



Considering sites for development



Welcome to the second edition of Our Plan Latest News. This edition is being published to tell you about an exercise we're going through to consider possible sites for future development in the borough.

The biggest challenge for our borough is enabling growth and providing much needed homes and jobs whilst, at the same time, protecting the beautiful place that is West Devon. To do this we need to gather evidence of local need and think about what we need to provide and where.

Finding land for new homes and employment activities will be one of the most challenging parts of preparing Our Plan. With Dartmoor National Park on our doorstep, a large Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, unique heritage assets, flood prone areas, rolling hills and many other sensitive environments within our borough, finding a good piece of land for development is no mean feat. Nevertheless, we have a duty and a responsibility to make sure there is enough land available to meet our local needs.

We want to see development happen in the right way and in the right places, with minimal impact on our environment and maximum opportunities for the wellbeing of our communities. That's why we've recently carried out an exercise to identify land that could possibly be used to provide sites for new homes and employment activities. By doing so, we can find out what opportunities there are for development and plan to meet our needs in the best way possible. Through neighbourhood planning, there will be a greater role for communities in taking this work forward and planning for growth in their own areas.

In this newsletter we're showing you how we've carried out this exercise, what the next steps on the journey are and what we're using the information for as well as what we're not using it for.

Please remember...

This exercise looks at what sites might have potential for future development in the borough. However, it doesn't make any decisions about where development will or will not go. Further consideration will be given to this through the preparation of Our Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.

Tell us what you think about our assessment of sites by sending us your comments by Friday 15th August 2014.

If I could give you one message to take away with you it would be that no decisions have yet been made about where new development will or will not go. We will not make any decisions without properly consulting you first. This exercise is just the first step we need to go through in helping us to plan for where new development could go.

Have a look at what our thoughts are about sites across the borough. What do you think? Have we missed anything? Do please let us know.

**Cllr Sanders
West Devon Borough Council**



How do we consider sites for future development?*

Find out what sites are available (Sep – Dec 2013)

Step 1

We are required to look at a whole range of sites which could potentially be used for housing or employment. This includes our existing allocations, brownfield sites and planning permissions which were granted but have not been developed. Last autumn, we also asked anyone who had land available for development to let us know. We received submissions for over 130 sites, spread out across a range of different towns and villages in the Borough.

Consider whether sites have constraints to development (Jan - May 2014)

Step 2

Between January and May we have been gathering lots of information to help us understand the constraints and opportunities for each individual site and whether they might have potential for development.

There are lots of things to think about and people to talk to when considering sites for development. These include:

Consideration	With input from....
Access	County Highways and the Highways Agency
Landscape and Ecology	The Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty partnership, the Dartmoor National Park Authority and the borough Landscape and Ecology Officer
Heritage and Archaeology	English Heritage, the County Archaeologist and the borough Conservation Officer
Flood risk, water quality and drainage	Environment Agency and the borough Engineer
Contamination and land stability	Environmental Health
Local infrastructure	Local infrastructure providers
School capacity	Education Authority at Devon County Council
Viability	Commercial agents, planning agents and developers

We are here

Share comments about the sites and ask for your views (June – Aug 2014)

Step 3

Each site has been considered and details about their constraints and opportunities have been recorded in Site Information Tables (see page 3). These tables present facts about the sites in relation to whether they can be physically developed or whether they are in a suitable location.

However, maybe you think we've missed something important out in our assessment. Maybe you feel that the constraints we've identified can be overcome or that one site is more favourable than another. If this is the case please do let us know by

15th August 2014 using the response form.

Progress options for development (Aug - Sep 2014)

Step 4

Once we've received your feedback about the sites, we'll be discussing options for how and where new development can be distributed across the borough in more detail. We'll be publishing more e-newsletters over the summer with information about this and will be coming to a range of local events to talk to you about Our Plan. Check out our Engagement Plan for more details.

* This process is known as the Land Availability Assessment and incorporates the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which is required by national policy. Our process has followed the guidance set out in the [National Planning Practice Guidance on Land Availability Assessments](#).

