts of the development should have safe and desirable footpaths and cycle ways throughout the development, to other town destinations and to existing rights of way. In particular, a pedestrian and cycle link should be created which connects to the existing footpath that runs to the west of the site along Chichacott Road. Internal footpaths and cycle ways should also be provided to link Parcel 2 with Parcel 4 in the long term. This will require the crossing of the Stockley Valley and viability and achievability will have to be taken into consideration.

Land Use

Neighbourhood Centre

4.274.30 In addition to residential development, other uses that will need to be accommodated on this site include a neighbourhood centre, a site for a new primary school and a landscape/open space buffer to the Scheduled Ancient Monument to the north west of the site.

4.284.31 The neighbourhood centre should help to form a focal point for community interaction for new and existing residents in the east of the town. The Core Strategy makes provision for small-scale neighbourhood retailing (e.g. a small foodstore of around 250m² net, primarily for top up shopping trips) to meet the basic shopping needs

of the new community and residents in the east of the town, providing that proposals are of an acceptable nature and scale to the development. Any proposals for food/non-food retail units over this threshold will need to demonstrate that they will not have a significant adverse impact on the town centre, in accordance with local and national policy. The local threshold is set out in the Council's adopted Assessing the Impact of New Retail Development in West Devon Supplementary Planning Document.

4.294.32 The community has expressed a desire to see a community building as part of the new development. There is no requirement in the adopted policy to provide this facility but the masterplan does not prevent this type of use coming forward as a community or private enterprise. Consideration will need to be given to the funding and long-term management and maintenance of any community facility that is brought forward.

4.304.33 Through previous consultation with the community, some residents have also expressed a wish to see a public house delivered in the east of the town. The consultation identified that many would wish to see a family friendly facility, which caters particularly for the early evening period which is not currently offered in the town. This sort of use would be encouraged where it does not compete with existing town centre uses.

Education

4.314.34 Despite the approval for residential development on the site previously identified in the Local Plan for a new primary school, the need still exists to identify a suitable site and options are being explored as part of this masterplanning exercise.

4.324.35 At the time of writing the masterplan, Devon County Council as the Education Authority has approved capital funding sufficient to purchase a primary school site to the east of Okehampton. The site will meet the impact of approved development in the town (H4) and the core strategy allocations.

~~4.334.36 The Education Authority has agreed to secure a site large enough to accommodate the existing and planned development. The education authority has agreed to forward fund the cost of the larger site on the basis that it will be reimbursed through developer contributions as and when future residential development secures planning consent. To ensure that new primary school provision can be brought forward in a timely manner, the Education Authority has agreed the means to forward fund a site large enough to accommodate the existing and planned development. The Education Authority is able to forward fund the cost of the larger site on the basis that it will be reimbursed as and when future residential development secures planning consent. The Borough Council supports this approach and~~



will endeavour to secure fair and proportionate contributions from future development commensurate with the development impact in order to reimburse the County Council's upfront investment.

4.344.37 Devon County Council has identified an area of land in the west of the allocation adjacent to Chichacott Lane for this new primary school. This is well located to the existing residential properties in the east of Okehampton and the new residential development. The County Council requires a site that is well related to the existing and new development and can be directly accessed from Crediton Road.

4.38 It is important that adequate parking and ancillary facilities for the primary school, such as playing fields and playground areas, are appropriately planned for and fully considered within the design. In particular, consideration needs to be given to the level of parking provision to ensure that the amenity of the surrounding residential area is not affected by ad-hoc parking arrangements and that safety issues do not occur as a result.

4.39 The new primary school should be well related to the neighbourhood centre. The connectivity and location of these uses in a central position to serve the new and existing residents will be important and will enable:

- The use of shared car parking facilities
- The concentration of main public transport links
- An effective integration of footpaths, cycleways and roads around the development towards a central location where the key services within the development are provided.
- Dual use of facilities where appropriate and achievable

Whilst this is the preferred scenario, it is acknowledged that an alternative location may be more commercially viable. It will be important that this is still located on the main route leading through the development with frontage onto Crediton Road so that it is able to serve other parcels of the development. An alternative location is indicated in Figure 5. With either location, the neighbourhood centre should promote the use of shared car parking facilities and be well related to main transport, footpath and cycle links.

4.354.40 The school itself is expected to be delivered as early as possible once planning permission is granted for development on Parcel 2. It is a critical piece of infrastructure and all new residential development will be required to contribute to the delivery of the school through appropriate s106 agreements. This includes development on allocated sites as well as any other development which may come forward in the town.

4.364.41 Developers are encouraged to engage with Devon County Council at an early stage to discuss arrangements for education provision required as part of the development.

4.374.42 There is a forecast deficit in pupil places at Okehampton College. As such, further places will need to be provided to accommodate the anticipated increase in secondary school pupils from the new development. It will therefore be necessary to

collect financial contributions from the development for secondary education where a need has been identified.

~~4.38 The new primary school should be well related to the neighbourhood centre. The connectivity and location of these uses in a central position to serve the new and existing residents will be important and will enable:~~

- ~~• The use of shared car parking facilities~~
- ~~• The concentration of main public transport links~~
- ~~• An effective integration of footpaths, cycleways and roads around the development towards a central location where the key services within the development are provided.~~
- ~~• Dual use of facilities where appropriate and achievable~~

Housing

4.394.43 Parcel 2 is allocated for predominantly residential development and is expected to deliver approximately 350-375 homes. As with all residential developments, the Parcel should provide 40% affordable housing in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 9, subject to viability.

4.404.44 Given the relationship of this parcel to the existing residential development to the west and south, it is appropriate to encourage a design character which reflects the traditional styles and densities of the town. In this way, development of this Parcel should reflect the principles of the Traditional Okehampton Character Area set out in section f of Chapter 5 (f). A range of sizes and types of homes are encouraged to meet the identified housing needs of the community. In particular, smaller one, two and three bedroom properties are encouraged as well as housing which is suitable for the elderly e.g. single storey dwellings, Lifetime Homes and sheltered housing. Smaller bedroom properties are encouraged in the form of terraced and semi-detached properties in order to meet the identified housing needs of the community. It may be appropriate to seek higher densities of development around the neighbourhood centre with less dense development as you move eastwards towards the Stockley Valley.

4.414.45 Given the recent welfare reforms, it is increasingly important that the development makes suitable provision for one bedroom properties as part of the mix of homes offered across the site, primarily as part of the affordable housing provision. Developers are encouraged to think creatively about how such properties can be provided.

Public Open Space, Sport and Recreation

4.424.46 For 350-375 houses, according to policy H26 of the local plan, up to 0.32ha of play should be required on this site. Typically this would equate to a LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) in terms of its area. However, rather than provide a LEAP/LAP (Local Areas for Play) in each of parcels 2, 3 and 4, there is more benefit to be gained for the community to provide a NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play) within

Parcel 2. This would provide a larger range of play equipment, an associated grass kick about area and hard surfaced play space.

4.434.47 Guidance indicates that children should have access to a NEAP within 15 minutes walk or 1,000m (in a straight line) of their house. As such, a NEAP in Parcel 2 could provide for all parcels (perhaps with the exception of parcel 5). Other LAP/LEAPs being provided through the H4 site will cater for more local provision of smaller play facilities without the need to provide through the parcels 2, 3 and 4.

4.444.48 As such, within Parcel 2, approximately 0.8ha is required to be set aside for the NEAP providing the first five pieces of equipment. Parcel 2 is not expected to fully equip this NEAP facility and contributions will be sought from later phases. Early consultation will be required with the Council's Natural Environment and Recreation Team to determine the location and appropriate equipment to be provided.

4.454.49 There is an existing deficiency in playing pitch provision in Okehampton which has been identified in the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2007 and the development itself will also generate a need for further provision. As there is limited space for on-site pitch provision within SP22A it is considered most appropriate for Parcel 2 to provide a commuted sum equivalent to the provision of up to 1.3ha of playing fields (including changing facilities) and maintenance so that suitable facilities can be delivered elsewhere in the town.

4.464.50 Parcel 2 is also expected to provide 0.48ha of amenity space or a commuted sum equivalent to such provision and maintenance.

Infrastructure

4.474.51 Detailed information about the infrastructure required and mechanisms for delivery is provided in Chapter 6. Parcel 2 will be expected to provide all relevant servicing and utilities infrastructure as listed in table 8 of Chapter 6.

4.484.52 There are a number of critical items of infrastructure which will need to be either provided on-site or through financial contributions. These are required in order to make the development acceptable. These are:

- ~~Financial contributions to the delivery~~ Provision of a link road between Exeter and Crediton roads;
- ~~Financial contributions to the delivery of the town centre access road~~
- Approx. 1.7 ha site for primary education facilities and development of primary school facility;
- Contributions to primary and secondary school provision;
- Primary healthcare provision;
- Age appropriate equipped play and recreation areas;
- Bus service provision to link the development with other parts of the town; and
- Enhancements/additional provision of playing pitches; ~~and~~
- ~~Contributions to town centre access road.~~

4.494.53 There are further items of desirable infrastructure which would have benefits for the development and wider community and contributions to these may be sought where

funding is available and where it can be justified that the development has a direct impact on its use.

Indicative Phasing

4.504.54 Development of this parcel is expected to commence between 2014 and 2018.

Indicative Layout

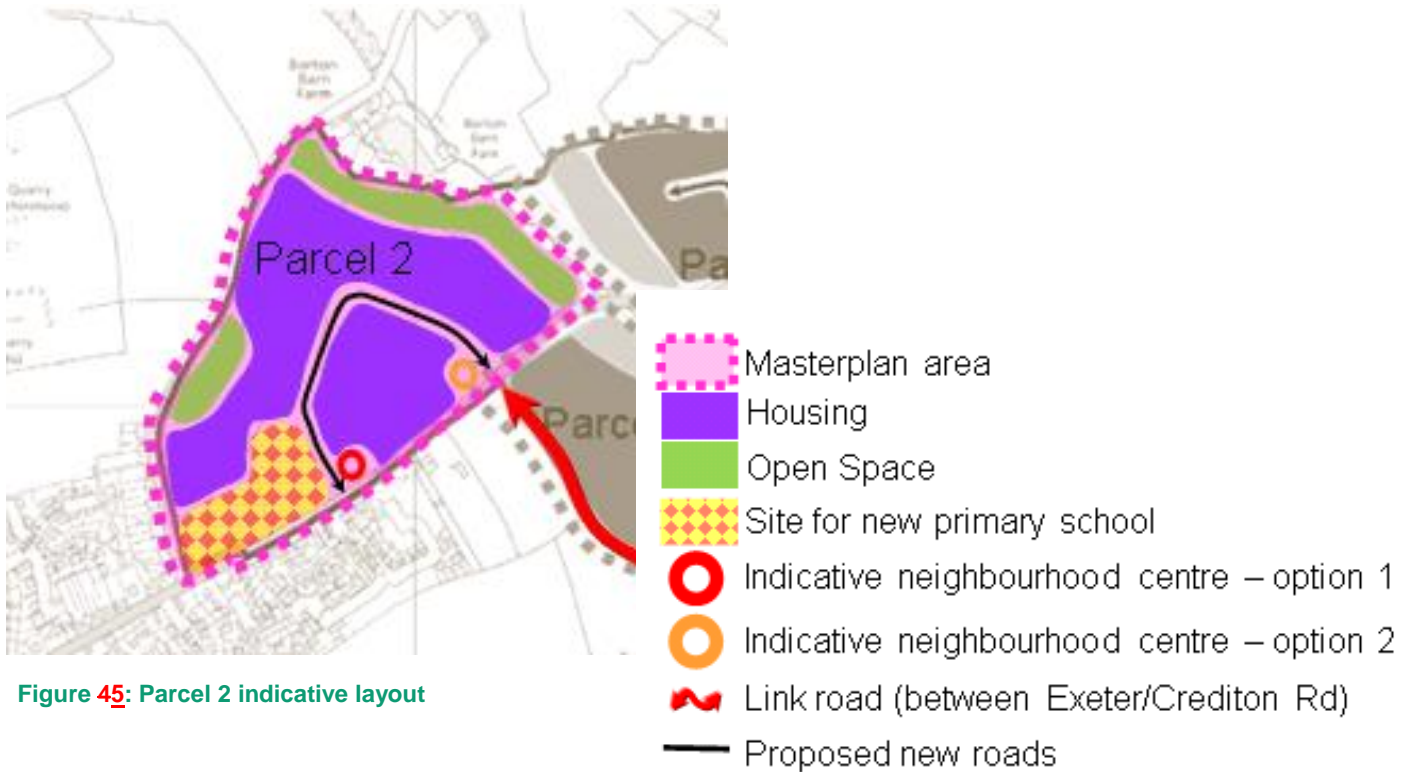


Figure 45: Parcel 2 indicative layout

Consultation question 3:

Do you agree with proposals for Parcel 2 (North of Crediton Road)?

Parcel 3: South of Crediton Road

4.514.55 Parcel 3 is made up of two distinct areas of the allocation:

- Land within SP22A to the south of Crediton Road (referred to as SP22A South)
- Land within ED2 to the north of the railway line (referred to as ED2 North)

4.524.56 Although these two sites form separate allocations, their proximity and physical relationship to one another means that there is an opportunity to consider their development jointly. Combining these sites is likely to enable a more viable and comprehensive development and encourage an effective use of ED2 North which is subject to a range of constraints as outlined below.

4.534.57 Overall, Parcel 3 covers an area of approximately 13.7 hectares. SP22A South is mainly in agricultural use for grazing and is bordered to its east by dense woodland surrounding the Stockley Valley. A small section of ED2 North is already developed for use as a depot.

4.544.58 There a number of constraints within Parcel 3 which will affect the types of land uses considered suitable for this area and which will have implications for how the development should be designed. These are explained in the table below and shown on the accompanying map:

Table 56: Parcel 3 constraints

Stockley Valley	The Environment Agency has identified a flood zone through the Stockley Valley. This is classified as flood zone 3, which is considered to be at high risk of flooding. As such, residential development in this area is considered to be 'more vulnerable' and should not be located here. It is therefore proposed that no development takes place within the identified flood zones in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 21. The watercourse and the woodland which surrounds it are important habitats for local biodiversity and by virtue of the flood zone, an appropriate buffer will be in place to help conserve and enhance the natural habitats in this area.
Woodlands, hedgerows and trees	The Stockley Valley forms a dense area of woodland and runs along the eastern boundary of the SP22A South site. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is present here. These woodlands should be retained in development proposals.
Visual sensitivity	Parcel 3 can be viewed from the northern boundary of the Dartmoor National Park. However, this area of land is relatively low lying and relates both physically and visually with surrounding built up development, particularly the development of H4 which lies immediately adjacent to SP22A South.
Ground conditions	A former landfill site is located within ED2 North north of the railway and as such is class ed <u>edified</u> as contaminated land.

