

Woodbury Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

Examiner's Clarification Note

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan provides a distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area. Its presentation is good and the difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. It addresses a series of locally-distinctive issues.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise issues for clarification with both the Parish Council and the District Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of my report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

Questions for the Parish Council

I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan.

Policy 1

Should I conclude that the combined effect of part 1.1 to part 1.3 of the policy is that small scale sustainable development will be supported in the neighbourhood area?

Is part 1.4 of the policy necessary given the nature of the existing policies in the development plan?

Policy 2

I understand the general thrust of the policy. Nevertheless, is it necessary as affordable housing will have been safeguarded at the time it was permitted?

Policy 3

Is part 3.1 of the policy a restatement of existing local policy and procedures?

Should part 3.2 of the policy be applied where it is appropriate to do so?

Policy 4

Is this policy needed?

Is it a strategic issue already addressed by the District Council on a day-to-day basis?

Policy 7

I appreciated the landscape character throughout the visit. In general terms the policy reads well.

In part 7.2 of the policy, I note that several examples are provided as viewing points. Nevertheless, if viewing points are not otherwise defined in the Plan will it be practicable or reasonable for the District Council to be able to apply the policy through the development management process?

In addition, how would views out of the neighbourhood area be determined? Is the intention to identify views which begin within the neighbourhood area (which are appropriate for a neighbourhood plan to address) and then extend out of the neighbourhood area (and where a neighbourhood plan cannot address land outside its defined area).

Policy 8

Does the policy bring any added value beyond the contents of national and local planning policies?

Policy 9

In general terms this is a good policy. I am minded to recommend that it is modified so that it can take a proportionate approach (based on the type and scale of the development proposed).

Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy 10

The policy takes a positive approach towards non-designated heritage assets. Did the Parish Council consider identifying any such assets?

Policy 11

Did the Parish Council consider providing clarity on the green spaces to be safeguarded by the contents of this policy as part of the Plan preparation process?

Policy 12

In general terms the policy takes a positive approach towards business development. Nevertheless part 12.1 of the policy takes a very matter-of-fact approach. It would be helpful if the Parish Council explained its approach.

Policy 15

This is a good policy which recognises the importance of community facilities and acknowledges that their circumstances may change in the Plan period.

In this broader context, did the Parish Council consider providing clarity on community facilities to be safeguarded by this policy as part of the Plan preparation process?

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

I would value the Parish Council's comments on the representations from:

- 3 West Group;
- Deven County Council;
- Richard House (via LRM Planning);
- FWS Carter; and
- Devon Countryside Access Forum.

The District Council makes a series of comments and suggestions. I would find it helpful to receive the Parish Council's comments on the representations made by the District Council.

Question for the District Council

I note the progress that has been achieved on the preparation of the East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2042. I also note that this issue has been raised in some of the representations.

Is the District Council continuing to work to the timetable to produce this Plan as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the Local Development Scheme (July 2025)?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses to this Note by 11 January 2026. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

If certain responses are available before others, I am happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled please could it come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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12 December 2025