

East Devon Local Plan – Duty to Co-operate

Draft Statement of Common Ground on Environment and Infrastructure

Second Regulation 19 consultation version 01



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Cover photo: View of Honiton from Round Ball Hill taken by planning policy team.

Version	By	Date	Changes
V.01	EDDC	10/12/25	Draft for SoCG bodies to review with 2 nd Reg. 19 Local Plan

To request this information in an alternative format or language please phone 01395 516551 or email csc@eastdevon.gov.uk

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is a draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) on environment and infrastructure matters that has been produced to support the second Regulation 19 version of the East Devon Local Plan 2020 to 2042. It is supported by and should be read together with the Statement of Compliance with the Duty to Co-operate¹.
- 1.2 Two other SoCG have been prepared on
- transportation and
 - site allocation, housing and employment.
- 1.3 This SoCG is structured so that the parties involved are listed, followed by a map and text describing the relevant strategic geography. Each strategic matter is summarised, together with a list of the evidence base, where agreement has been reached and any need for ongoing co-operation.

¹ [Evidence and Examination Library - Key Supporting Documents \(KSD\) - East Devon](#)

2 List of parties involved and signatures

2.1 This draft Statement of Common Ground confirms areas of agreement and outstanding issues between the parties below and East Devon District Council in relation to the East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042. This is a draft SoCG that will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination so no signatures are required at this stage.

2.2 The bodies that are relevant to this SoCG are:

- East Devon District Council (East Devon or EDDC);
- Dorset Council (Dorset or DC);
- Somerset Council (Somerset or SC);
- Mid Devon District Council (Mid Devon or MDDC);
- Exeter City Council (Exeter or ECC);
- Teignbridge District Council (Teignbridge or TDC);
- Devon County Council (DCC);
- The Environment Agency (EA);
- Natural England (NE);
- Historic England (HE);
- East Devon National Landscape (EDNL);
- Blackdown Hills National Landscape (BHNL);
- South West Water (SWW);
- Network Rail (NR);
- National Power (NP);
- Western Power (WP);
- Devon and Cornwall Police (DCP); and
- Sport England (SE).

2.3 This SoCG covers the following matters and issues:

- Climate Change – mitigation - C01
- Climate Change – adaptation - C02
- Infrastructure - delivery of supporting infrastructure - I01
- Water quality - River Axe catchment - W01
- Water quality - River Exe - W02
- Water quality - all East Devon water bodies - W03
- Water quality – impact of increased housing numbers - W04
- Biodiversity - nature recovery - B01
- Habitat mitigation - in combination impacts of proposed development on Exe Estuary SPA and Pebblebed Heaths SAC - Hb01
- Habitat mitigation - impact of pollution from additional traffic using roads on Pebblebed Heaths SAC - Hb02
- Landscape/seascape/heritage assets - potential impacts of wind farms on heritage assets and the national landscapes - L01

2.4 Table 1 indicates which bodies are involved in the matters considered in this SoCG.

Table 1 – Bodies relevant to issues											
Body	Issue										
	C01	C02	I01	W01	W02	W03	W04	B01	Hb01	Hb02	L01
DC	X			X							
SC	X			X							
MDDC	X				X						
ECC	X				X				X		
TDC	X				X				X		
DCC	X		X							X	
EA		X	X	X	X	X	X				
NE			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
SWW				X	X	X	X				
NH			X								
EDNL											X
BHNL				X							X
WP			X								
DCP			X								
SE			X								
HE			X								X
NHS			X								
NR			X								
NP			X								

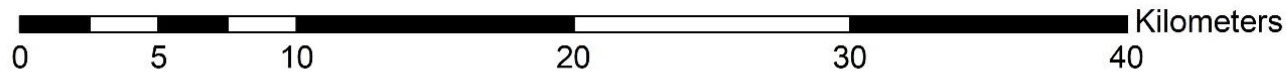
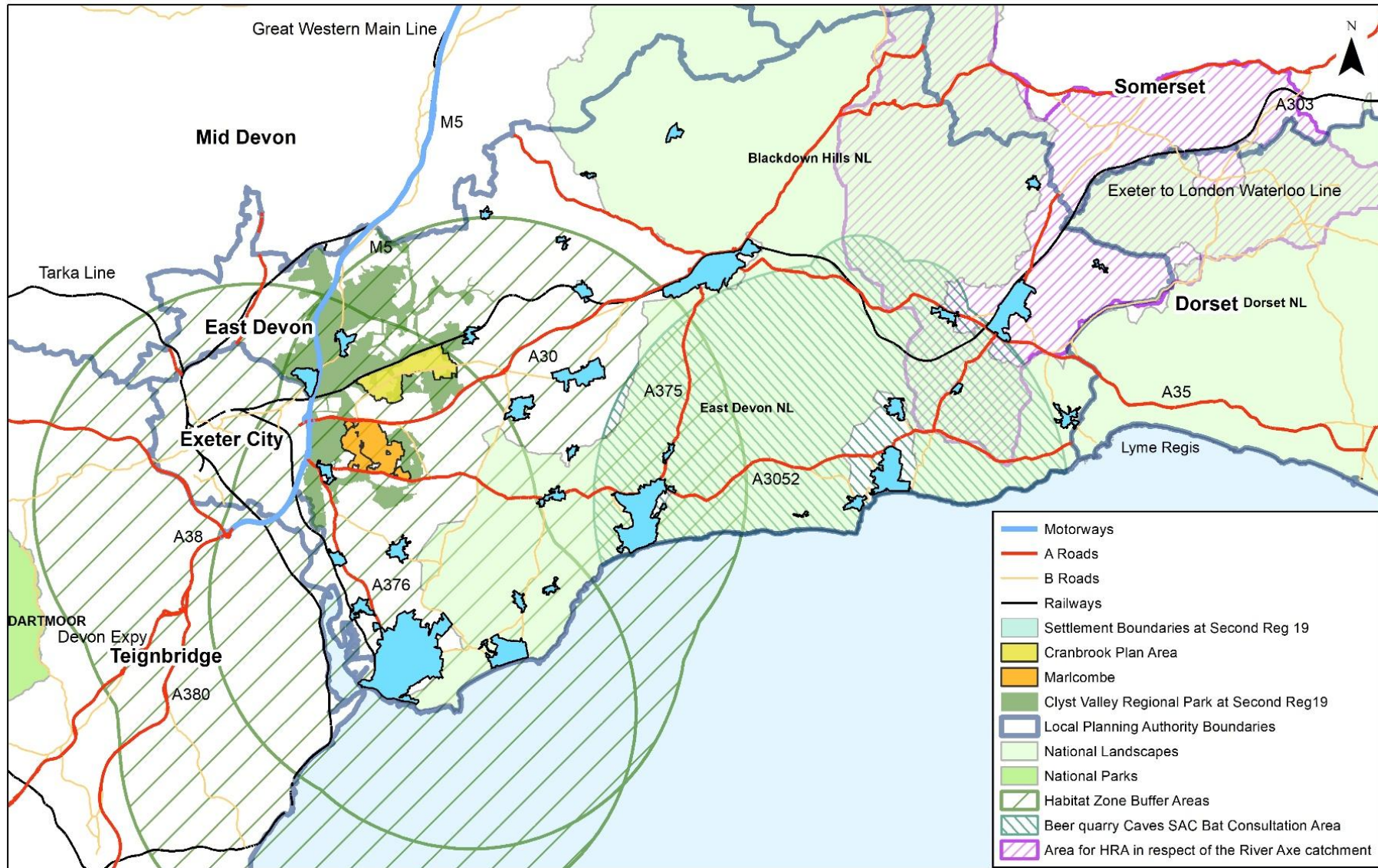
3 Strategic Geography