	Investigation work is needed, in the form of gas monitoring and a full contamination assessment, to determine the suitability of this site for built development within 250m of the landfill site prior to any development commencing application being submitted. Consideration will need to be given to the types of development that are appropriate in this location.
Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) Pond	The SUDS pond associated with the development of the H4 site is located within this Parcel. Early consideration of the layout of development around the SUDs is required.
<u>Heritage and archaeological assets</u>	<u>There are currently no known historic environment constraints but there is the potential in the area for archaeological remains and further survey work will be required alongside any applications that are submitted to determine the extent of the remains, if any.</u>

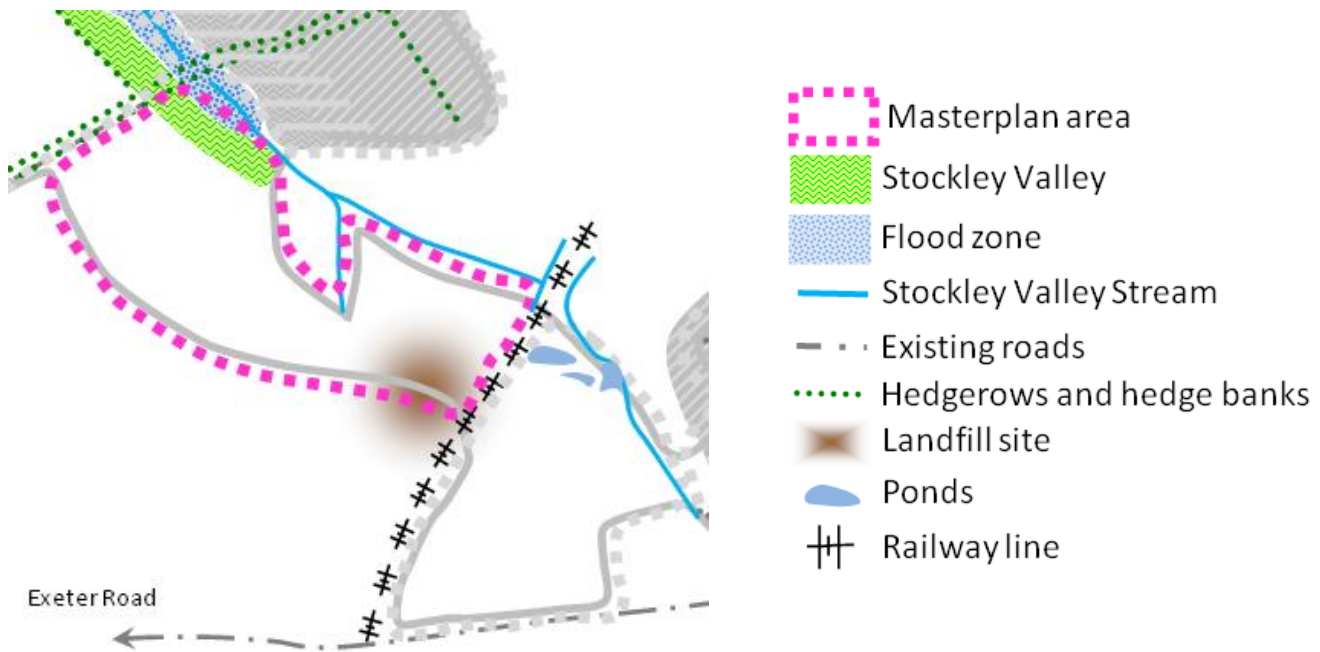


Figure 56: Parcel 3 constraints map

Access

4.554.59 Primary vehicle access will be achieved via the link road between Exeter and Creden Road. As set out in the previous section, it is expected that the link road will come forward as part of the first phase of any development within SP22A. However, if the link road has not been delivered by the time Parcel 3 comes



forward, it will need to be completed as part of this development.

4.564.60 Appropriate access points from the link road into the development will be required. The number, location and specification of these junction arrangements will need to be determined in accordance with the County Council as part of the pre-application process, in addition to appropriate footpath and cycleway provision.

Land use

4.574.61 Parcel 3 is comprised of land allocated for both residential and employment development. However, due to the constraints listed above, the potential for either of these uses to come forward on ED2 North is limited due to the presence of contaminated land. In addition, the undeveloped part of this site is at a much lower level than the depot which already exists, which means that its physical links with the area of SP22A South are much stronger than its connections with the depot and railway line.

4.584.62 Between the areas of ED2 North and SP22A South, there is an area measuring approximately 3 ha which is not currently within the boundaries of the allocation. These boundaries define the extent to which development can take place and should be regarded as firm edges. However, in exceptional circumstances and in cases where it can be demonstrated that development outside of the boundary would result in a higher quality, more viable development, a degree of flexibility may be acceptable. Given the relationship between this area of unallocated land and the two allocated sites either side of it, it is considered that a more comprehensive development may be able to be achieved by looking at this site in its entirety. It should be noted that this element of flexibility should not lead to a level of development above that set out in SP22 and that any applications of this nature would be advertised as a departure from the adopted development plan. This will enable those who support or oppose the boundary extension to engage in a robust decision making process.



4.63 All parts of the development should have safe and desirable footpaths and cycle ways throughout the development, to other town destinations and to existing rights of way. In particular, internal footpaths and cycle ways should be provided to link Parcel 3 with the southern section of Parcel 4 in the long term. This will require the crossing of the Stockley Valley and viability and achievability will have to be taken into consideration.



Housing

4.594.64 With regards to SP22A South, this land is allocated for residential development and combined with the rest of Parcel 3 can deliver approximately 200-225 homes. Should a proposal come forward which incorporates a justified and effective extension to the allocated boundary in the manner suggested above, a slightly higher level of development may be appropriate. This would need to ensure that it does not compromise the delivery of sufficient open space and a development that meets all the other required objectives. As with all residential developments, the Parcel should provide 40% affordable housing in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 9, subject to viability.

4.604.65 Given the physical relationship of Parcel 3 with H4 and the likely urbanised nature that will occur as a result of the link road, it is considered appropriate to encourage a design character which reflects the traditional styles and densities of the town. In this way, the development of Parcel 3 should reflect the principles of the Traditional Okehampton Character Area set out in Chapter 5 (f). A range of sizes and types of homes are encouraged to meet the identified housing needs of the community. In particular, smaller one, two and three bedroom properties are encouraged as well as housing which is suitable for the elderly e.g. single storey dwellings, Lifetime Homes and sheltered housing. Smaller bedroom properties are encouraged in the form of terraced and semi-detached properties in order to meet the identified housing needs of the community. The differing topography on this site may also lend itself to an element of split level housing where it would not impact on the wider landscape. It may be most suitable to create areas of higher density development feeding off of the link road with less dense development moving eastwards towards the Stockley Valley reflecting the rural edge to the development.

4.614.66 Given the recent welfare reforms, it is increasingly important that the development makes suitable provision for one bedroom properties as part of the mix offered across the site. Developers are encouraged to think creatively about how such properties can be provided.

Public Open Space, Sport and Recreation

4.624.67 Across Parcel 3, the Council would wish to see appropriate habitat creation, play areas, SUDs schemes and informal recreation space as suggested by the Design Brief and local community. Applicants are advised to liaise with the Council's Natural Environment and Recreation team in the early stages of preparing plans for this area.

4.634.68 ED2 North lends itself to these types of uses which are less sensitive to contamination and more complementary to nearby residential development. One option recommended for a



compatible use was included within the East of Okehampton Design Brief which suggested that this undeveloped area of land could be used to form a 'Stockley Valley Park', providing open and recreational space for nearby residents, businesses and visitors to enjoy. This would create an accessible central "lung" of green space for the enjoyment of residents and visitors to the town. The community has also expressed a desire to see the creation of a water meadow, recognising ground conditions in the area. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider these options within applications for development of Parcel 3. By doing so, it will help to meet the requirement for around 0.29ha of amenity space and will allow the residential development proposed within this area to be designed in a manner that maximises the use of the land and taking opportunities to deliver the open space requirements in adjacent areas. If the amenity space is not provided in this manner, alternative on site provision should be accommodated.

4.644.69 Parcel 3 will be expected to contribute to the provision of the NEAP which is being provided within Parcel 2. Early consultation will be required with the Council's Natural Environment and Recreation Team to determine the appropriate equipment to be provided.

4.654.70 There is an existing deficiency in playing pitch provision in Okehampton which has been identified in the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2007 and the development itself will also generate a need for further provision. As there is limited space for on-site pitch provision within SP22A it is considered most appropriate for Parcel 2 to provide a commuted sum equivalent to the provision of up to 0.77ha of playing fields (including changing facilities) and maintenance so that suitable facilities can be delivered elsewhere in the town.

Infrastructure

4.664.71 Detailed information about the infrastructure required and mechanisms for delivery is provided in Chapter 6. Parcel 3 will be expected to provide all relevant servicing and utilities infrastructure as listed in table 8 of Chapter 6.

4.674.72 There are a number of critical items of infrastructure which will need to be either provided for on-site or through financial contributions which are required in order to make the development acceptable. These are:

- Financial contributions towards and/or Provision of a link between Exeter and Crediton Roads (if not already delivered as part of Parcel 2 or earlier phases of development);
- Financial contributions to the delivery of the town centre access road;
- Contributions to the new primary school facility, including land acquisition costs;
- Contributions towards secondary school provision;
- Primary healthcare provision;
- Age appropriate equipped play and recreation areas;
- Bus service provision to link the development with other parts of the town; and
- Enhancements/additional provision of playing pitches;
- ~~Contributions to town centre access road;~~

4.684.73 There are further items of desirable infrastructure which would have benefits for the wider community and contributions to these may be sought where funding is available and where it can be justified that the development has a direct impact on its use.

Indicative Phasing

4.694.74 Development of this parcel is expected to commence between 2018 and 2021.

Indicative Layout

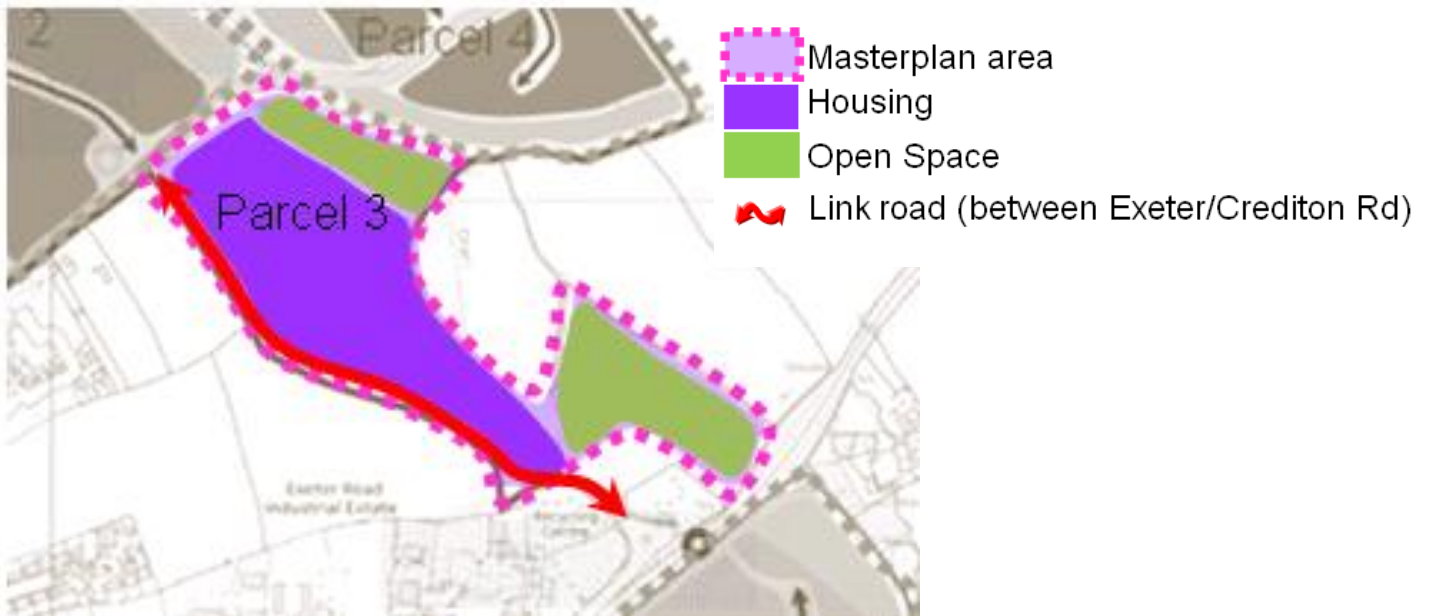


Figure 67: Parcel 3 indicative layout

Consultation question 4:

Do you agree with the proposals for Parcel 3 (South of Crediton Road)?

Parcel 4: East of Stockley Valley

4.704.75 Parcel 4 is made up of land within SP22A to the east of the Stockley Valley (referred to as East of Stockley Valley). It covers an area of approximately 9.8 hectares. The land is in agricultural use for grazing and is bordered to the west by dense woodland surrounding the Stockley Valley.