Where can I see all of the sites that are being considered?

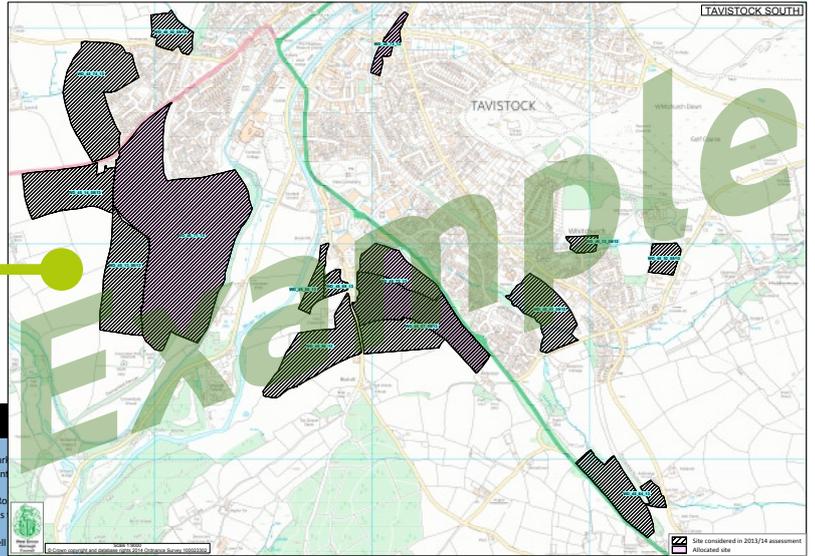
You can see all of the sites that have been submitted for consideration plus comments from our assessment of them at:

- www.westdevon.gov.uk/siteassessment
- West Devon Borough Council Office, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock
- Okehampton Customer Service Centre, St. James Street, Okehampton
- Your local town or parish council clerk
- Via the internet at your local library

These pictures are examples of the Site Information Tables and Site Maps which are available for you to view:

Site Maps

These maps show all of the sites which have been considered as part of this exercise. They also show all of the sites which are already allocated in adopted plans.



Site Reference	Site Address	Site area (ha)	Site Information
<p>Tavistock - General Comments Tavistock is the largest town in West Devon with a population of around 12,450 people (Patient and Practitioner Services Agency 2012). As a local market town, it serves the communities of its surrounding rural areas. The town has a good range of services and facilities, including a variety of town centre facilities, primary and secondary school provision, a community hospital and general practitioners. Some further development (in addition to existing allocations for up to 750 homes) could be supported by the planned primary school at Callington Road site is capable of expansion. Financial contributions towards facilities and land may be required from any new development. There are limited options some capacity to support development but financial contributions towards facilities and land may be required from any new development. Tavistock sits within the catchment area for the River Tavy. The water quality in this catchment area is being monitored, particularly in relation to shell development is proposed, early discussions with the Environment Agency will be required to look at ways to overcome any negative impact.</p>			
WD_45_01_08/13	New Launceston Road, Tavistock	5.9	<p>Access Highways access acceptable in principle. The site is relatively remote from the town centre but is on an existing bus route and has reasonably good vehicular access towards the A386. Topography makes walking and cycling to the site difficult but there is potential to link to the route along the former railway line (viaduct walk).</p> <p>Landscape and Ecology Relatively flat site. Far reaching views, particularly towards the south of the site. Appropriate screening/landscaping likely to be required which may reduce yield.</p> <p>Heritage and Archaeology Potential for archaeological remains - pre-application assessment and evaluation required. There are potential issues on the setting of the tall house (listed building) and a concern that over intensification of the area could harm its setting.</p> <p>Flood Risk, Water Quality and Drainage The site is within a critical drainage area which has a history of flooding. Flooding is also known on the numerous minor watercourses/ditches within the area. Any new development will have to contribute to reducing current rainfall runoff rates. Early discussions with the Borough Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority (Devon County Council) and Environment Agency (if it is a main river) will be required.</p> <p>Contamination and Environmental Health No constraints have been identified at this stage but further assessment may be required as part of any pre-application process.</p> <p>Other A public footpath crosses the site.</p>
WD_45_02_08/13	Land adjacent to Fenside, Crease Lane, Tavistock	2.7	<p>Access The site is remote from the town centre and has poor vehicular access along a narrow lane. The junction of Crease Lane with Callington Road is inadequate to take further traffic generating development. Good pedestrian access to the town centre along the former railway line (viaduct walk).</p> <p>Landscape and Ecology Site is steeply sloping to the north and has far reaching views. This area of town is quite rural and development here could alter its character. Any development would need to retain the former railway line as green infrastructure.</p> <p>Heritage and Archaeology No constraints have been identified at this stage but further assessment may be required as part of any pre-application process.</p> <p>Flood Risk, Water Quality and Drainage The site is within a critical drainage area which has a history of flooding. Flooding is also known on the numerous minor watercourses/ditches within the area. Any new development will have to contribute to reducing current rainfall runoff rates. Early discussions with the Borough Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority (Devon County Council) and Environment Agency (if it is a main river) will be required.</p> <p>Contamination and Environmental Health No constraints have been identified at this stage but further assessment may be required as part of any pre-application process.</p> <p>Other No other constraints have been identified at this stage but further assessment may be required as part of any pre-application process.</p>