- 3.1 East Devon lies to the southeast of Devon, having boundaries with Exeter City, Teignbridge and Mid Devon and extending eastwards to the county borders with Dorset and Somerset.
- 3.2 East Devon is primarily a rural area with an outstanding natural environment, reflected in the designation of its southern coastline as part of the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site (WHS) and 57% of the District being designated as a National Landscape. However, the close proximity of the city of Exeter to the western boundary of East Devon has helped to fuel demand for major developments.
- 3.3 Development in the western parts of East Devon has the potential to impact the designated European wildlife sites of the Exe Estuary, East Devon Pebblebed Heaths and Dawlish Warren (in neighbouring Teignbridge). Since 2015, housing and tourist accommodation developments within 10 kilometres of these designated areas have been able to pay for habitat mitigation through the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS). The Clyst Valley Regional Park provides the largest opportunity for SANG in East Devon and is being developed to provide high quality green space at a large scale to compliment strategic growth in the area.
- 3.4 The River Axe flows from Somerset, briefly into Dorset and then into East Devon. For most of its length in East Devon (and into Dorset) the Axe is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI). However, its wildlife interest is deteriorating as a result of excess phosphates in the river, most of which come from agricultural run-off, though a sizable proportion is from treated sewage.

3.5 Map 1 shows some of the environmental and landscape designations in East Devon. These include the whole of the East Devon, part of the Blackdown Hills and a small part of the Dorset National Landscapes. The map also shows, the Clyst Valley Regional Park, the habitat mitigation zones for the Exe Estuary and Pebblebed Heaths, the consultation area for Beer Quarry and Caves Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the River Axe catchment area for Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). Other designations not shown can be viewed on the interactive local plan map². These include: the Dorset and East Devon/Jurassic Coast World Heritage; the Coastal Preservation Area; Heritage Coast; Green Wedges; Bat pinch points; SAC's; SPA's; Ramsar Sites; Marine Conservation Zones; National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, County Wildlife Sites, Special Verges and Ancient Woodland.

3.6 Map 1 Selected landscape and environmental designations (on next page).

² [EDDC Local Plan 2020 to 2042 Policies Map \(Second Reg 19 Consultation\)](#)



4 Strategic Matter C01 Mitigating climate change

Summary of issue

- 4.1 The importance of climate change is shown by its inclusion as one of the key issues facing the Greater Exeter area as identified in the Joint Strategy 'Our Shared Coordinates'. This feeds into 'net zero'³ as one of the shared coordinates which need to be addressed across the area.
- 4.2 East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and all of the neighbouring councils have declared a climate emergency and have strategies for dealing with this. East Devon, Exeter City, Mid Devon, Teignbridge and Devon County Council have endorsed the Devon Carbon Plan, which is the roadmap for how Devon will reach net-zero by 2050 at the latest.
- 4.3 East Devon District Council has committed to carbon neutrality by 2040. The first Regulation 19 plan included a chapter on mitigating climate change, including policies to meet the overarching goal of achieving carbon neutrality in East Devon by 2040. The Environment Agency had some detailed comments on these policies that have been largely incorporated into the second Regulation 19 plan.

Evidence base

- 4.4 Our Shared Coordinates⁴ was published in January 2024 by EDDC, ECC, MDDC and TDC in partnership with DCC. It demonstrates the joined-up strategy and policy approach the Councils have taken across the functional area, articulates the benefits of working together as a cohesive area to address strategic opportunities and challenges, provides the starting point for identifying key strategic infrastructure and funding challenges and a framework for more wider collaboration with key stakeholders. The spatial strategy concentrates large scale new development around strategic growth areas in the most sustainable locations. This includes new and expanded settlements on the edge or near Exeter. The strategy identifies six shared coordinates for delivering sustainable growth: net zero; jobs and prosperity (including strategic employment allocations at Exeter Science Park and Skypark); homes in well connected sustainable locations; quality places; nature and connectivity (physical and digital). The importance of investment in infrastructure (such as transport, green infrastructure, utilities and health care) to support growth, is a cross-cutting theme.

³ Net zero means balancing emissions produced and removed, consistent with the Devon Carbon Plan

⁴ [Our shared coordinates, a joint strategy for East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge](#)

- 4.5 Devon Carbon Plan⁵. This was published in 2022 and describes the changes needed to achieve net-zero emissions in Devon. It introduces goals to overcome barriers, followed by actions to make them happen.

Areas of agreement

- 4.6 That the local plan is a key element in addressing the climate emergency at a local scale that complements the approaches taken by neighbouring authorities.

Areas of disagreement

- 4.7 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

- 4.8 The authorities of East Devon, Exeter City, Mid Devon, Teignbridge, Somerset, Dorset and Devon County Council will continue to work together to mitigate climate change.

Parties involved

- 4.9 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: MDDC, ECC, TDS, SC, DC and DCC.