4.714.76 There are a number of constraints within Parcel 4 which will affect the design and layout of the development. These are explained in the table below and shown on the accompanying map:

Table 6: Parcel 4 constraints

Stockley Valley	The Environment Agency has identified a flood zone through the Stockley Valley. This is classified as flood zone 3, which is considered to be at high risk of flooding. As such, residential development in this area is considered to be 'more vulnerable' and should not be located here. It is therefore proposed that no development takes place within the identified flood zones in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 21. The watercourse and the woodland which surrounds it are important habitats for local biodiversity and by virtue of the flood zone, an appropriate buffer will be in place to help conserve and enhance the natural habitats in this area.
Woodlands, hedgerows and trees	The Stockley Valley forms a dense area of woodland and runs along the western boundary of the Parcel 4. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is present here. These woodlands should be retained in development proposals.
Visual sensitivity	This parcel is visually prominent, particularly in views from Dartmoor National Park, which is exacerbated by the physical separation from the existing urban area of Okehampton. Development in this parcel will need to mitigate against any potentially negative visual impacts from Dartmoor and the surrounding landscape.
Topography	Land in Parcel 4 rises steeply from the Stockley Valley and creates a degree of physical separation from the remainder of SP22. This makes part of the parcel more sensitive to development and lower densities and lower level properties may be more suitable here.
<u>Heritage and archaeological assets</u>	<u>There are currently no known historic environment constraints, but there is the potential in the area for archaeological remains and further survey work will be required alongside any applications that are submitted to determine the extent of the remains, if any.</u>

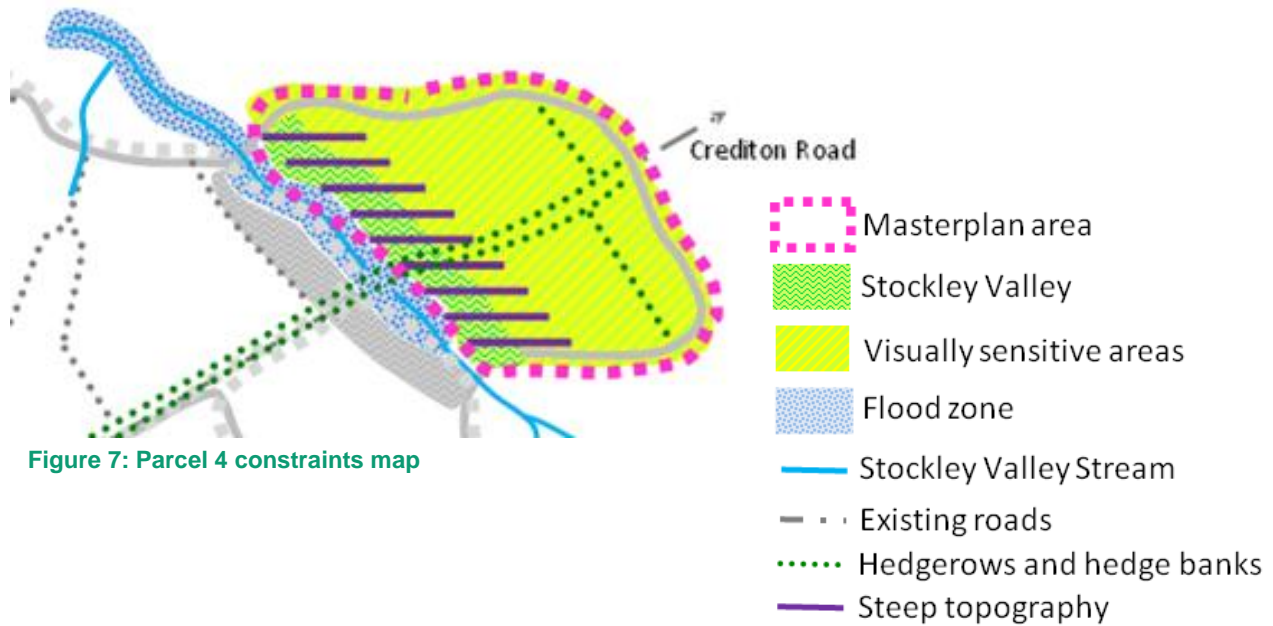


Figure 7: Parcel 4 constraints map

Access

4.724.77 Access to the site should ideally be achieved by a single point on either side of Crediton Road. There is the potential for access to be provided via alternative routes from the rest of SP22A, should a feasible solution be found. This will need to take into account design, landscaping, levels of development, environmental constraints and viability. Any applicant is encouraged to liaise with the County Council as early as possible as part of the pre-application process. The roads to serve Parcel 4 should reflect the rural character of the area and, where possible, the 'shared streets' concept will be encouraged in this location for internal highways.



4.78 As set out in previous sections, the delivery of a link road between Exeter Road and Crediton Road is required as part of the development of the allocation. Financial contributions towards the provision of the link road will be sought from the development of Parcel 4 if the link road has not been completed ahead of its development.

4.734.79 Internal footpaths and cycleways should be included within the design of Parcel 4. This is particularly important regarding potential links between the northern parts of Parcel 4 and Parcel 2 and the southern part of Parcel 4 and Parcel 3. Provision could link with green infrastructure and open spaces in these locations. All parts of the development should have safe and desirable footpaths and cycle ways throughout the development, to other town destinations and to existing rights of way. In particular, internal footpaths and cycle ways should also be provided to link Parcel 2 with the northern part of Parcel 4, Parcel 3 and the southern part of Parcel 4 in the long term. This will require the crossing

of the Stockley Valley and viability and achievability will have to be taken into consideration.

Land Use

Housing

4.744.80 Parcel 4 is comprised of land allocated for residential development and can deliver approximately 150 homes. As with all residential developments, the Parcel should provide 40% affordable housing in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 9, subject to viability.

4.754.81 This area has a notably different character from the other parcels of residential land within SP22A by virtue of its distance from the town and the more rural features evident. As such, it is therefore appropriate for less dense development in this area which reflects the hamlet and farmstead characteristics of the area.

4.764.82 It is therefore appropriate to encourage a design character which reflects the traditional style and character of the Hamlets. In this way, the development of this Parcel should reflect the principles of the Rural Hamlet Character Area set out in Chapter 5 (f), whereby properties are appropriately grouped or clustered around a central courtyard or green space.

~~A range of property sizes and types will be required that takes inspiration from the typical hamlet/farmstead pattern of~~

development typical of the area. A range of sizes and types of homes are encouraged to meet the identified housing needs of the community. In particular, smaller one, two and three bedroom properties are encouraged as well as housing which is suitable for the elderly e.g single storey dwellings, Lifetime Homes and sheltered housing. The style of housing should take inspiration from the hamlet/farmstead pattern of development typical of the area.



Public Open Space, Sport and Recreation

4.774.83 Parcel 4 will be expected to contribute to the provision of the NEAP which is being provided within Parcel 2. Early consultation will be required with the Council's Natural Environment and Recreation Team to determine the appropriate equipment to be provided.

4.784.84 There is an existing deficiency in playing pitch provision in Okehampton which has been identified in the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2007 and the development itself will also generate a need for further provision. As there is limited space for on-site pitch provision within SP22A it is considered most appropriate for Parcel 2 to provide a commuted sum equivalent to the provision of up to 0.52ha of

playing fields (including changing facilities) and maintenance so that suitable facilities can be delivered elsewhere in the town.

4.794.85 Parcel 4 is also expected to provide 0.19ha of amenity space or a commuted sum equivalent to such provision and maintenance.

Infrastructure

4.804.86 Detailed information about the infrastructure required and mechanisms for delivery is provided in Chapter 6. Parcel 4 will be expected to provide all relevant servicing and utilities infrastructure as listed in table 8 of Chapter 6.

4.814.87 There are a number of critical items of infrastructure which will need to be either provided for on-site or through financial contributions which are required in order to make the development acceptable. These are:

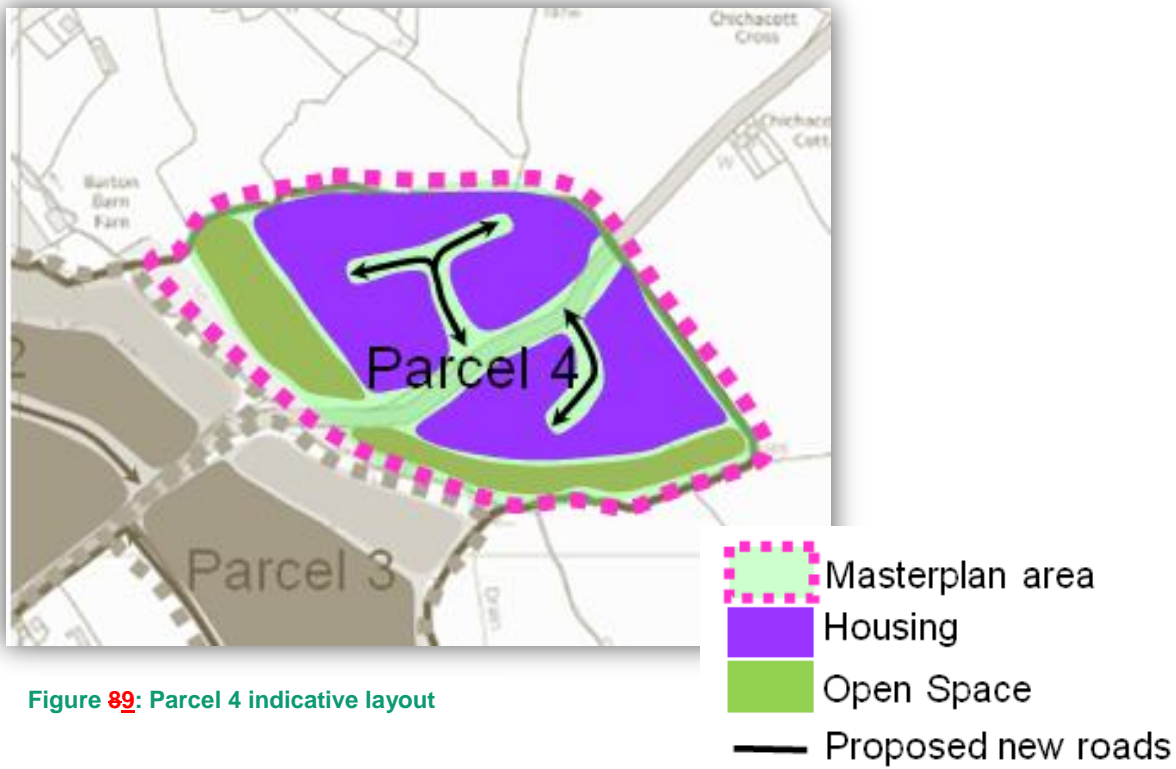
- Financial contributions towards the delivery Provision of a link between Exeter and Crediton Roads (if not already delivered as part of earlier phases of development);
- Financial contributions towards the delivery of the town centre access road;
- Contributions to the new primary school facility, including land acquisition costs;
- Contributions towards secondary school provision;
- Primary healthcare provision;
- Age appropriate equipped play and recreation areas;
- Bus service provision to link the development with other parts of the town; and
- Enhancements/additional provision of playing pitches; ~~and~~
- ~~Contributions to town centre access road.~~

4.824.88 There are further items of desirable infrastructure which would have benefits for the wider community and contributions to these may be sought where funding is available and where it can be justified that the development has a direct impact on its use.

Phasing

4.834.89 Development of this parcel is expected to commence between 2021 and 2024.

Indicative Layout



Consultation question 5:

Do you agree with the proposals for Parcel 4 (East of Stockley Valley)?

Parcel 5: North of Stockley Hamlet

4.844.90 Parcel 5 is made up of the land allocated as SP22B to the north of Stockley Hamlet (referred to as North of Stockley Hamlet) and covers an area of approximately 9.3 hectares. SP22B is mainly in agricultural use for grazing. In the south western corner of the site is the existing Farmer Luxtons Farm shop and parking area.

4.854.91 There are a number of constraints within Parcel 5 which will affect the design and layout of the development. These are explained in the table below and shown on the accompanying map:

Table 78: Parcel 5 constraints

Woodlands, hedgerows and trees	The Stockley Valley forms a dense area of woodland and runs along the western boundary of the SP22A East site. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is present here. These woodlands should be retained in development proposals.
Visual sensitivity	Parcel 5 is visually prominent, particularly in views from Dartmoor National Park, which is exacerbated by the physical separation from the existing urban area of Okehampton. Development in this parcel will need to mitigate against any potentially negative visual impacts from Dartmoor and the surrounding landscape.
<u>Heritage and archaeological assets</u>	<u>There are currently no known historic constraints but there is potential in the area for archaeological remains and further survey work will be required alongside any applications that are submitted to determine the extent of the remains, if any.</u>

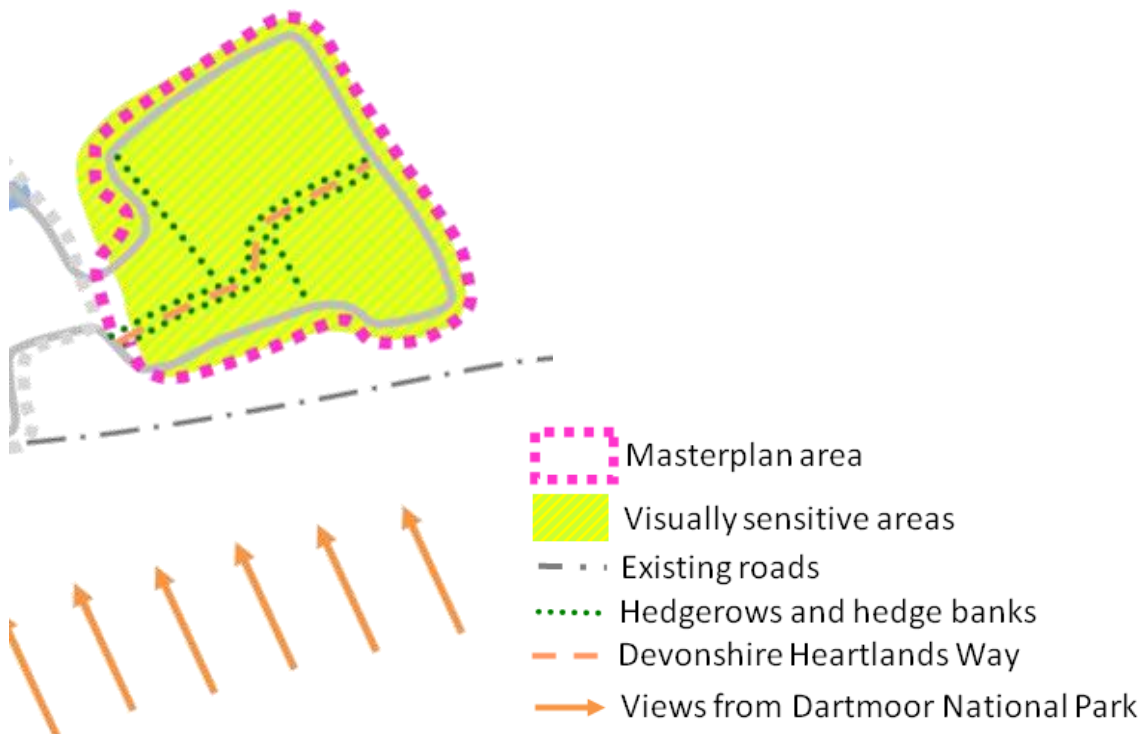


Figure 910: Parcel 5 constraints map

Access

4.864.92 Access already exists through the site. However, this is a narrow rural lane which forms part of the Devonshire Heartlands Way. This route has a reduced traffic role, serving the hamlets and existing farmsteads in the area.