Site Information Tables

These tables set out information about the constraints and opportunities for each site which has been considered. Depending on the constraints identified, we have concluded that there are either 'significant constraints' to development or 'limited constraints' to development.

Jargon buster!

- **Allocations** – sites which are included in adopted plans where development has been agreed in principle
- **Brownfield** – land which has been previously developed
- **Critical drainage area** – areas where the flood risks from surface water run-off are likely to be most significant
- **Masterplan** – a plan which provides guidance on the design, layout and types of uses on development sites
- **Mineral Consultation Area** – areas which require consultation to protect mineral resources
- **Unviable** – the development results in a financial loss
- **Yield** – the amount of development which is likely to be achievable on the site

Huh?

Important Information!

Here are some key things you need to know about the exercise we've been through to consider sites for development.....

Topics coming up in future e-newsletters....

- Renewable energy
- Development strategy
- Neighbourhood Planning

What next?

What it is

It is a technical exercise to identify potential sites for development

It is an exercise based on the advice of a range of expert individuals and organisations who have looked at whether the site can be physically developed (i.e. can it be accessed or are there contamination issues?) and whether it is in a suitable location.

It is a useful piece of evidence for neighbourhood planning groups to use to help them plan for development in their communities. Neighbourhood planning groups should consider carrying out a similar exercise if they want to identify other or additional development opportunities.

It is an exercise which has only looked at sites already allocated for development, planning permissions which have expired before they have been developed, brownfield land and other sites submitted to us for consideration. We will continue to look at all other opportunities for development so if you have land which you would like us to consider then please let us know.

What it is not

It is not an exercise to allocate sites for development.

It is not an assessment about communities' preferences or aspirations for development. However, all the information we've gathered can now be used by communities to help them form their own views about opportunities for individual sites. Please let us know what you think.

It is not a guarantee that a site with significant constraints could not be developed if these constraints can be overcome. However, overcoming constraints can be expensive and could make development of a site unviable.

Likewise, there is no guarantee that a site with limited constraints will get developed.

It is not a guarantee that development will take place if sites have been submitted in a particular town or village. Likewise, it is not a guarantee that development will not take place in a particular town or village if no sites have submitted.

Have your say!

This is your opportunity to tell us what you think about any of the sites that are being considered. Have we missed anything? Can any of the constraints we've identified be overcome? Do you think any sites are more suitable than others?

Please tell us what you think by Friday 15th August 2014 using the Response Form.

consultation

If you are a developer or planning agent, we will be arranging specific events to talk with you about our development strategy.

Please contact us to register your interest to attend.

For more information

Follow us on Twitter and find us on Facebook to keep up to date with progress being made on Our Plan and to find out about events near you.

 www.facebook.com/OurPlanWD

 [@OurPlanWD](https://twitter.com/OurPlanWD)

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