⁵ eastdevon.gov.uk/media/icsdsywg/cfl-014-devon-carbon-plan.pdf

5 Strategic Matter C02 Adapting to Climate Change

Summary of issue

- 5.1 The local plan needs to consider how development can deal with the likely consequences of climate change, particularly in regard to extreme heat, flooding, maintaining an adequate water supply. At the Regulation 18 consultation, the Environment Agency suggested that more emphasis should be given to these adaptation and resilience issues.
- 5.2 The issue was addressed in the first Regulation 19 plan by included a chapter (7) on adapting to climate change. This included Strategic Policy AR01 which set out resilience measures related to flood risk and Strategic Policy AR02, which required all new dwellings to achieve the higher standards for water efficiency set out in the Building Regulations. In addition, Chapter 6 (climate change mitigation) included Strategic Policy CC02, which requires all new homes to be designed to avoid temperature discomfort as a result of rising temperatures.
- 5.3 At Regulation 18, the Environment Agency also suggested that space should be safeguarded to help accommodate the potential impacts of climate change (coastal squeeze compensation, bigger, joined natural spaces including open functional floodplains). The first Regulation 19 plan dealt with this through Strategic Policy WS09, which allocated land for the Clyst Valley Regional Park (CVRP), 40% of which is within a floodplain and required contributions to enhanced natural flood storage. Additionally, Strategic Policy AR01 included requirements for development to protect land required for flood management, including natural floodplains.
- 5.4 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has informed the policies and allocation of the plan and a Water Cycle Study addresses water supply issues and has also informed the plan.
- 5.5 No substantive representation was made on this subject through the first Regulation 19 consultation, although the Environment Agency made some detailed policy comments that have been incorporated into the second Regulation 19 plan. These include amendments to Strategic Policy AR01. More significant additions have been to Strategic Policy AR02 that are relevant to the water quality issues considered later in this SoCG.

Evidence base

- 5.6 Clyst Valley Regional Park Masterplan⁶. This document has been refined through public consultation and is a material consideration in assessing planning applications within the Clyst Valley Regional Park policy boundary. The masterplan defines a shared vision, objectives, and outlines potential projects.

⁶ eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2pwh3s1e/env-002-cvrp-masterplan-final.pdf

- 5.7 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment⁷. The SFRA has informed the plan policy and allocations. A Level 1 SFRA⁸ was completed in February 2024. This was followed by Level 2 SFRA work on a number of allocations. A Flood Risk Topic Paper⁹ summarises the SFRA work and includes the sequential and exception tests undertaken for some allocations.
- 5.8 Water Cycle Study¹⁰. This was prepared on behalf of EDDC and published in November 2025. Key findings include that:
- Future developments are likely to stress some water management units and strategic planning in water supply and quality management will need to be considered with SWW.
 - The River Exe Estuary, the River Axe, and the Otter Estuary are at high risk from nutrient loading and infrastructure enhancements and continued rigorous planning will be needed to handle the increased wastewater and sewage loads expected from new developments.
 - Mitigation of potential negative impacts on biodiversity may be required, especially in designated conservation sites. Future monitoring and further testing to assess potential increases in nutrient discharge and contaminants from wastewater treatment works and surface runoff is recommended.

Areas of agreement

- 5.9 East Devon and the Environment Agency agree that the policies of the local plan provide an appropriate framework for adapting to climate change through designing in resilience and safeguarding space.

Areas of disagreement

- 5.10 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

- 5.11 All issues are resolved.

⁷ All of the SFRA documents are available in [Evidence and Examination Library \(First Regulation 19\) - Climate Change and Flooding \(CCF\) - East Devon](#) and [Evidence and Examination Library - Archived Documents \(ARC\) - East Devon](#)

⁸ [IEZ-JBAU-XX-XX-RP-HM-0001-A1-C01-Level_1_SFRA](#)

⁹ [ccf-004-rev-flood-risk.pdf](#)

¹⁰ [ccf-001-the-east-devon-water-cycle-study.pdf](#)

Parties involved

- 5.12 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: EA.

6 I01 - Delivery of supporting infrastructure

Summary of issue

- 6.1 Infrastructure delivery is fundamental to supporting sustainable development. Strategic and well-planned infrastructure ensures that new developments contribute positively to community needs and objectives.
- 6.2 To support the delivery of the development strategy, we have produced an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sets out the required supporting infrastructure. Significant engagement has been undertaken with a number of duty to cooperate bodies, most notably with Devon County Council (as Local Transport Authority, Local Education Authority, Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority and Council responsible for various adult and young people's services). This infrastructure plan can evolve as plan making progresses and can be adjusted after the plan is adopted.
- 6.3 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will supersede the November 2017 version and will sit alongside the adopted IDP for the adopted Cranbrook Plan DPD. A separate IDP for Marcombe will be published later.
- 6.4 The existing Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document provides clear guidance on development obligations and supports high-quality, infrastructure-supported development.

Evidence base

- 6.5 Infrastructure Development Plan¹¹. The latest IDP was published in November 2025 and replaces the 2017 IDP. There is a separate IDP for Cranbrook and a separate IDP for Marcombe is being prepared. The IDP includes a schedule of projects that have three levels of priority.
- 6.6 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document¹². This Supplementary Planning Document (SDP) was adopted in 2017. It details the obligations that may be required from different types and amounts of development and sets out the basis on which the level of obligation will be calculated, where appropriate.

¹¹ [Evidence and Examination Library - Key Supporting Documents \(KSD\) - East Devon](#)

¹² [Supplementary plans and development and design briefs - Planning Obligations supplementary planning document - East Devon](#)

Areas of agreement

- 6.7 EDDC, DCC, NE, HE, EA, NR, NHS, HE, NP, WP, DCP and SE agree that the IDP sets out the infrastructure needed to support the local plan.

Areas of disagreement

- 6.8 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

- 6.9 It is recognised that the dynamic nature of infrastructure development requires the IDP to be treated as a 'living document', regularly updated to reflect project completions, emerging development opportunities, and evolving community needs.

Parties involved

- 6.10 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: DCC, NE, HE, EA, NH, NR, NHS, NP, WP, DCP and SE.