4.874.93 Devon County Council has advised that access can be achieved to the development off this lane but that access points to both sides of Parcel 5 should be located at the western end to reduce the distance which vehicles travel along this highway. This will maintain the character and quality of the lane.

4.884.94 Opportunities should also be explored to provide internal highway access between Parcels 1 and 5 using the existing spur at the eastern end of the access road east of Higher Stockley Mead.



4.95 All parts of the development should have safe and desirable footpaths and cycle ways throughout the development, to other town destinations and to existing rights of way. In particular, a pedestrian and cycle link should be provided to the Devonshire Heartlands Way and should link internally with Parcel 1. This will require the crossing of the Stockley Valley and viability and achievability will have to be taken into consideration.

Land Use

Employment

4.894.96 Parcel 5 is allocated for predominantly employment uses where the overarching intention is to deliver a development with a range of job opportunities that are compatible with the rural nature of the site and its location within the Okehampton Hamlets. Any employment development which takes place on this site should reflect the characteristics of the Rural Hamlet Employment and Residential Character Area set out in Chapter 5(f).



4.904.97 Whilst the majority of this site should be used for employment, other uses may be acceptable but only where they enable the delivery of serviced employment land, increase the supply of jobs in the local area and/or contribute to local economic growth. In such circumstances, proposals for these employment enabling uses should clearly demonstrate that they have met these criteria, that they have no significant adverse impact on the town centre and that they are compatible with the surrounding employment uses.

Housing

4.914.98 The majority of residential development should be located within Parcels 2, 3 and 4 (in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 22). However, a small element of residential development may be appropriate within parcel 5 where it would help to deliver the employment land. Any residential development will need to be appropriately planned to ensure that it does not compromise the operation of surrounding employment uses. Any residential development will need to be built in a way which reflects the characteristics of the Rural Hamlet Employment and Residential Character Area set out in chapter 5(f).



The scale of residential development acceptable will be dependent on the proportion of other uses to be accommodated on the site. This will need to be considered alongside any proposals on parcels 2, 3 and 4 of SP22A to ensure there is not a significant oversupply or undersupply of the required amount of residential units and so that it does not compromise the delivery of other stated objectives. Any residential development in this area will be subject to the Core Strategy affordable housing requirements and will need to be otherwise acceptable in planning terms. A range of sizes and types of homes are encouraged to meet the identified housing of the community. In particular, smaller one, two and three bedroom properties are encouraged as well as housing which is suitable for the elderly e.g. single storey dwellings, Lifetime Homes and sheltered housing.

Public Open Space, Sport and Recreation

4.924.99 Within Parcel 5, the type and amount of open space and play areas required will be dependent on what uses come forward on the site and will be determined at the detailed planning application stage.

4.934.100 Where employment enabling residential development is proposed, Parcel 5 should make on-site provision for a Local Landscaped Area of Play (LAP). This will be necessary due to the distance from this site to the NEAP in Parcel 2 and other play facilities within the H4 allocated site. Early consultation will be required with the Council's Natural Environment and Recreation Team to determine the appropriate equipment to be provided.

4.944.101 There is an existing deficiency in playing pitch provision in Okehampton which has been identified in the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2007 and any residential development on this site will also generate a need for further provision. Parcel 5 should provide a commuted sum relevant to the level of any residential development proposed towards the provision of playing fields (including changing facilities) and maintenance so that suitable facilities can be delivered elsewhere in the town.

4.954.102 Parcel 5 is also expected to provide amenity space relevant to the level of any residential development proposed or a commuted sum equivalent to such provision and maintenance. Links should be promoted to any amenity space in Parcel 3 if this has been successfully delivered in this time.

Infrastructure

4.964.103 Detailed information about the infrastructure required and mechanisms for delivery is provided in Chapter 6. Parcel 5 will be expected to provide all relevant servicing and utilities infrastructure as listed in table 8 of Chapter 6.

4.974.104 There are a number of critical items of infrastructure which will need to be either provided for on-site or through financial contributions which are required in order to make the development acceptable. These are:

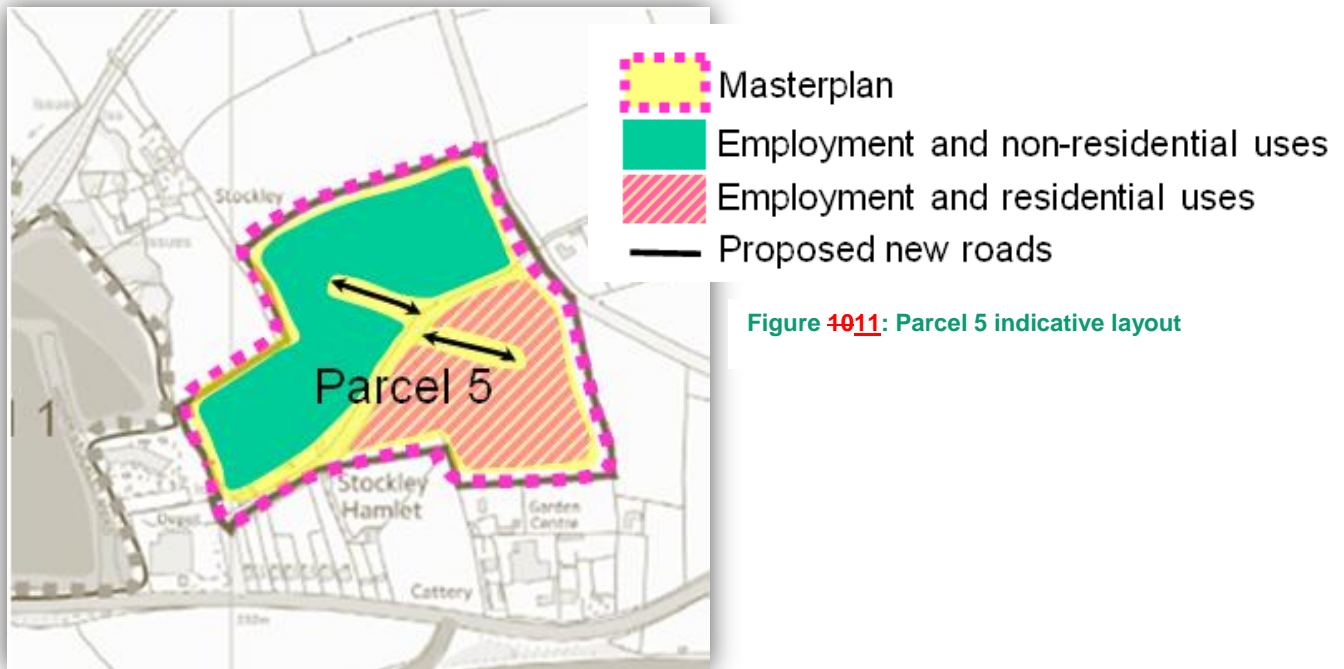
- ~~Financial~~ Contributions to the delivery of the town centre access road (if residential development is proposed);
- Contributions to new primary school facilities, including land acquisition costs (if residential development is proposed);
- Contributions to secondary school provision (if residential development is proposed)
- Primary healthcare provision (if residential development is proposed);
- Age appropriate equipped play and recreation areas (if residential development is proposed);
- Bus service provision to link the development with other parts of the town (if residential development is proposed); and
- Enhancements/additional provision of playing pitches (if residential development is proposed).

4.984.105 There are further items of desirable infrastructure which would have benefits for the wider community and contributions to these may be sought where funding is available and where it can be justified that the development has a direct impact on its use.

Indicative Phasing

4.994.106 ~~Development of this parcel is expected from 2018 onwards~~ Due to the mixed use nature of Parcel 5 and the benefits that additional employment uses would bring for the Okehampton area, this area of land could come forward from 2014. However, any development proposals for this parcel should be employment led as stated above.

Indicative Layout



Consultation question 6:

Do you agree with the proposals for Parcel 5 (North of Stockley Hamlet)?

5 | Design principles

- 5.1 The NPPF stresses the importance of good design and the role it plays in creating positive environments for people to live in. As such, the Council wishes to see the following design guidance reflected in applications for development. This refers specifically to ED2, SP22A and SP22B and but can also be used as good practice on other developments coming forward in the Okehampton area.
- 5.2 From the outset, applicants will be expected to demonstrate how their proposals make the most efficient use of land through the appropriate design and layout of the new development proposed. The efficient use of land not only promotes good and coherent developments which minimises the need for Greenfield developments, it also improves the viability of sites and thus helps deliver necessary infrastructure.
- 5.3 It is understood that there are viability considerations that need to be taken into account in design and materials, but there are many cost effective options which can be used to achieve a high quality and distinctive design across all aspects of development. Applicants are encouraged to engage early with the Council in pre-application discussions so that a viable development can be achieved whilst still ensuring a high quality layout and design.
- 5.4 This section looks at the following areas:
 - a. Access and street layout
 - Vehicle
 - Footpaths and cycleways
 - b. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
 - c. Boundaries
 - d. Broadband connections
 - e. Building materials and styles
 - f. Character areas and development densities
 - g. Open space provision
 - h. Orientation
 - i. Parking
 - j. Properties and their usability
 - k. Public transport
 - l. Site entrances
 - m. Sustainable construction
 - n. Sustainable energy
 - o. Sustainable urban drainage
 - p. Street furniture
- 5.5 Each of these categories contributes to reducing carbon emissions, achieving sustainable development, promoting safe and active communities and connecting the development with the surrounding landscape. They should be considered collectively and reflected in any application for development.

a. Access and street layout

Vehicle

- 5.6 The following requirements for the development should be incorporated within detailed planning applications for any of the identified parcels of land and specific advice in relation to this should be sought from relevant highway officers:
- Main routes should be built to a standard that is suitable for all types of vehicles required to serve the facilities within the development. This will include cars, buses, recycling and refuse vans and emergency vehicles. This list is not exhaustive and the main routes will need to ensure that they are accessible for all other types of vehicles which require access to the development at the detailed planning application stage.
 - Main routes should link easily to the main play and recreation areas and other key community spaces within the development.
 - Spaces for buses turning/circular routes and appropriate bus stops/shelters should be incorporated along the main routes.
 - Clearly designated cycle lanes should be provided as well as safe and generous pedestrian pavements.
 - Consideration should be given to the nature and siting of appropriate, safe pedestrian crossings on main routes that follow natural desire lines, link to footpaths and are well located in relation to services and facilities.

For each of these elements, discussion with the County Council should be held at the earliest opportunity to ensure appropriate provision is made.

- 5.7 From the main routes, a network of streets should be provided which feed naturally into the exterior areas of the development. Particularly within residential areas, a significant proportion of these streets should be designed as 'shared streets' where walking and cycling is given priority over the private car. Developers are encouraged to refer to the Manual for Streets (or successor) guidance as an example of best practice.
- 5.8 Apart from the main routes through the development, streets should be designed as subtly defined carriageways with no major strategic role. Highways should be designed to achieve an appropriate balance of priorities for walking, cycling and cars.
- 5.9 In most cases within the minor street network, cul-de-sacs should be avoided as they inhibit continual movement and connectivity throughout the development.
- 5.10 On both main routes and minor streets, natural traffic calming solutions should be used instead of winding road networks which promote a less efficient use of space and are uncharacteristic of the historical urban pattern of Okehampton. Options such as using pinch points, different road materials, pedestrian crossing points, on-street parking and landscaping should be explored to promote this.

Footpaths and Cycle ways

- 5.11 It is vital that any new development is able to connect and integrate with the existing community, services and facilities available in the area.
- 5.12 This in part can be achieved by providing excellent footpath and cycle connections to allow the easy movement around the development, particularly between homes, play and open space areas, the neighbourhood centre and key facilities, employment areas, the wider countryside and existing footpaths and cycleways, and onwards into the town. Consideration should be given to natural 'desire lines' and, where possible, such routes should be overlooked with natural surveillance to create safe links. Paths situated to the rear of properties are actively discouraged as these have proven to generate crime.
- 5.13 The allocated sites have a mix of steep and gentle slopes and consideration must be given to how people with mobility issues can effectively use these routes. Options such as appropriately placed rest areas and routes which follow gentle inclines should be explored. Level footpaths and pavements should also be promoted wherever possible and unnecessary steps should be avoided. For ease of use by all types of users, cycleways and footpaths should be clearly segregated.
- 5.14 Specific requirements are listed below:
- All parts of the development should have safe and desirable footpaths and cycleways leading to the neighbourhood centre and key open spaces;
 - From Parcel 2, a pedestrian and cycle link should be created which connects directly to the existing footpath that runs to the west of the site at Chichacott Lane
 - From Parcels 1 and 5, pedestrian and cycle links should be provided to the Devonshire Heartlands Way
 - Internal footpaths and cycleways between the northern parts of Parcel 4 and Parcel 2.
 - Internal footpaths and cycleways between the southern part of Parcel 4 and Parcel 3.
 - ~~Pedestrian and cycle access should also be possible from the station and ED2 to the existing rail overbridge to link with Hameldown Road~~ Opportunities should be explored to achieve a pedestrian and cycle link to Hameldown road across the railway line
 - Developers are encouraged to provide safe and secure covered cycle storage as part of the new development, particularly at the neighbourhood centre;
 - Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant pedestrian and cycle access.
- 5.15 The plan on the following page shows indicative walking and cycling routes for both SP22A, SP22B and ED2:

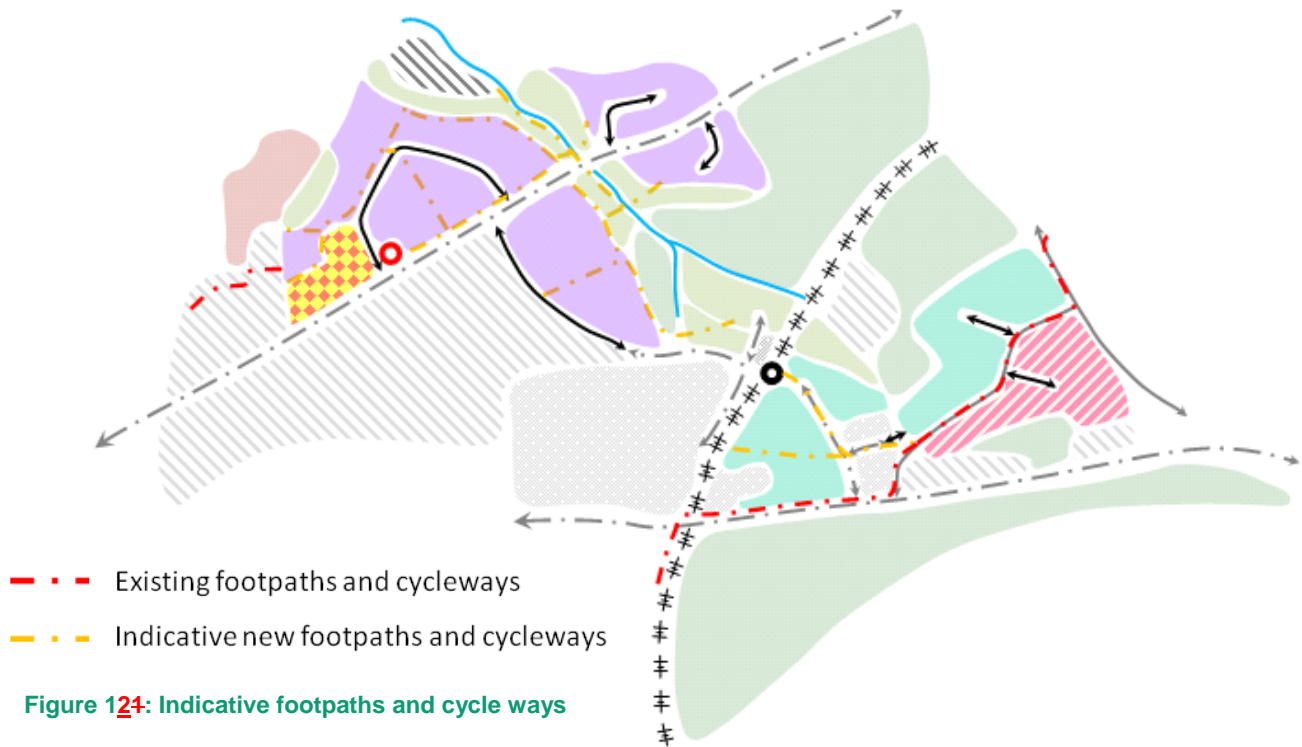


Figure 124: Indicative footpaths and cycle ways

b. Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

5.16 Chapter 4 identifies the key sensitivities and constraints on the different parcels of land. In particular, it notes the presence of woodlands, hedgerows, trees, hedge banks and watercourses which currently act as important wildlife corridors, as well as providing an important contribution to the landscape.

5.17 In particular, applications for development will need to have regard to the following:

- a. On all sites, woodlands, hedgerows, hedge banks, trees and watercourses should be retained and enhanced to provide continuous and varied open space networks for wildlife whilst also enriching the public domain. In any circumstances where these are likely to be breached to achieve access, these should be limited in their extent and appropriate alternative wildlife corridors should be provided.
- b. There are opportunities for structural and less formal tree planting in all parcels of the development. Structural planting provides benefits in terms of improvements to air quality, local ecology, wildlife corridors and overall design quality. In particular, native trees typical of the area and appropriate to the ground type in the specific planting area should be used, which will be determined at the detailed planning application stage.
- c. Sufficient buffering of hedgerows, hedge banks and woodlands should be ensured for minimal disturbance of the wildlife corridors, recognising the importance of maintaining them as unlit corridors.

- d. Opportunities to maximise the biodiversity value of open space, footpaths, cycleways and allotments will be sought in terms of their connectivity, planting and maintenance (e.g. by including fruit and nut trees). This applies in particular to the multi-functional space envisaged through the Stockley Valley which should be designed as a corridor with varied habitats benefiting wildlife which can be enjoyed by new and existing residents alike. This type of green infrastructure will have positive benefits for the water quality leading into the River Okement, satisfying the Water Framework Directive objective of 'no deterioration' of ecological status.
- e. Within the buildings themselves, opportunities will be sought to incorporate inbuilt provision for bats and birds, with the provision sensibly located or grouped to support various species (e.g. located to provide easy access to linear features or wooded areas, or grouped as some bird species prefer).
- f. The use of the site by protected species, particularly bats and dormice must be established by detailed surveys prior to any application submission, and mitigation effectively incorporated into the design of the site, including aspects such as layout, hedgerow and habitat management, lighting, and open space management.
- g. The provision of multifunctional green infrastructure can have benefits for the environment and to support healthy communities. Consideration should be given to the positive use of all green and public open spaces as well as any area of undevelopable land surrounding the development. For example, these areas could be promoted as woodland, meadows, allotments, orchards, community gardens or kept as partial agricultural use.

5.18 In accordance with the Core Strategy, all applications will need to demonstrate any potential impact on wildlife and biodiversity value and mitigation and enhancement measures will need to be put in place as required. A Landscape and Biodiversity Management and Monitoring Plan should be provided at the detailed planning application stage.

c. Boundaries

5.19 Boundary treatments are essential in providing clear definition to public and private spaces, can increase security for households and help to reinforce local character. Well designed boundaries can contribute positively to the overall character of the development and help to strengthen the local street scene.

5.20 The choice of boundary treatment in the new developments should reflect local character and the different areas within the sites. Consideration should be given to the use of either hard or planted boundaries and thus to the species, materials, height, colour and maintenance required to ensure that the quality of the street scene is not compromised by the choice of boundary treatment and that such boundaries are appropriate to the different uses. In the more densely built parts of development, there should be a strong street frontage, typical of the character of Okehampton and West Devon whereas softer frontages may be appropriate on edge of town, less densely developed sites.

- 5.21 For boundaries that front public areas, new stone faced Devon banks are encouraged wherever possible and existing Devon banks should be retained and enhanced. This has ecological benefits by ensuring that there are sufficient wildlife corridors throughout the development as well as reinforcing local character and the quality of the public realm. Buildings should be located a suitable distance away from existing tree corridors to avoid the over-shading of nearby properties, future pressure for tree works and the risk of falling mature trees.
- 5.22 The type of rear boundary treatment is also important so that the overall character of the area is not compromised and private gardens are of a good quality. If hedging is promoted in these areas, the Council will expect the provision of an initial supporting structure (such as railing or wire) to assist in establishing the hedge. Rear boundary treatments should avoid the use of close board fencing.
- 5.23 The development of the different parcels provides many opportunities for structural tree planting. This planting is characteristic of existing parts of the town and Hamlets where there is a very strong tree presence (e.g. Chichacott is very green and there are strong lines of mature beech along the upper part of Exeter Road). This should include the planting of native trees typical of the area. Further information can be obtained from the Council's landscape officer when considering the appropriate species and mix. The Council encourages pre-application discussions to ensure existing and proposed landscaping is designed into any scheme from the outset.
- 5.24 Given the edge of town location of the new development, it is important that this transitional character to the surrounding countryside is acknowledged through the use of appropriate landscaping. Therefore more natural forms of hard landscaping will be encouraged which also help with site drainage and biodiversity. This would include, for example, gravel or grasscrete rather than tarmac for areas such as parking spaces. Shared surfaces should be used wherever possible and these surfaces should be permeable to help with drainage.



- 5.25 Specimen trees are encouraged within the highway and should be used to soften the built form and also provide natural traffic calming through pinch points etc. Details of engineered tree pits should be discussed with the Council's landscape officer as part of the detailed application stage. Swathes of planting are encouraged through the development to provide a visual presence as well as functioning as green corridors.

d. Broadband connections

- 5.26 Okehampton is due to benefit from fibre network connections to superfast Broadband. It is important that new development is able to use this resource when it is available and be connected to the town's network supply. The most cost-effective option is to include

these fibres as part of the construction of the development rather than fit these retrospectively. Developers are strongly encouraged to include this provision within the development of all parcels of land within the allocations.

5.27 Developers should refer to the published Openreach developer guidance available on the BT website.

e. Building materials and styles

5.28 The overarching aim of the Masterplan is to achieve a high quality, locally distinctive development which embodies the enduring character of the town and the hamlets whilst creating a sustainable development of its time.

5.29 There is a diverse range of architectural styles present in Okehampton and the Hamlets, with no one dominant style. Within the historic core of the conservation area there are examples of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture. Typical characteristics of these properties include the following and help to contribute to a mix of texture and interest within the built form:

- Sash windows
- Bay windows
- Mullions
- Quoins
- Gable roofs with third floor living in the roof space
- Window lights in gable end
- Slate roofs
- High density terraced housing
- Variable roof heights and orientation

5.30 The town centre itself is relatively contained, with the main areas comprising Fore Street, the Arcade, Red Lion Yard and School Way. Residential development in the town centre, particularly along Northfield Road and North Street is typical of the dense development of its time, with long terraces and carriageway arches to rear parking. Slate is the common roof material and buildings are typically rendered with heavy painted concrete window sills. Stone is more commonly used on ancillary buildings (for example garages, walling and banks and on public and higher status buildings such as the old schools and Town Hall).



- 5.31 It is not the role of the masterplan to comment on the merits of the various styles present in the town but to ensure that new development has a strong identity to the town and Hamlets through high quality design and construction methods.
- 5.32 It is not necessary for new development to replicate the urban form of the past but to take inspiration from the qualities of the historic built environment. The Council will encourage developments which successfully integrate features of the past with innovative, sustainable and modern design and construction methods that have reference to local vernacular and form.
- 5.33 Colours, materials and features used on individual buildings, rooftops and surfaces are all important in helping to achieve a high quality development that is distinctive to the area and contributes to achieving a sense of place. The following should be taken into consideration.

Materials

- 5.34 Typical materials that have been used historically in the Okehampton area are natural slate, stone and render. New development should aim to incorporate these locally sourced materials in buildings, rooftops and surfaces wherever possible. The use of render has also featured on more recent 20th century developments in the town and more modern sustainably sourced materials can be incorporated effectively into new developments where they are in keeping with the style of the area and can complement the more traditional materials.
- 5.35 Natural slate should be used on roof surfaces. Ideally, a mix of differing natural slates will be used throughout the new development to provide texture and interest to the roofscape. This is particularly important for the views into the site from the Dartmoor National Park and wider countryside. Concrete roof tiles will be resisted.
- 5.36 Where natural stone is to be used, particularly on key buildings and vistas, it should be randomly laid in lime mortar. Natural stone is encouraged on ancillary buildings and boundaries (for example on garages where the house is rendered). Brickwork will be discouraged as it is not typical of the local style.
- 5.37 The ‘fabric first’ principle must be applied to all new development. This means the need for energy is reduced at the outset through good construction and the use of appropriate materials is key to this. This should be supported by overall energy efficient design which incorporates high standards of insulation, glazing and ventilation.
- 5.38 Some materials (such as some mixes of self-coloured render) which have been used on recent developments have led to premature ageing of buildings and staining due to the



weather and the Council is keen to avoid the continued use of such materials and techniques. The Council will actively encourage the use of materials which will weather appropriately over time and contribute to the long-term attractiveness of the development. The highest specifications of design and materials possible will be sought across the development.

Building form

5.39 The provision of two storey houses is considered to be appropriate for development to the east of Okehampton. Well-proportioned two storey dwellings with third floor living in the roof space may be considered appropriate but only in locations where they do not compromise the amenity of neighbouring properties (i.e. by overlooking), have minimal impact on the landscape and contribute in a positive manner to the quality of design of the local street scene. On these properties, there should be gable end windows and/or dormer rooflights.



5.40 Where possible, split-level properties and level changes internal to houses should be explored to address the more extreme topography in some areas of the site in order to avoid large retaining structures externally.

5.41 All properties should have access to a reasonable amount of private open space. Larger properties in particular should make provision for good sized gardens. Where apartments and collections of smaller properties do not have access to high levels of private open space, they should be well located so as to ensure easy access to community spaces and play areas or the creation of roof gardens should be promoted. Roof gardens can add vital private amenity space for residents as well as help to contribute ecological value to buildings.

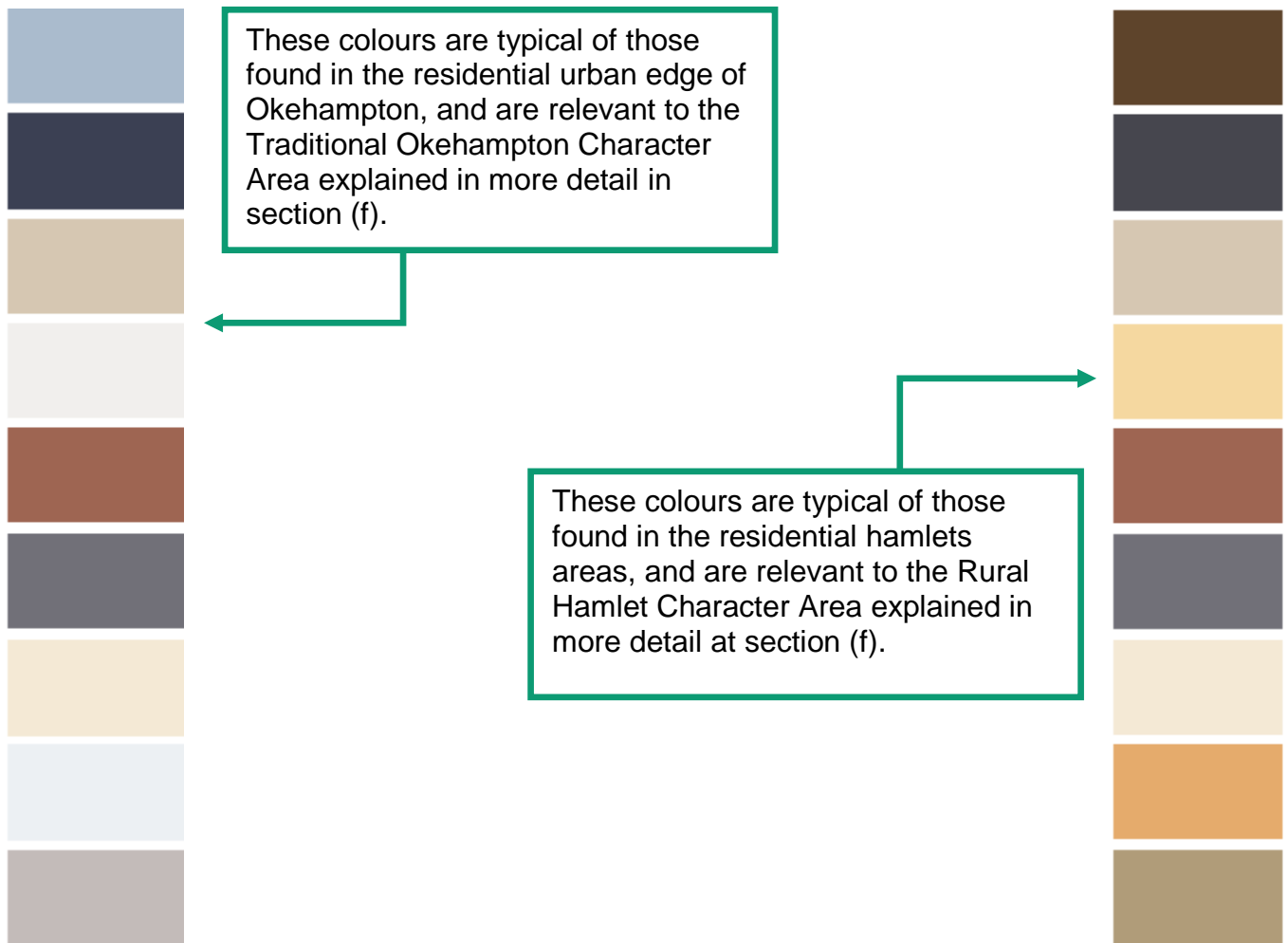
5.42 As is typical of the character of Okehampton, roof pitches should be steeper with a narrower plan form.