7 W01 – Water Quality – River Axe

Summary of issue

- 7.1 Developments in the catchment of the River Axe in Somerset, Dorset and Devon have the potential to have a negative impact on the water quality. The Habitat Regulations screening identified likely significant effects in relation to the River Axe SAC and all allocations within the catchment were screened in.
- 7.2 Many of the issues relate to agricultural practices that lie outside of the control of the planning system. However, wastewater or sewage can have a damaging impact on water bodies as it can contain large amounts of nutrients (such as phosphorus and nitrates), ammonia, bacteria, harmful chemicals and other damaging substances. Issues arise where sewage treatment technology to adequately reduce levels of phosphorus and harmful chemicals is not in place, where leakages occur from privately owned septic tanks and, in wet weather, storm overflows can discharge untreated sewage. Outcomes can include increased turbidity, algal blooms, reduced dissolved oxygen and an overall increase in the nutrient status of receiving waterbodies. Natural England requires that new development affecting vulnerable water bodies must achieve ‘nutrient neutrality’. There is a significant issue with phosphate levels, which are having a detrimental impact on the River Axe SAC.
- 7.3 Increases in housing add to existing pressure on the sewage network and the volume of wastewater. The Water Cycle Study¹³ (WCS) found that the River Axe SAC/SSSI is likely to be at high risk from nutrient loading from waste water treatment works and this situation would be made worse through development. The Habitat Regulations Assessment¹⁴ (HRA) for the first Regulation 19 plan found that Strategic Policy PB04, which requires nutrient neutrality for all development within the River Axe catchment, should ensure no adverse effects, but highlighted uncertainty over the implementation of mitigation measures.
- 7.4 Natural England’s response to the first Regulation 19 consultation concluded that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that mitigation measures will not use up the available restoration measures and that that evidence of ongoing delivery should be included in Chapter 17 Implementation and Monitoring. This is included in paragraph 17.2 of the second Regulation 19 plan.
- 7.5 In December 2024, EDDC was successful in a bid for Government finance for a Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund as the lead authority administering the scheme, which also applies to the Axe catchment in Somerset and Dorset. This fund has been used to support the employment of a

¹³ [Evidence and Examination Library - Climate Change and Flooding \(CCF\) - East Devon](#)

¹⁴ [csd-006-se-devon-local-plan-hra-reg-19-300125.pdf](#)

dedicated officer whose role includes identifying and setting in place measures to address and offset the impact of pollutants entering the watercourse and managing those that are already within it. The fund will also be used alongside developer contributions to cover the cost of implementing and managing specific schemes and projects. Whilst early projects have been defined for implementation, and this will allow for some new housing to be implemented, the intent is that a comprehensive time based strategy will be developed, with implementable projects within, that will provide the mitigation needed, and removals of source problems at the outset, to allow for the local plan to be implemented, specifically land allocations for development in the catchment. This work and mitigation will be a collaborative, across planning authority boundaries, exercise with measures to be accommodated in East Devon, Somerset and Dorset. Early identified measures include upgrading of existing water and sanitary systems in existing properties, which will lessen volumes of water/waste water entering sewage systems and thus freeing up capacity. Medium and longer term mitigation may include measures to manage water and clean water flows in a better way, including agricultural run-off, securing improved farming practice to reduce pollution incidences and creating wetland projects. In the years ahead the concerns will also be addressed through increased investment in and improvements to sewage treatment plants. It should be noted that, whilst the council will produce and implement an overarching strategy, applicants for planning permission have scope to define and implement their own mitigations measures. Such developer schemes and the overarching strategy will be progressed and assessed under Habitat Regulation requirements.

- 7.6 Further work with Natural England and the Environment Agency is needed to understand the extent to which measures to deliver restoration and the necessary reductions in nutrient loading are achievable in practice.

Evidence base

- 7.7 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of draft plan (Preferred Options – Regulation 18)¹⁵ was published in 2022. It assessed the impact of the plan on the internationally important sites for biodiversity (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). The initial screening identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- a. General urban effects - East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - b. Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land - Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC and Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar.

¹⁵ [csd_005-habitat-regulation-assessment-of-draft-plan.pdf](#)

- c. Recreation - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Dawlish Warren SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
- d. Hydrological issues - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West SAC.
- e. Air quality - East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.

7.8 The HRA found that the first two potential impacts (a and b) could be dealt with through site selection and policy wording. It stressed the importance of reviewing the exiting mitigation strategy for the third impact (c). This review has now been complete. Further work was required in respect of the other impacts (d and e).

7.9 HRA for second Regulation 19 plan¹⁶ was published in November 2025 and identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:

- Urban effects (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
- Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land (Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA).
- Recreation (Dawlish Warren SAC, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West Bay SAC).
- Water supply (Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
- Water quality (River Axe SAC).
- Air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

7.10 It concluded further evidence and details of mitigation are required in relation to water quality (River Axe SAC) and air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

7.11 Water Cycle Study¹⁷. This was prepared on behalf of EDDC and published in November 2025. Key findings include that:

- Future developments are likely to stress some water management units and strategic planning in water supply and quality management will need to be considered with SWW.

¹⁶ [csd-006-rev-b-se-devon-local-plan-hra-reg-19-v2.pdf](#)

¹⁷ [ccf-001-the-east-devon-water-cycle-study.pdf](#)

- The River Exe Estuary, the River Axe, and the Otter Estuary are at high risk from nutrient loading and infrastructure enhancements and continued rigorous planning will be needed to handle the increased wastewater and sewage loads expected from new developments.
- Mitigation of potential negative impacts on biodiversity may be required, especially in designated conservation sites. Future monitoring and further testing to assess potential increases in nutrient discharge and contaminants from wastewater treatment works and surface runoff is recommended.

7.12 Triple Axe Action Plan¹⁸. The triple Axe project is a multi-agency scheme that is identifying and delivering enhancements and improvements to the River Axe, its functioning and to surroundings land. The project is focussing on improvements to overall environmental quality and is tackling a range of problems whilst also seeking to realise positive opportunities. Whilst the Triple Axe project is addressing more than just nutrient concerns, they are a major part of the overall work. The Triple Axe project, therefore, is very much complementary to and runs alongside local plan related mitigation measures.

Areas of agreement

7.13 The authorities of East Devon, Somerset and Dorset, together with Natural England, the Environment Agency, South West Water and the Blackdown Hills National Landscape recognise that development in the catchment of the River Axe has the potential have a detrimental impact on water quality, including the SAC.

Areas of disagreement

7.14 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

7.15 East Devon will work with Natural England and the Environment Agency to review water quality monitoring to ensure an ongoing understanding of the problem and effectiveness of interventions. Particular attention will be given to the extent to which measures to deliver restoration and the necessary reductions in nutrient loading are achievable in practice, whether they have been identified and whether they have been secured and/or are being implemented.

7.16 East Devon will work with the Environment Agency, Natural England and South West Water to understand the need for improvements to relevant waste water treatment works in relation to the phasing of development.

¹⁸ [Triple Axe Partnership - Blackdown Hills National Landscape](#)

Parties involved

- 7.17 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: DC, SC, NE, EA, SWW and BHNL.

8 W02 - Water Quality - River Exe Catchment

Summary of issue

- 8.1 The Environment Agency comments¹⁹ on the Regulation 18 plan highlighted potential impacts from cumulative growth projections in East Devon, Exeter and Mid Devon on the Exe Estuary Special Protection Area. No comments were received from the Environment Agency or Natural England at the first Regulation 19 consultation specifically related to water quality in the River Exe catchment. The HRA for the first Regulation 19 plan found that there were no credible risks to the Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar with respect to water quality. This was confirmed in Table 3 of the HRA on the second Regulation 19 plan. However, the WCS, published in November 2025, found that River Exe Estuary SAC, SSSI, SPA is at a high risk from nutrient loading from the Countess Wear WwTW.

Evidence base

- 8.2 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of draft plan (Preferred Options – Regulation 18)²⁰ was published in 2022. It assessed the impact of the plan on the internationally important sites for biodiversity (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). The initial screening identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- a. General urban effects - East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - b. Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land - Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC and Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar.
 - c. Recreation - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Dawlish Warren SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - d. Hydrological issues - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West SAC.
 - e. Air quality - East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
- 8.3 The HRA found that the first two potential impacts (a and b) could be dealt with through site selection and policy wording. It stressed the importance of reviewing the exiting mitigation

¹⁹ [env-agency_redacted.pdf](#)

²⁰ [csd_005-habitat-regulation-assessment-of-draft-plan.pdf](#)

strategy for the third impact (c). This review has now been complete. Further work was required in respect of the other impacts (d and e).

- HRA for second Regulation 19 plan²¹ was published in November 2025 and identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- Urban effects (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
- Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land (Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA).
- Recreation (Dawlish Warren SAC, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West Bay SAC).
- Water supply (Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
- Water quality (River Axe SAC).
- Air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

8.4 It concluded further evidence and details of mitigation are required in relation to water quality (River Axe SAC) and air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

8.5 Water Cycle Study²². This was prepared on behalf of EDDC and published in November 2025. Key findings include that:

- Future developments are likely to stress some water management units and strategic planning in water supply and quality management will need to be considered with SWW.
- The River Exe Estuary, the River Axe, and the Otter Estuary are at high risk from nutrient loading and infrastructure enhancements and continued rigorous planning will be needed to handle the increased wastewater and sewage loads expected from new developments.
- Mitigation of potential negative impacts on biodiversity may be required, especially in designated conservation sites. Future monitoring and further testing to assess potential increases in nutrient discharge and contaminants from wastewater treatment works and surface runoff is recommended.

²¹ [csd-006-rev-b-se-devon-local-plan-hra-reg-19-v2.pdf](#)

²² [ccf-001-the-east-devon-water-cycle-study.pdf](#)

Areas of agreement

- 8.6 That Natural England and the Environment Agency are satisfied that the HRA on the plan does not identify credible risks to water quality in the River Exe catchment but note that continued assessment will need to take place.
- 8.7 The authorities of East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge together with Natural England, the Environment Agency and South West Water recognise the need to understand the potential impact of development in catchment of the River Exe on water quality, including the SAC.

Areas of disagreement

- 8.8 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

- 8.9 The authorities of East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge will work with Natural England, the Environment Agency and South West Water to understand the need for improvements to the Countess Wear WwTW in relation to the phasing of development.

Parties involved

- 8.10 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: MDDC, ECC, TDS, NE, EA and SWW.

9 W03 - Water Quality - Improving all East Devon water bodies

Summary of issue

- 9.1 The Environment Agency comments²³ on the Regulation 18 plan suggested that the plan should aim to improve water bodies throughout the plan area. In 2023, East Devon committed to a Nature Recovery Declaration to support Devon County Council in the production of a Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy²⁴. Consultation on the draft Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy²⁵ closed in November 2025 and a revised strategy is expected to be published in March 2026. East Devon is working with Natural England and other councils in Devon to improve the natural environment, including water quality.
- 9.2 Strategic Policy PB06 of the Regulation 19 plan supports proposals that enhance existing Nature Recovery Networks. Policy DS04 requires all major development proposals to contribute to the achievement of excellent ecological status of rivers and watercourses, through enhanced natural flood storage, capture of run-off and restoration of soil health. Strategic Policy WS09 requires major development within and adjacent to the Clyst Valley Regional Park to contribute to the achievement of excellent ecological status in the River Clyst and tributaries, through enhanced natural flood storage, capture of run-off and restoration of soil health.
- 9.3 The second Regulation 19 plan includes an expanded policy AR02: Water Quality and Efficiency. This seeks to protect, manage and improve water quality in all water bodies affected by development in East Devon through a number of criteria.

Evidence base

- 9.4 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of draft plan (Preferred Options – Regulation 18)²⁶ was published in 2022. It assessed the impact of the plan on the internationally important sites for biodiversity (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). The initial screening identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- a. General urban effects - East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - b. Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land - Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC and Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar.

²³ [env-agency_redacted.pdf](#)

²⁴ [Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy \(LNRS\) | Devon County Council](#)

²⁵ [Devon's Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Environment](#)

²⁶ [csd_005-habitat-regulation-assessment-of-draft-plan.pdf](#)

- c. Recreation - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Dawlish Warren SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
- d. Hydrological issues - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West SAC.
- e. Air quality - East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.

9.5 The HRA found that the first two potential impacts (a and b) could be dealt with through site selection and policy wording. It stressed the importance of reviewing the exiting mitigation strategy for the third impact (c). This review has now been complete. Further work was required in respect of the other impacts (d and e).

9.6 HRA for second Regulation 19 plan²⁷ was published in November 2025 and identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:

- Urban effects (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
- Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land (Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA).
- Recreation (Dawlish Warren SAC, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West Bay SAC).
- Water supply (Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
- Water quality (River Axe SAC).
- Air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

9.7 It concluded further evidence and details of mitigation are required in relation to water quality (River Axe SAC) and air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

9.8 Water Cycle Study²⁸. This was prepared on behalf of EDDC and published in November 2025. Key findings include that:

- Future developments are likely to stress some water management units and strategic planning in water supply and quality management will need to be considered with SWW.