5.43 Solid fuel heating through multi-fuel burners etc is being increasingly demanded and incorporated back into new buildings. Where this occurs either internal chimneys of a local design or flues where appropriate (on more contemporary properties) should be incorporated. These add interest to the roofscape and overall design.

Colours

5.44 There is a clear palette of colours which are distinctive to Okehampton and the Hamlets and should be used as the basis of building and street colour design in the new development for both residential and employment uses. These are shown below and

can be used to reflect the existing buildings in the new whilst also providing identities to different areas of the new development.



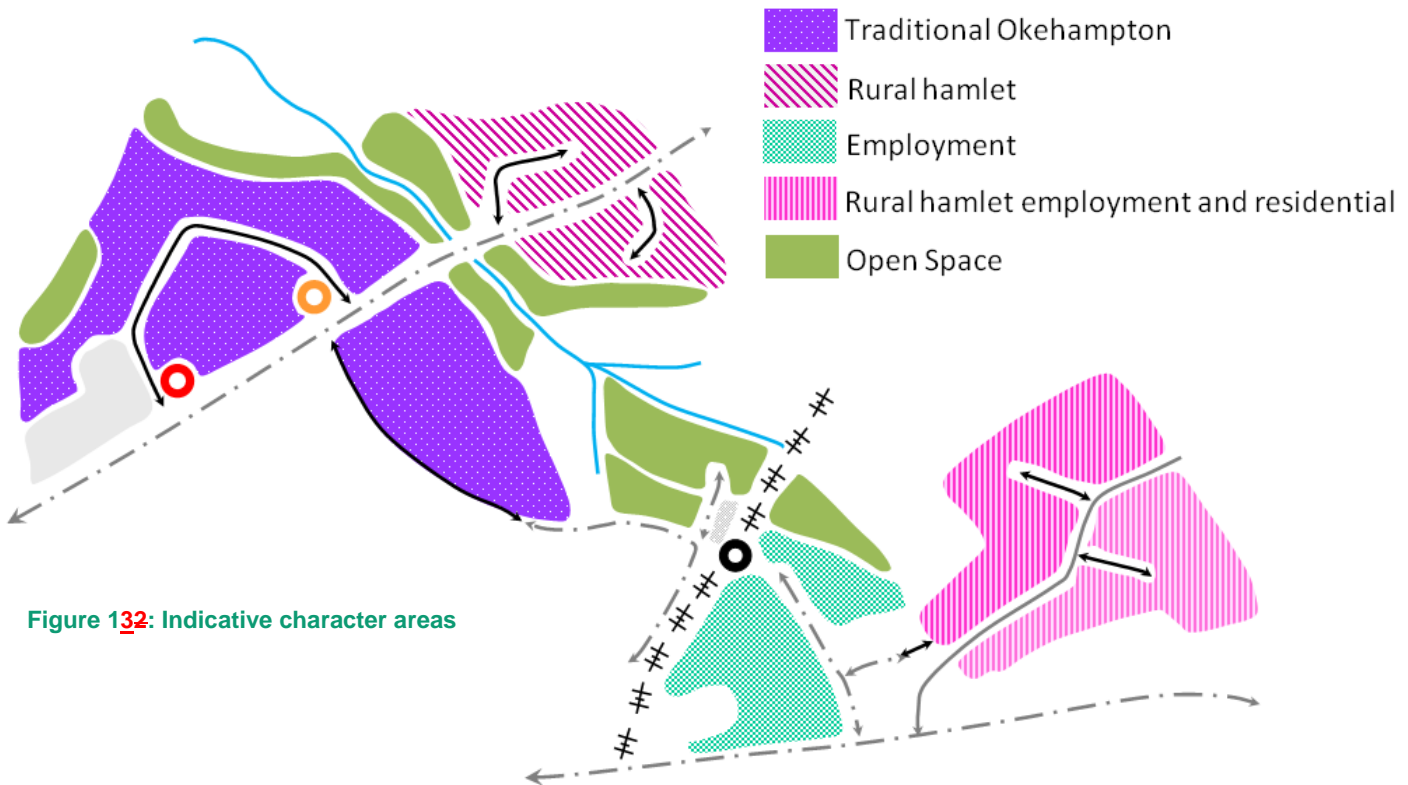
Windows

- 5.45 The design and placement of windows can make a strong contribution to the local character and quality of the development. They should be designed and located in ways which add significant detail and distinctiveness to buildings and maximise opportunities to overlook the street and open space.
- 5.46 Across Okehampton, the types of windows that have been used on buildings vary considerably and therefore the design of windows within the new development should focus on being in keeping with the overall style that the development is keen to promote, being mindful of how they contribute to individual dwellings and the wider street scene.
- 5.47 Both the size and positioning of windows are important in maximising the provision of natural light and solar gain into buildings. The use of well proportioned and well positioned windows is strongly encouraged as it reduces the requirements for artificial lighting and therefore improves the energy efficiency of the building.

- 5.48 All elevations should contain windows that are located in a considered and well proportioned manner. Blank elevations should be avoided as windows offer natural surveillance opportunities and therefore help to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 5.49 Simple casement windows are encouraged and should be considered as an integral part of the design of the development. The use of stick on glazing bars will not be acceptable.
- 5.50 Wherever possible, window frames and doors should be constructed with sustainably sourced timber, particularly on key and focal buildings.

f. Character areas and development densities

- 5.51 The purpose of identifying character areas is to ensure a variety of design and layout so that different parts of such a large development are distinctive whilst being cohesive. These character areas are not intended to be overly prescriptive, but seek to provide guidance to inform high quality design.
- 5.52 There are distinct areas within the sites where different character areas will be applicable. These different areas should respond to the management principles of the Landscape Character Assessment and to the different types of Historic Landscape Character. Indicative layouts and illustrations setting out how these character areas could be interpreted are shown in Figure 132.



5.53 In terms of Landscape Character, the allocated sites sit within an area defined as “Undulating Upland Plateau” (as defined by the West Devon Borough and Tamar Valley AONB Landscape Character Assessment). This landscape area has some defining characteristics such as:

- Gently rolling upland intersected by the Stockley Valley Stream;
- Hedge banks which line the majority of the routes through the sites;
- A few small areas of woodland e.g. Stockley Valley and around the settlements of Chichacott and Stockley;
- Networks of winding minor roads, e.g. Chichacott Road and the tracks around Stockley Hamlet;
- Sparse settlements away from the main town centre; and
- High and open landscape with extensive views.

5.54 Understanding and integrating these defining features of the landscape into the proposed development wherever possible will help to establish a distinctive identity and a memorable sense of place.

5.55 A set of management principles accompany the Landscape Character Assessment and are available on the Council’s website. These should be used to inform the detailed layout and design of the development.

5.53 5.56 The Council has an adopted policy (SP6) to manage the density of housing development. This policy states that developments at less than 30 dwellings per hectare will generally be resisted but that lower densities may be acceptable where there is an existing strongly defined low density character.

➤ Traditional Okehampton Character Area

This character area should contain a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced housing types that are generally two storeys in height. An element of properties which contain third floor living within the roof space, reflecting the character of the town centre, will also be appropriate where the amenity of neighbouring properties is not compromised (i.e. by overlooking), there is minimal impact on the landscape and where such properties contribute in a positive manner to the quality of design of the local street scene. On these properties, there should be gable end windows and/or dormer rooflights. The differing topography in these areas may also lend itself to an element of split level housing.

There should be a higher density of dwellings along the main routes within this character area, reflecting the proximity to public transport routes, education and community facilities. There should be a strong built frontage along the main roads through the development. Key/focal buildings should be located along the main routes and around the neighbourhood centre.

Streets should be laid out in a compact built form which is similar in character, form and layout to the residential neighbourhoods in the centre of Okehampton. They should be designed as subtly defined carriageways and should not have a major strategic role.

➤ Employment Character Area

This area should accommodate units for medium sized manufacturers, light industry, storage facilities at a range of scales, office space and the service and tourism sector. There is existing vehicular access to this area that is capable of accommodating HGV's. Proposals for service and tourism sector and any other commercial uses will be supported where there is no significant adverse impact on the town centre.

The design of the building should complement the Okehampton Business Centre already on the site. Service areas, storage, parking and turning arrangements will need to be developed within any planning application that is submitted.

Where possible, development should provide a well defined and high quality frontage along Exeter Road, being sensitive to views from the Dartmoor National Park and helping to strengthen this as one of the arrival points to the town and promoting the excellent links to the A30.

➤ Rural Hamlet Character Area

Dwellings in this character area should be appropriately grouped or clustered in an inward facing manner around a central courtyard or green space reflecting the rural hamlet characteristics of the farmsteads in the area. Typically these clusters will comprise of one larger unit/higher status building set within a larger curtilage (to replicate the traditional farm house), with a smaller grouping of buildings to reflect traditional barns, thereby creating a range of different housing types.

This character area should have strong pedestrian and cycle links to the Stockley Valley and to parcels 2 and 3, as well as good access to the surrounding countryside.

Hedgerows and existing trees should be a positive and strong feature of the built form, supplemented by additional planting, particularly along the boundaries, to create a strong landscape structure within which the development sits.

➤ Rural Hamlet Employment and Residential Character Area

Within this character area, uses that will be appropriate should reflect the rural setting and include small workshops, live/work units, light industry, artisan and craft workspace, **small office space** and storage development, agricultural/farming related businesses and a small proportion of residential dwellings. To promote a tight knit and enterprising community, these types of units should be set within easily accessible clusters.

Development should be of a design that reflects and respects the visual sensitivity of the site from the Dartmoor National Park. Buildings should be designed so as to be as minimally intrusive in to the landscape, whilst promoting a strong association with the surrounding landscape. Buildings should be more rural in character and should incorporate distinctive landscaping features of the existing trees and hedge banks. Appropriate natural building materials are encouraged wherever possible.

Where residential units are promoted to facilitate the delivery of serviced employment land across the remainder of the site, they should be located in the southern area of parcel 5, to the north of Stockley Hamlet and should reflect the characteristics of the Rural Hamlet Character Area above. Any residential development should not compromise the operation of surrounding employment uses.

g. Open space provision

- | ~~5.54~~5.57 This includes sports, play and recreation areas, allotments, community gardens, orchards and informal spaces.
- | ~~5.55~~5.58 The NPPF states that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. The Council will require an appropriate proportion and quality of play areas and open spaces to be provided to meet this national policy objective.
- | ~~5.56~~5.59 The type and amount of open space to be provided in the allocated sites should be discussed with Council officers as part of the pre-application discussions to ensure that it meets locally identified needs and is complementary to existing facilities in the town.
- | ~~5.57~~5.60 Open space and recreation facilities are important to the quality of life of people who live, work and visit the area. Within the new developments, there is a requirement to provide easy and safe access to good quality, recreational space. The nature and scale of these open spaces should be appropriate to the location, topography and character of the area and discussed with Officers at the pre-application stage.
- | ~~5.58~~5.61 The location and siting of open spaces should be integral to the development. They should be well related to nearby development to provide natural surveillance and help to create safe and secure environments which do not attract nuisance behaviour. It is expected that there should be a mix of formal and informal spaces across the site to provide a variety of opportunities for the local community to enjoy.
- | ~~5.59~~5.62 New play and recreation areas, open spaces and footpath and cycle links should complement the facilities already provided in the town, and integrate the new development effectively with the existing town.
- | ~~5.60~~5.63 Where allotments, community gardens and orchards are proposed, these should be easily accessible and well connected to footpaths and cycle ways and, where possible, formal public transport routes. The location of allotments should have regard to the topography, orientation and local soil conditions so as to maximise the opportunities for community food production.
- | ~~5.61~~5.64 Applications for residential developments should be accompanied by a Landscape and Biodiversity Management and Monitoring Plan. This will need to address the layout and function of public open spaces and make appropriate arrangements for their long-term management and maintenance.

h. Orientation

- | ~~5.62~~5.65 Buildings should be orientated in a manner which takes into consideration the following:

- **Local topography and contours:** within the sites are areas of challenging topography. This will have a significant influence on the design of the development.
- **Opportunities to maximise solar gain:** facing the most frequently occupied rooms towards south will maximise use of the sun's heat whilst minimising the loss of energy.
- **Well related to street layout:** providing an active frontage and natural surveillance.
- **Focal points:** local focal points should be located where they attract the attention and encourage people to move through the development, provide visual interest and positively contribute to the quality and interest of public spaces and streets.
- **Respond to external views:** in particular the outward views towards the Dartmoor National Park, Ball Hill and Abbeyford Wood should be a primary consideration in establishing the layout of streets, buildings and open space.
- **Weather protection:** recognising the degree of exposure to typical weather conditions.

i. Parking

- | 5.635.66 Within the rural area of West Devon, it is acknowledged that there remains a high dependency on the private car. As such, it is important to ensure that adequate car parking is included within the scheme without compromising the overall design quality and layout.
- | 5.645.67 The layout and location of parking areas is a key feature that can affect the overall quality and functioning of the development. It will be important to ensure that parking does not dominate the street scene and that an appropriate balance is reached between incorporating sufficient parking spaces to serve the new development whilst reflecting the character of the area. Parking provision should be considered as an integral part of the design and layout of new development.
- | 5.655.68 The Council would wish to see as much on-plot parking as is compatible with the design and layout and character area principles. This should be provided in close and convenient proximity to the buildings and dwellings which it serves for people going about their daily business.
- | 5.665.69 Elsewhere, the Council would wish to see a mix of parking arrangements appropriate to the use of the sites and the different character areas envisaged by this masterplan:
- Courtyard parking should only be considered where it can be demonstrated that is an efficient use of space and is overlooked by surrounding properties. Courtyards should be well related to residential units with easy and safe footpath access to properties. Spaces should be clearly demarcated to avoid confusion for residents and visitors about parking arrangements.
 - Provision for disabled parking. Manual for Streets recommends that 5% of parking spaces are designated for disabled people and this should be considered as best practice within the development.
 - Adequate provision for public use car parking (e.g. visitors, care providers, delivery vehicles, car club etc).