²⁷ [csd-006-rev-b-se-devon-local-plan-hra-reg-19-v2.pdf](#)

²⁸ [ccf-001-the-east-devon-water-cycle-study.pdf](#)

- The River Exe Estuary, the River Axe, and the Otter Estuary are at high risk from nutrient loading and infrastructure enhancements and continued rigorous planning will be needed to handle the increased wastewater and sewage loads expected from new developments.
- Mitigation of potential negative impacts on biodiversity may be required, especially in designated conservation sites. Future monitoring and further testing to assess potential increases in nutrient discharge and contaminants from wastewater treatment works and surface runoff is recommended.

9.9 Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy²⁹. The LNRS is a joint strategy for Devon, Plymouth and Torbay that sets out priorities for nature. Consultation on a draft was undertaken in 2015, and the final strategy is expected in March 2016. Production of a LNRS is a statutory requirement and includes a description of the area and its wildlife, opportunities and priorities for restoring wildlife together with actions to achieve various priorities such as clean water and carbon sequestration.

9.10 Clyst Valley Regional Park Masterplan³⁰. The Clyst Valley Regional Park (CVRP) is large greenspace that is protected from development through both adopted³¹ and emerging³² local plan policy. A large proportion of the Regional Park is within the National Trust's Killerton estate and 40% is within a floodplain. The area of the CVRP is presently 2,338 hectares, which is roughly half the size of Exeter. The area identified³³ in the second Regulation 19 is larger than that currently protected. The CVRP masterplan defines a shared vision, objectives, and outlines potential projects.

Areas of agreement

9.11 East Devon, Natural England, the Environment Agency and South West Water support Strategic Policy AR02 of the second Regulation 19 plan.

Areas of disagreement

9.12 None.

²⁹ [Devon's Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Environment](#)

³⁰ [env-002-cvrp-masterplan-final.pdf](#)

³¹ [Strategy 10 of East Devon District Council East Devon Local Plan 2006 to 2026](#)

³² [Evidence and Examination Library \(First Regulation 19\) - Core Submission Documents \(CSD\) - East Devon Strategic Policy WS09: Clyst Valley Regional Park](#)

³³ [EDDC Local Plan 2020 to 2042 Policies Map \(Second Reg 19 Consultation\)](#)

Active and ongoing co-operation

- 9.13 East Devon will work with Natural England, the Environment Agency and South West Water to monitor water quality in East Devon water bodies to inform development decisions having regard to Strategic Policy AR02.

Parties involved

- 9.14 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: NE, EA and SWW

10 W04 - Water Quality and resources – impact of increased housing numbers

Summary of issue

- 10.1 The impact of additional housing on the capacity of wastewater treatment can have detrimental impacts on the quality of water bodies if infrastructure improvements are not co-ordinated with development.
- 10.2 The Environment Agency (EA) made comments on water quality, water resources and housing for the first Regulation 19 plan consultation. It highlighted the impacts of additional housing in different wastewater treatment catchments and noted that the timetable for South West Water producing the Cycle 2 Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans (DWMP) did not align with the emerging local plan. The EA stressed the importance of the WCS providing evidence for the additional growth and distribution strategy to enable alignment with water company investment planning in order to avoid adverse impacts on the water environment.
- 10.3 The WCS is now complete and key findings include that:
- Future developments are likely to stress the water management units of Otterton, Fairmile, and Fenny Bridges in terms of surface water availability resulting in a future water deficit in East Devon. SWW have developed a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP), that sets out how the company plans to overcome the predicted deficit, pointing towards a need for strategic planning in water supply and quality management.
 - The River Exe Estuary, the River Axe, and the Otter Estuary are at high risk from nutrient loading due to the increases in wastewater production from proposed housing developments. These areas are vulnerable due to direct effluent discharges or cumulative effects from multiple sources, exacerbating existing problems like phosphate pollution. Infrastructure enhancements and continued rigorous planning are recommended to handle the increased wastewater and sewage loads expected from new developments.
- 10.4 The WCS makes a number of policy recommendations, including adoption of stringent water efficiency standards, closely monitoring water resource applications, and barring developments that could harm water quality or green infrastructure. These have been incorporated into the second regulation plan through Strategic Policy AR02.

Evidence base

10.5 Water Cycle Study³⁴. This was prepared on behalf of EDDC and published in November 2025. Key findings include that:

- Future developments are likely to stress some water management units and strategic planning in water supply and quality management will need to be considered with SWW.
- The River Exe Estuary, the River Axe, and the Otter Estuary are at high risk from nutrient loading and infrastructure enhancements and continued rigorous planning will be needed to handle the increased wastewater and sewage loads expected from new developments.
- Mitigation of potential negative impacts on biodiversity may be required, especially in designated conservation sites. Future monitoring and further testing to assess potential increases in nutrient discharge and contaminants from wastewater treatment works and surface runoff is recommended.

Areas of agreement

10.6 East Devon, Natural England, the Environment Agency and South West Water support Strategic Policy AR02 of the second Regulation 19 plan.

Areas of disagreement

10.7 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

10.8 East Devon, with the support of the Environment Agency, will work with South West Water to develop a clear narrative for the upgrading of water infrastructure in line with housing delivery trajectories.

Parties involved

10.9 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: EA and SWW.

³⁴ [ccf-001-the-east-devon-water-cycle-study.pdf](#)

11 Biodiversity – nature recovery – B01

Summary of issue

- 11.1 On major developments we have a local plan policy seeking 20% net gain, with 10% for non-major schemes. It is envisioned that BNG provision on major developments can typically be accommodated on-site. Where full BNG delivery on-site is not achievable, off-site provision will be required and can provide greater ecological gains. There are currently over 50 ha of registered BNG habitat banks within the adjoining districts and same character area as East Devon, with further habitat banks becoming registered in East Devon in 2025. BNG can also be provided on land used for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS), with over 100 ha of SANG also required to be delivered over the local plan period. Therefore, it is considered there is a pipeline of BNG delivery that can accommodate the predicted level of growth over the next plan period.

Evidence base

- 11.2 Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy³⁵. The LNRS is a joint strategy for Devon, Plymouth and Torbay that sets out priorities for nature. Consultation on a draft was undertaken in 2025, and the final strategy is expected in March 2016. Production of a LNRS is a statutory requirement and includes a description of the area and its wildlife, opportunities and priorities for restoring wildlife together with actions to achieve various priorities such as clean water and carbon sequestration.
- 11.3 Clyst Valley Regional Park Masterplan³⁶. This document has been refined through public consultation and is a material consideration in assessing planning applications within the Clyst Valley Regional Park policy boundary. The masterplan defines a shared vision, objectives, and outlines potential projects.

Areas of agreement

- 11.4 East Devon,

Areas of disagreement

- 11.5 None.

³⁵ [Devon's Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Environment](#)

³⁶ eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2pwh3s1e/env-002-cvrp-masterplan-final.pdf

Active and ongoing co-operation

- 11.6 East Devon will work with NE to ensure that BNG is delivered in accordance with plan policy.

Parties involved

- 11.7 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: NE.

12 In combination impacts on Exe Estuary SPA and Pebblebed Heaths SAC - H01

Summary of issue

- 12.1 The impact of growth levels in East Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter on three designated European wildlife sites was a key issue in the preparation of the adopted plan. A joint strategic approach to mitigation has been in place since 2014 and is applied consistently across Exeter City, East Devon and Teignbridge. This strategic approach applies to residential and some tourist development within a zone of influence drawn around each European site. The mitigation strategy is long running, well established and ensures mitigation can be delivered. The strategy was revised and updated during 2023 and 2024 (in a joint commission by East Devon, Exeter City and Teignbridge District) with the new strategy set up to continue indefinitely with reviews and updates scheduled at five-year intervals. The new strategy will therefore cover the period 2025-2030 at which point it will be revised and updated as necessary. Key parties, including Natural England and stakeholders involved in the delivery of the strategy (such as the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust) have been consulted and commented on early drafts. The HRA on the first Regulation 19 plan found that the mitigation strategy provides a robust and established means to address impacts arising from the cumulative effects of development across a wide area. Natural England have reviewed the updated strategy and are supportive of the approach.

Evidence base

- 12.2 South East Devon Wildlife Sites – Joint Habitats - Sites Mitigation Strategy (2024)³⁷. This sets out the mitigation requirements relating to impacts from recreation (associated with new housing and tourism development) on the Exe Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar site, Dawlish Warren Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC/East Devon Heaths SPA. The strategy covers the period 2025-2030 and will be updated on a rolling basis every 5 years, providing the opportunity to check the mitigation, scale of growth and update any costs. It replaced and superseded the previous strategy (established in 2014) to take account of increased housing numbers and ensure the level of mitigation is appropriate. Mitigation measures comprise:
- SAMMS (Strategic Access Management and Monitoring).
 - Off-site infrastructure (including SANGs – ‘Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace’ and local projects).

³⁷ [env-009a-rev-se-devon-mitigation-strategy-final-2025.pdf](#)

- 12.3 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of draft plan (Preferred Options – Regulation 18)³⁸ was published in 2022. It assessed the impact of the plan on the internationally important sites for biodiversity (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). The initial screening identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- a. General urban effects - East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - b. Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land - Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC and Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar.
 - c. Recreation - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Dawlish Warren SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - d. Hydrological issues - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West SAC.
 - e. Air quality - East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
- 12.4 The HRA found that the first two potential impacts (a and b) could be dealt with through site selection and policy wording. It stressed the importance of reviewing the exiting mitigation strategy for the third impact (c). This review has now been complete. Further work was required in respect of the other impacts (d and e).
- 12.5 HRA for second Regulation 19 plan³⁹ was published in November 2025 and identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- Urban effects (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
 - Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land (Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA).
 - Recreation (Dawlish Warren SAC, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West Bay SAC).
 - Water supply (Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
 - Water quality (River Axe SAC).

³⁸ [csd_005-habitat-regulation-assessment-of-draft-plan.pdf](#)

³⁹ [csd-006-rev-b-se-devon-local-plan-hra-reg-19-v2.pdf](#)

- Air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

12.6 It concluded further evidence and details of mitigation are required in relation to water quality (River Axe SAC) and air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).

Areas of agreement

12.7 East Devon, Exeter, Teignbridge and Natural England agree that the mitigation strategy adequately addresses impacts arising from the cumulative effects of development on the Exe Estuary SPA and Pebblebed Heaths SAC.

Areas of disagreement

12.8 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

12.9 East Devon will work with Exeter, Teignbridge and Natural England to implement the mitigation strategy.

Parties involved

12.10 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: ECC, TDC and NE.

13 Strategic matter habitat mitigation issue Hb02 - impact of pollution from additional traffic using roads on Pebblebed Heaths SAC

Summary of issue

- 13.1 Development is typically associated with increased traffic and emissions which can increase the airborne concentration of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and ammonia (NH₃), and the subsequent rate of nitrogen deposition from the atmosphere. This can lead to the nutrient enrichment and acidification of soils, encouraging more tolerant ruderal species at the expense of sensitive plant, lower plant and invertebrate communities. In high concentrations, ammonia can result in direct toxic effects on vegetation, a factor which may also be true of NO_x. Larger animals, such as small mammals and birds are considered immune to direct effects but can be vulnerable to change in their supporting habitats. Furthermore, it can exacerbate the effects of other factors such as climate change or pathogens. However, levels of deposition typically fall quickly over the first few metres from the roadside before gradually levelling out; beyond 200m, they become difficult to distinguish from background levels so that impacts at 10m, 50m or 200m can be very different from those at the roadside. There is potential for impacts, albeit an increasingly diminishing scale and rate, to fall beyond 200m.
- 13.2 Work undertaken to inform the HRA has shown that the baseline levels of key pollutants are already high for the East Devon Heaths and are in exceedance of the critical load for nitrogen deposition and critical level for ammonia. Air quality modelling predicts that, as a result of the increased traffic associated with the Plan, further deterioration is expected, such that around 20% of the East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA would have levels of nitrogen deposition contributions in exceedance of 1% of the critical load and around 10% of the SAC/SPA would exceed the 1% critical level for ammonia. Much of these areas contain qualifying heathland habitat. However, the scale, nature and degree of actual impacts on the ground would need to be established through on-site assessment work.
- 13.3 An initial air quality mitigation strategy produced to support the local plan recommended that further work is conducted on traffic and emissions modelling to enable mitigation to be specified in more detail, including further development and refinement of strategic mitigation options for testing.
- 13.4 The intent is that, ahead of and to support plan submission, a detailed mitigation strategy will be finalised. This will set out more detail on promotion of and transition to electric vehicles and also other mitigation measures to address adverse impacts that would otherwise arise. This detailed mitigation strategy will establish programmed levels of development that can be implemented, when taken in conjunction with the delivery of mitigation, that will allow for development to be implemented without causing negative net impacts. A break clause is built in

to plan policy that will prevent development occurring or occupation should critical loadings be exceeded or mitigation is not acceptably addressing development generated adverse impacts. Monitoring to review mitigation success will be critical and this will also sit alongside and be considered with further modelling to review changing predicted potential impacts. Such monitoring and technical assessment will need to be undertaken within the context of understanding that both a consequence of implementation plan policy and also wider factors that are beyond the reach or control of planning.