- Adequate parking (approximately 60-70 spaces) should be provided around the railway station in Parcel 1, alongside safe bicycle storage.
- Additional parking spaces should be provided as required for uses associated with the neighbourhood centre and school in Parcel 2.
- At appropriate locations in the development, particularly at the neighbourhood centre, school and station, provision should be made for electric car charging points. It should be possible to incorporate such facilities within individual residential units in the future and this should be considered at the design stage.
- Options for integrated on-street parking should also be explored and designed so as not to dominate the street scene whilst ensuring safe pedestrian access along the building line.
- Flats are not expected to make up a significant proportion of the housing stock but where they are used should be in keeping with the local character of the surrounding properties. Flats over garages (FOGs) can contribute to the mix of housing within a scheme as well as providing parking for its accompanying properties. It may be appropriate in some situations to provide access to courtyard parking beneath these units, offering natural surveillance. Consideration to the suitability of this type of property within the scheme and how the parking arrangements for the site can be delivered should form a key part of the design and layout.
- Ad-hoc street parking should be discouraged through subtle design, boundaries and landscape features.

j. Properties and their usability

5.675.70 Of importance to the community of Okehampton is to ensure that all new development is designed with the practicalities of day to day living in mind. As such, the following should be considered within the overall design of development:

- Private gardens should ideally be as level as possible and offer opportunities to maximise the enjoyment of the outdoor space and provide the chance to dry washing outside. The positioning of gardens should be determined through the orientation of the development to maximise natural daylight. Gardens should be screened with appropriate boundary treatments (see section (c)) and be safe and secure areas for residents to enjoy;
- Arrangements for the storage of refuse bins should be well related to properties and be located so as not to dominate the street scene. Collection points should ideally not require the transporting of bins through the house;
- Road layouts and parking arrangements should not compromise the access and turning of emergency vehicles;
- Ensuring appropriate provision of indoor or outdoor drying areas;
- Where garages are provided, they should be adequately sized so that they can accommodate a family sized car and be integrated or well related to the property;
- Providing facilities and space for general storage, e.g. dedicated storage areas or attic areas;
- Arrangements for waste collections and street cleaning (see Council guidance at www.westdevon.gov.uk).

k. Public transport

5.685.71 It will be important that the new developments are served by public transport to provide access to the town centre and offer sustainable travel options for the new development. Within Parcel 2, it will be particularly important to ensure that the bus service serves the neighbourhood centre and school. Consideration should be given from the outset to the design of roads that are able to accommodate bus movement and turning.

5.695.72 The Council encourages developers to engage with Devon County Council at the early stages of the design preparation to discuss the provision of a bus service for the new development. These discussions should look at how the service can link into existing operational routes, agree details of routes and understand appropriate highway specifications and turning facilities.

5.705.73 All parts of the development should be accessed by easy, safe and attractive walking routes, ideally within 400m of a bus stop which is appropriately sited within the development. The most convenient location for a bus stop is often at a road junction so that it is able to connect to a number of pedestrian routes and well related to appropriate pedestrian crossings. Bus stops and the railway station should be easily accessible to take account of the mobility needs of all individuals. This should be encouraged wherever possible.

l. Site entrances

5.715.74 Parcels 1 - 5 are situated along main routes into the east of Okehampton. Currently, these sites form part of the rural landscape and, as they are developed, the nature of these approaches will change to a more urban setting. It is therefore important that however these sites are developed, the entrances need to be safe, attractive and sensitive to neighbouring properties, uses and landscapes.

5.725.75 In particular, these site entrances should be developed in accordance with the following principles:

- Development along Chichacott Road should have regard to the character and form of existing bungalows and the rural nature of the road which they face on to. Green street frontages, single storey dwellings and/or dormer bungalows may be appropriate types of development in this location.
- Where buildings are located directly adjacent to Exeter Road or Crediton Road they should provide a cohesive street scene and acknowledge the scale and character of neighbouring properties and the transition from the countryside to the town.
- In Parcel 1, new development is encouraged to have suitable amounts of visibility from the main road. In these instances, the Council would expect the buildings to be of a design that complements the site's setting and incorporate suitable landscaping.
- On all sites, the entrances should create an appropriate transition between the rural and urban landscapes by being fully interspersed with a strong landscaped frontage.

m. Sustainable construction

5.735.76 The area around the allocations has seen a high level of development in recent years. Concerns have been raised by nearby residents about dust and noise arising from the construction. It is important to ensure that any further development in this area does not affect air quality significantly and as such, planning applications should be accompanied by an Air Quality report and Construction Management Plan.

5.745.77 Sustainable construction is also important in helping to protect soils and minimising the risk of environmental harm such as excessive run-off and flooding. Sustainable construction can result in positive outcomes such as cost savings, successful landscaping, enhanced amenity, and a healthy, natural environment.

n. Sustainable energy

5.755.78 Core Strategy Strategic Policy 2 requires all new developments above 10 dwellings or 1,000 sq m of non-residential development to generate at least 10% of its energy from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources and this will need to be demonstrated in the planning applications.

5.765.79 The Council is mindful of the progression of building regulations towards zero carbon development and would expect high levels of energy efficient and sustainable design so far as is compatible with the overall viability of the site.

5.775.80 As referenced in part (e) of this chapter, the 'fabric first' principle to energy efficiency should be applied, with the focus being on maximising solar gain whilst minimising the loss of energy.

5.785.81 The orientation, design and layout should promote the integration of renewable micro-generation, such as installation of solar pv and solar thermal panels. Where the viability of the development does not permit this, 'future proofing' should ensure that roof structures, wiring and hot water tanks can accommodate technologies at a later date.

5.795.82 The indicative total of 900 homes and proposed community and employment uses provides scope to investigate the feasibility of decentralised distributed energy networks and their viability. It is recognised that the allocated sites will be built out in a phased manner and it is therefore important that early phases of development do not preclude the later development or extension of distribution networks.

5.805.83 The following aspects of delivery should be fully explored:

- Where development is occurring concurrently, or where the developer interests are known, a collaborative approach will be expected so that the cost of installing distribution networks and generating technology is spread evenly across the phases.
- In cases (for example because of market conditions, detailed site viability etc) where it is not possible to deliver low carbon energy supplies, infrastructure to enable the retrofitting of low carbon energy supplies will be expected, for example the installation of pipe work. This will enable properties to connect to a decentralised network even if it is not operational until later phases.
- Solutions that can be delivered for groups of buildings or at the whole site level.
- The degree to which distribution networks can be retrofitted into nearby development.
- The impact of the technologies on the amenity of the site and surroundings.
- Arrangements for the longer term management of the technology and energy supplies.

o. Sustainable urban drainage

5-815.84 The Environment Agency has identified a range of flood related issues across the allocated area. This includes areas of Flood Zone 3, flood risk from ordinary watercourses, surface water issues and the Critical Drainage Area.

5-825.85 As such, applications will need to include a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment with a Strategic Drainage Strategy. If applications come forward as individual parcels, the FRA and Drainage Strategy should take into consideration the wider allocation and how development across the whole area will have an impact.

5-835.86 Development in this area will have to play its part in reducing current rainfall run-off rates. All off-site surface water discharges from the development should mimic the "Greenfield" performance up to a maximum 1 in 10 year discharge. On-site, all surface water should be safely managed to the "1 in 100 climate change" conditions. To satisfy the above will require additional water storage areas to be created within the site compared to the normal SUDS design, thereby contributing to a reduction in flooding downstream.

5-845.87 Infiltration and ground investigations should be undertaken early on in the planning process to understand the drainage issues of the development sites. For each phase of development, the Environment Agency encourages a Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs) plan to be prepared to demonstrate how the development will address surface water conveyance and storage.

5-855.88 SUDs will need to be used to reduce the rate and volume of surface water run-off as a result of the development. Options such as swales, open drainage features and filter drains for surface water conveyance are encouraged and detention basins, permeable paving or soakaways for surface water attenuation and/or infiltration should be explored. These will need to be capable of accommodating storm water and made

with robust features which are able to cope with drainage system blockages and other unforeseen circumstances.

~~5.865.89~~ SUDs can also offer benefits for the local environment and biodiversity of the development, alongside improved flood management. There are opportunities to integrate SUDs with wider landscaping and open space provision and this should be considered at the early stages of design.

p. Street furniture

~~5.875.90~~ Street furniture includes features such as signage, lighting, benches, bollards, public art, bus and railway shelters, waste bins, dog fouling bins and any other pieces of equipment which are situated on streets and within open spaces.

~~5.885.91~~ In line with Government guidance, the Council is keen that there is not an over dominance of street furniture and that the overall design pays careful consideration to a clean and clutter-free street scene. It is particularly important that any street furniture proposed as part of the new development is appropriate to the more rural setting of the sites. The following principles should be taken into consideration:

- A bespoke approach using local materials and styles that reflects the rural nature of the development areas
- Signs should only be used where they serve a clear function
- The positioning and style of street furniture should be considered as part of the overall design of the development and where used should be attractively located around the development.
- Where possible, street furniture should be incorporated within the actual building design (e.g. signs erected on buildings or boundary walls).
- Street furniture should be appropriately located so that it does not encourage inappropriate behaviour, thus affecting the quality of life of local residents.
- Street lighting should be used only in so far as it is essential for road safety and security. This should be in the form of low level lighting with downward firing to ensure that limited light escapes into the sky. Opportunities for a 'dark skies' element should be explored to respect local ecology. Applicants are referred to the County Council's policy for Street Lighting for Carbon Reduction which is available on their website – www.devon.gov.uk.

Consultation question 7:

Do you support the design aspirations of the masterplan?

6 | Delivering the development

- 6.1 This masterplan seeks to achieve an ambitious and exciting development for Okehampton and the Hamlets which involves the delivery of new homes, local employment opportunities, new primary education facilities and traffic infrastructure in the town.
- 6.2 To achieve a well serviced and comprehensive development, there needs to be an appropriate delivery and phasing plan. This will help to ensure that funding from the new homes is available at necessary intervals to bring forward the infrastructure required.
- 6.3 Chapter 4 highlighted the infrastructure required to support the development of each parcel of land. This section provides further detail on the delivery organisations and type of contribution required.

a. Infrastructure requirements

- 6.4 Infrastructure planning is an essential part of the plan-making process. It enables the Council to ensure that any new development which takes place is supported by the right level of infrastructure at the right time and that new development contributes positively towards this.
- 6.5 This chapter updates the Okehampton section of the “2010 WDBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan”. This information will be regularly monitored through the development of the allocations to ensure that the required infrastructure is being delivered and that all infrastructure requirements are up to date. Any updates will be made as necessary through the regular monitoring reports that the Council prepares. Any applications for development across the allocation should refer to the most up to date version of this information.
- 6.6 The generic infrastructure requirements associated with the development of the allocated sites are set out in Table 89 below. This covers all types of infrastructure required to make the development accessible and useable. This includes on-site roads, technological connections and utilities. It refers to ED2, SP22A and SP22B but is also relevant to other development coming forward in the town and hamlets. Appropriate provision should be made in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 4. This table should not be seen as an exhaustive list of requirements and will be monitored and updated during the plan period to ensure that the full infrastructure requirements are being met.
- 6.7 Affordable housing is not included within any of the following tables. It should be provided as part of the development in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 9.

Table 89: Servicing and utilities infrastructure – all parcels

Infrastructure Item	On-Site Provision / Financial Contributions	Lead Delivery Organisation
Sewage treatment and water resource facilities	<p><u>Applicants of residential sites to undertake and fund (as directed by SWW) an assessment of the capacity of the foul sewerage capacity and water supply networks.</u></p> <p>On-site connections to sewerage and water distribution networks</p> <p>Financial contributions to Sewage Treatment Works</p>	South West Water
Energy supply	<p>On-site provision of <u>new</u> cables and/or pipework connections to local energy supply.</p> <p><u>Diversion or under-grounding of less strategic electricity circuits.</u></p> <p><u>Retention of strategic electricity circuits.</u></p>	Western Power Distribution Wales and West Utilities Other energy supply companies as required
Telecommunications (High Speed Broadband and Telephone)	On-site provision of fibres and connections to local interchange	WDBC / DCC
Provision for waste disposal and recycling facilities	On-site	WDBC / DCC
Sustainable Urban Drainage systems	On-site	WDBC
Highways infrastructure	On-site	Developer DCC
Walking and cycling routes	On-site	Developer
Landscaping and informal open space provision	On-site	Developer

6.8 The following table summarises the critical infrastructure requirements and sets out the broad timescales for their delivery. These elements of infrastructure are considered to be *critical* to the development of new homes as without which there will be an overburden on existing resources. As such, they are needed in order for the development to take place. The infrastructure items are not listed in any order of priority in order to ensure there is flexibility when negotiating planning obligations.

Table 910: Critical infrastructure – all parcels

Infrastructure Item	On-Site Provision / Financial Contributions	Funding Sources	Lead Delivery Organisation	Indicative Delivery Timescales
Provision of link between Exeter and Crediton Road <u>including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Provision of a roundabout access on Crediton Road</u> <u>Provision of a right hand turn lane on Exeter Road into Exeter Road Industrial Estate (Beardown Road)</u> 	Financial contributions and/or on-site provision	Developer contributions	Developer DCC	To be delivered by completion of the first parcel <u>To be delivered as part of Parcel 3 or earlier if viable and achievable</u>
Provision of right hand turn lane on Exeter Road	On-site provision	Developer contributions	Developer	Alongside the completion of the link road between Exeter and Crediton Road
Provision of town centre access road	Financial contributions	Developer contributions Local Transport Plan 3 Central Government transport infrastructure grants	DCC	By completion of all parcels
Education provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 1.7 hectare site for primary school within SP22A 	On-site provision	Developer contributions	DCC*	As part of Parcel 2 (2014-2018)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancements / extensions to Primary School provision 	Financial contributions	Developer contributions	DCC*	Ongoing through plan period as required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancements / extensions to Secondary School 	Financial contributions	Developer contributions	DCC*	Ongoing through plan period as

provision				required
Primary healthcare provision (to meet the needs of the increase in local residents)	Financial contributions	Developer contributions	NHS England	Ongoing through plan period as required
Age appropriate equipped play and recreation areas**	On-site	Developer contributions	Developer	Ongoing through plan period as required
Provision of bus service to serve new development	Financial contributions On-site provision of bus stops	Developer contributions	DCC Bus operator	Ongoing through plan period as required
Enhancements to / additional provision of playing pitches**	Financial contributions	Developer contributions	Developer	Ongoing through plan period as required
Site for railway <u>halt</u> and car park	On-site	Developer contributions	Developer	As part of Parcel 1 (2014 ongoing)
East of Okehampton Railway Shelter	Financial contributions	Developer contributions Local Transport Plan 3 Investment Programme	DCC	As part of Parcel 1 (2014 ongoing)

* Contributions will be sought in accordance with DCC standard requirements and WDBC adopted *Infrastructure and Community Facilities to Support New Development SPD*.

** *Open space, play area and pitch requirements have been calculated using saved Local Plan policy H26 and are based on an average occupancy rate of 2.3 persons per household. These requirements should be used as a guide but developers are encouraged to liaise with the relevant Council department during early application discussions to consider the most appropriate type, quantity and distribution of provision.*

6.9 The table below sets out the infrastructure items which are desirable and would have benefits for the community but which are not specifically needed to support the new development e.g. library provision, youth facilities etc. It is important that these items of infrastructure are recorded in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan so that they can be delivered if funding becomes available.

Table 10: Desirable infrastructure – all parcels

Infrastructure Item	On-Site Provision / Financial Contributions	Lead Delivery Organisation
Enhancement of Okehampton youth facilities to meet the needs of the new development	Financial contributions	DCC
Improvements to town library provision	Financial contributions	DCC
Further enhancements to rail accessibility such as signalling (to increase service frequency and/or improve journey time)	Financial contributions	Rail operator DCC
<u>Improvements to bus service to Exeter</u>	<u>Financial contributions</u>	<u>DCC</u> <u>Bus operator</u>

6.10 Infrastructure should be provided in accordance with Core Strategy Strategic Policy 4 and the following principles:

- All servicing and utilities infrastructure should be integrated into the design of the development. Each phase should not preclude the onward development of extension of supply distribution networks or highways infrastructure;
- Infrastructure should be delivered broadly in accordance with the indicative delivery timescales identified in table 10.
- Applicants should engage at an early stage with the lead delivery organisation(s) as listed in tables 9, 10 and 11 to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure can be accommodated to the required standard as part of the development.
- Developments on all parts of the sites should contribute proportionally to the key elements of infrastructure required as part of the allocation where the infrastructure concerned benefits the area as a whole.
- Infrastructure that is required to accommodate all parts of the development should be considered in the initial design so that all new development is adequately served in the event that another part of the allocation fails to come forward either at all or within a reasonable timescale.

b. Phasing

6.106.11 The indicative timescales for development have been set out in chapter 4 and are based upon the best available information at the time of writing. However, this will be subject to review as time goes on and more of the variables about market conditions and infrastructure requirements become more certain.

6.116.12 The allocated sites to the east of Okehampton are available and applications for development could come forward at any time. There is currently development underway to the east of the town on land allocated in the Local Plan (H4). This is likely to impact on the commencement of developing the allocated sites, and as such is reflected in the

indicative timescales of the masterplan. Nevertheless, the Council is keen to see the allocated sites come forward to ensure a steady supply of housing is maintained.

| 6.126.13 The delivery of the sites will be assessed through the regular monitoring reports that the Council prepares.

c. Managing viability

| 6.136.14 The Council recognises that viability is a material consideration and is keen to create the right conditions in which viable developments can be achieved. To this end, the Council welcomes an open book dialogue with prospective applicants and encourages early pre-application discussions.

| 6.146.15 The Council acknowledges that there are a range of infrastructure requirements and that these will need to be managed sensitively to ensure that both the long term aspiration of delivering the town centre relief-access road and some of the more immediate infrastructure and affordable housing needs are met.

| 6.156.16 In the event that the issue of viability can be demonstrated and it can be shown that this is preventing the scheme from proceeding, the Council reserves the right to negotiate planning obligations through S106 agreements.

Consultation question 8:

Do you think the key infrastructure needs have been appropriately planned for?

7 | Glossary

Affordable housing	Housing provided for those whose incomes do not allow them to compete in the open market or for whom private sector rents are too high.
Core Strategy	The Core Strategy is a plan for the Borough that sets out how much development will take place and where it should be located. It contains policies to manage the development and use of land in West Devon. It covers the period 2006 – 2026.
Decentralised or distributed energy	This refers to a range of low carbon technologies that do not rely directly on the national grid to deliver energy or heat and instead use a local distribution network.
Infrastructure	Services and facilities which support communities. These include education, energy and power, flood defences, healthcare, roads and transport, sport and recreation facilities, telecommunications, waste, water and sewage.
Lifetime Homes	These are buildings which are built in accordance with sixteen design criteria intended to make homes more easily adaptable for lifetime use.
Renewable energy	Types of energy which occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment (i.e wind, water, sun and biomass)
Section 106/financial contributions	Legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.
Supplementary Planning Document	Documents which provide further detail to policies in the Local Plan or Core Strategy.
Sustainable Development	Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Sustainable Urban Drainage System	Management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a sustainable manner.
Viability	A development will be considered viable when the gross value of the finished scheme is sufficient to cover all reasonable costs of the development, including agreed planning obligations, infrastructure contributions and appropriate returns to both the landowners and developers.

8 | Next steps

~~This masterplan will be subject to a minimum four week consultation period.~~

~~All responses to the consultation will be considered and any changes required as a result will be incorporated into the final version of the document, where appropriate.~~

~~Following the consultation, this masterplan will be taken through committee processes to seek approval to adopt in winter 2013.~~

~~Please send any comments about this masterplan to the Strategic Planning Team by **5pm on Friday 25th October 2013**. Comments can be made using the interactive form:~~

- ~~• By email: strategic.planning@westdevon.gov.uk~~
- ~~• By post: WDBC Offices, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock, PL19 0BZ~~
- ~~• Online: www.westdevon.gov.uk~~

Consultation questions:

- ~~1. Do you support the vision for new development to the east of Okehampton~~
- ~~2. Do you support the proposals for Parcel 1 (Opportunity Okehampton)?~~
- ~~3. Do you support the proposals for Parcel 2 (North of Crediton Road)?~~
- ~~4. Do you support the proposals for Parcel 3 (South of Crediton Road)?~~
- ~~5. Do you support the proposals for Parcel 4 (East of Stockley Valley)?~~
- ~~6. Do you support the proposals for Parcel 5 (North of Stockley Hamlet)?~~
- ~~7. Do you support the design aspirations of the masterplan?~~
- ~~8. Do you think the key infrastructure needs have been appropriately planned for?~~

~~Please complete a response form which is available on the Council's website (www.westdevon.gov.uk)~~

Agenda Item 3

At a Meeting of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kilworthy Park, Drake Road, **TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the **28th** day of **JANUARY 2014** at **2.00pm**

Present: Cllr P R Sanders – Chairman
Cllr R E Baldwin – Vice-Chairman

Cllr W G Cann OBE Cllr T J Hill
Cllr C M Marsh Cllr J R McInnes
Cllr C R Musgrave Cllr T G Pearce
Cllr P J Ridgers

Substitute: Cllr J Sheldon for Cllr S C Bailey

In attendance: Cllrs M J R Benson, A F Leech, J B Moody, N Morgan
and D K A Sellis

Executive Director (Resources)
Chief Accountant
Head of Finance & Audit
Head of ICT and Customer Services
Strategic Planning Officer
Member Services Manager

***RC 31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr E H Sherrell and Cllr S C Bailey for whom Cllr J Sheldon acted as substitute.

***RC 32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed, and Cllrs C M Marsh, J R McInnes and P R Sanders each declared a personal interest in item 6 (Minute RC 35 refers) by virtue of being Members of Dartmoor National Park and they remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote.

***RC 33 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 10 December 2013 were confirmed as a correct record.

***RC 34 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 – QUARTER 3 – 31 DECEMBER 2013**

The Chairman presented a report of the Chief Accountant (page 1 to the agenda) that gave Members an indication of the potential year end financial position of West Devon Borough Council for the revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14 and brought to Members' attention any significant variance from the revenue and capital budgets set. The report enabled Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budgets for 2013/14.

The Chairman and Chief Accountant both answered a number of questions in relation to the detail in the report.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2013/14 financial year for the revenue budget be noted; and
- (ii) The progress on the capital programme to 31 December 2013 be noted.

RC 35 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2014/15 TO 2017/18

The Chairman presented a report of the Head of Finance and Audit and the Chief Accountant (page 12 to the agenda) that provided an updated forecast of the budget situation for the year 2014/15 and updated forecast for the four years to 2017/18. The forecast was intended to provide a framework within which decisions could be made regarding the future service provision and council tax levels whilst building an approach that guarantees West Devon Borough Council's longer term viability.

The Chairman took Members through the key elements of the report and responded to questions. The following points were raised:

- Members asked that a report be tabled to the appropriate Committee in the future to enable Members to look at discharging their responsibilities in respect of public conveniences;
- The Head of Finance and Audit outlined the position in respect of the Devonwide Business Rates Pool;
- Members were concerned that the government was yet to provide guidance on the council tax threshold. There was also concern about whether a threshold would apply to town and parish councils;
- A Member noted that the procedure in relation to an allocation of New Homes Bonus to Dartmoor National Park seemed bureaucratic. The Head of Finance and Audit set out the proposed procedure, being an annual letter to the Council to set out the projects that the funding would be used towards. Members were pleased to note however that there would be an allocation of funds;
- A Member was pleased to note the commitment to Village Halls and Community Projects in future years.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** that:

- (i) In order to set a balanced budget for 2014-15:

EITHER*

- an increase in Council Tax of 1.9% is agreed (which equates to a Band D council tax of £204.50 for 2014/15, an increase of £3.81 per year or 7 pence per week). This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £3,923,435 (as shown in Appendix B1)

OR

- A Nil increase in Council Tax is agreed (the Band D Council Tax for West Devon Borough Council will remain at £200.69 for 2014/15) and the Council will accept the Council Tax Freeze Grant of 1% being offered by the Government. This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £3,850,338 (as shown in Appendix B2)

* The modelling is based on 0.1% below the threshold for Council Tax increases, which is currently 2%. The final threshold for 2014-15 is expected to be announced after the Financial Settlement has been finalised at the end of January.

- (ii) The financial pressures in Appendix A of £350,000 be accepted
- (iii) The proposed savings of £381,553 set out in Appendix A be adopted
- (iv) An additional £304,413 (if council tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1) or £334,697 (if council tax is frozen as per Appendix B2) of New Homes Bonus Grant is used to balance the 2014-15 Budget. (This is in addition to the £353,076 of New Homes Bonus already built into the budget assumptions to be used for 2014-15).
- (v) Approval of the 2014/15 Capital Programme projects totalling £841,000 as per 7.1 be agreed.
- (vi) Financing the 2014/15 Capital Programme of £841,000 by using £555,000 of New Homes Bonus funding, £186,000 of Government grant and £100,000 of Capital Resources (as per 7.1) be agreed
- (vii) The Council transfers £18,688 of its allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2014/15 to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park', to be applied for and drawn down by Dartmoor National Park as required. This amount is a one-off payment and the position will be considered annually by the Council as part of the budget process. The condition is that this is for use within the boundaries of the Borough Council only.

- (viii) The Council Tax Support Grant of £103,138 be passed onto Town and Parish Councils. (This is a reduction of 13.66% from 2013/14) as per 4.3.
- (ix) The minimum level of the Unearmarked Revenue Reserves be maintained to at least £750,000 as per Section 6.1
- (x) The level of reserves as set out within this report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted. This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003.

RC 36 AUTHORISATION FOR RIPA APPLICATIONS TO MAGISTRATES COURT

The Chairman presented a report of the Head of ICT and Customer Services (page 31 to the agenda) that advised Members of the mandatory change in procedure in authorising covert investigation techniques in pursuance of potential investigations.

The Head of ICT and Customer Services responded to questions in relation to how often this had been used and also outlined the possible future position in respect of a Single Fraud Investigation Service. He also requested an additional recommendation to enable changes to the staff listed in the exempt Appendix to be delegated to the Head of Paid Service.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** that:

1. the nominated officers listed in exempt Appendix A are authorised to represent the Council in applying for judicial approval to use covert techniques in the pursuance of a potential investigation; and
2. authority to change the names of authorised officers outlined in Appendix A be delegated to the Head of Paid Service.

***RC 37 EAST OF OKEHAMPTON MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)**

The Strategic Planning Officer presented a report (page 36 to the agenda) that asked Members to adopt the SPD, which had been prepared to provide guidance for the development of the allocated development sites to the east of Okehampton, to use as a material planning consideration when determining applications for development on the allocated sites to the east of Okehampton.

The Strategic Planning Officer identified the more significant changes to the document presented at Appendix A, and confirmed to Members that it would not set policy but would set a framework of a consistent set of

principles to be applied when planning applications for the area were to be considered. She also advised of some of the concerns that were raised during the consultation and how the Council had responded to these concerns.

During discussion on this item a number of Members thanked the officer for her hard work in relation to the document. Strong concerns were raised that work had been carried out based on assumptions from Devon County Council that were later changed. Whilst there were good reasons for the changes, the manner in which they were carried out did not help the working relationship between the two Councils.

Members also discussed how important it was for future planning applications to have design and materials specified to ensure that they would blend in with the surrounding buildings and landscape. The Strategic Planning Officer confirmed that a Design Panel would be set up to help with a consistent approach to design.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- I. The East of Okehampton Masterplan SPD be adopted, to use as a material planning consideration when determining applications for development on the allocated sites to the east of Okehampton; and
- II. Any inconsequential changes considered necessary to the SPD are delegated to the Head of Planning, Economy and Community in consultation with the Chairman of the Resources Committee.

(The Meeting terminated at 3.20 pm)

Chairman

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