- 13.5 The plan contains wording in Policy PB04 that “Development will not be permitted where there is potential for increased vehicle numbers, applying a precautionary approach, resulting in increases of emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and/or ammonia (NH3), from internal combustion engine vehicles exceeding threshold levels of harm to designated sites (specifically the Pebblebed Heaths).”

Evidence base

- 13.6 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of draft plan (Preferred Options – Regulation 18)⁴⁰ was published in 2022. It assessed the impact of the plan on the internationally important sites for biodiversity (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). The initial screening identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- a. General urban effects - East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - b. Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land - Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA/SAC and Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar.
 - c. Recreation - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Dawlish Warren SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
 - d. Hydrological issues - Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West SAC.
 - e. Air quality - East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.
- 13.7 The HRA found that the first two potential impacts (a and b) could be dealt with through site selection and policy wording. It stressed the importance of reviewing the exiting mitigation

⁴⁰ [csd_005-habitat-regulation-assessment-of-draft-plan.pdf](#)

strategy for the third impact (c). This review has now been complete. Further work was required in respect of the other impacts (d and e).

- 13.8 HRA for second Regulation 19 plan⁴¹ was published in November 2025 and identified the potential for likely significant effects with respect to:
- Urban effects (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
 - Loss of supporting habitat/functionally linked land (Beer Quarry & Caves SAC, East Devon Heaths SPA).
 - Recreation (Dawlish Warren SAC, East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA, Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar, River Axe SAC, Sidmouth to West Bay SAC).
 - Water supply (Exe Estuary SPA/Ramsar).
 - Water quality (River Axe SAC).
 - Air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).
- 13.9 It concluded further evidence and details of mitigation are required in relation to water quality (River Axe SAC) and air quality (East Devon Heaths SAC/SPA).
- 13.10 Mitigation of air quality impacts for the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths⁴². This technical report was produced on behalf of EDDC and published in October 2025. It contains the results of an updated Air Quality HRA of the impacts of road traffic emissions on the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, and HRA Stage 1 assessment of air quality impacts against screening thresholds.
- 13.11 Mitigation of air quality impacts in East Devon - mitigation strategy⁴³. This technical report was produced on behalf of EDDC and published in November 2025. It contains an overview of the work undertaken to date, in regard to site condition and functioning, the Habitats Regulation Assessment outcomes, and the development of mitigation options as well as the steering group meetings that assisted in their creation and the next steps to ensure that there are no adverse effects to the Pebblebed Heaths designated sites.

Areas of agreement

- 13.12 East Devon and Natural England agree that a detailed mitigation strategy is required to set out more detail on promotion of and transition to electric vehicles and also other mitigation

⁴¹ [csd-006-rev-b-se-devon-local-plan-hra-reg-19-v2.pdf](#)

⁴² [ED21793_Mitigation of AQ impacts East Devon Pebblebed Heaths_Technical report](#)

⁴³ [Ricardo report template](#)

measures to address adverse impacts that would otherwise arise and therefore will allow for development to be implemented.

Areas of disagreement

13.13 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

13.14 East Devon will work with Natural England to agree a detailed mitigation strategy.

Parties involved

13.15 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: NE.

14 L01 - Landscape/seascape/heritage assets - potential impacts of wind farms on heritage assets and the national landscapes

Summary of issue

- 14.1 The first Regulation 18 plan policy map identified areas with potential for wind power generation. The related policy (Strategic Policy 31 – Suitable areas for wind energy development) supported wind energy development in the areas identified subject to impacts on landscape, historic environment and other factors.
- 14.2 Discussions with both Historic England and the national landscape teams (East Devon and Blackdown Hills) considered whether the heritage and landscape aspects of wind farms should be assessed for each site as evidence for the local plan, given that these areas are quite small and could be considered to be tantamount to an allocation. However, it was recognised that there is a wide variety of turbine designs and scales, and the impacts were likely to be design specific. At the time of the first Regulation 19 consultation, EDDC considered it to be more appropriate to assess any impact on a scheme-by-scheme basis if proposals were brought forward. A criteria based policy (CC03 - Promoting low carbon and renewable energy) was therefore included in the first Regulation 19 Plan (Strategic Policy CC03). This required that, for renewable energy generating schemes to be supported, there should be no significant adverse impacts on the local environment that could not be satisfactorily mitigated, including individual and cumulative landscape and visual impacts, as well as the character of wider historic townscapes, landscapes and seascapes. The related plan policy map identified areas with potential for wind power generation. This approach complied with the 2023 NPPF.
- 14.3 A slightly different approach has been taken in the second Regulation 19 plan. This retains a criteria based policy (amended CC03) but it applies to all areas, and no areas have been identified on the policy map as being suitable for wind power generation. Although this diverges from elements of the 2023 NPPF under which plan is being submitted (under transitional arrangements) the approach is consistent with current Government thinking and addresses the concerns of Historic England.

Evidence base

- 14.4 None.

Areas of agreement

- 14.5 EDDC, HE, EDNL and BHNL agree that the removal of areas with potential for wind power generation from the policy map, together with amended Policy CC03, resolve this issue.

Areas of disagreement

14.6 None.

Active and ongoing co-operation

14.7 None required

Parties involved

14.8 The parties below are satisfied that the preceding is an accurate position statement as of publication of the second Regulation 19 Plan in November 2025. This Statement of Common Ground will be reviewed prior to the submission of the local plan for examination. NB signatures are not required at this stage, but the following bodies will be invited to sign at submission stage: HE, EDNL and BHNL.