

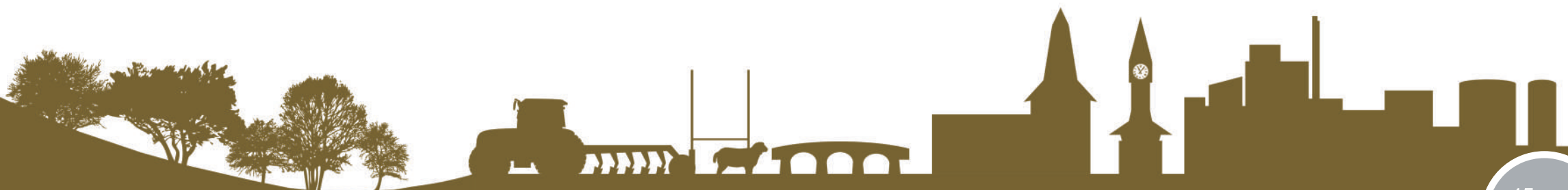
3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Housing

In the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan (Draft)(JLP) North Tawton is identified as a smaller town within the Thriving Towns and Villages Policy area, alongside Hatherleigh, Bere Alston and Lifton, Strategic Objective SO8 (Draft JLP) sets out to maintain the vitality and viability of the smaller towns and key villages through the provision of homes, jobs, services and community infrastructure sufficient to enable them to play an important role as local centres for their surrounding areas. In relation to housing this will be achieved through delivering an appropriate mix of new homes that responds positively to local housing needs and improves long term sustainability.

The Draft JLP sets out the provision for new homes across the whole plan area for 2014-2034, the life of the Draft JLP. Within the Thriving Towns and Villages area, across West Devon and South Hams, at least 7,700 homes are required of which 970 are within the smaller towns and key villages. These include homes that have been completed or under construction, have planning permission, site allocations or are 'windfalls'. The term 'windfall' is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as 'sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.' Windfalls can be included within the housing allocation within West Devon's 5 Year Land Supply where there is compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply.

Objectives

7. To support as closely as possible the views expressed by the town's residents through the social engagement process.
8. To support housing development that sustains the population of the town at a level that helps maintain shops, jobs and services sufficient to enable North Tawton to thrive as a place in which to live.
9. To ensure the provision of a sufficient number, type, range and tenure of housing of a good standard that meets the needs of different groups of people. To wherever possible promote independent living for people of all ages and conditions.
10. To ensure that the design of any new development reflects and respects the distinctive character of the town and its surroundings.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Housing

At time of writing (2017), within North Tawton there is existing commitment to 87 dwellings that are either completed, under construction or have planning approval. In addition, planning permission has been granted for 77 dwellings, with a further 37 dwellings awaiting planning permission. Of this total of 201, 22 would be described as 'windfalls'. There is every likelihood that over the period of the Plan that a number of windfalls will become available within North Tawton contributing to the number of dwellings developed.

At the time of writing (2017) it is known that Wainhomes are considering the next phase of their long term plan to develop up to 600 homes within the North Tawton area, on Greenfield sites. This kind of large scale development is not required to meet the housing needs for North Tawton, nor of the Smaller Towns and Key Villages within the Draft JLP. Neither is it in keeping with the views and wishes of the town's residents. This scale of development would not be regarded as sustainable, putting significant pressure on the infrastructure of North Tawton.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Housing: Priority Sites for North Tawton Identified in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP)

The Draft JLP highlights **Batheway Fields** for mixed use - homes and employment (Use Class B1) for 61 dwellings and 1,300 sq.m employment floor space. Wainhomes submitted a Planning application in 2016 for a further 28 dwellings to be built on the land identified for employment use at the Batheway Site. This was refused. At time of writing (2017) the land identified for the employment space, along with land identified for medical centre use, has been put up for sale.

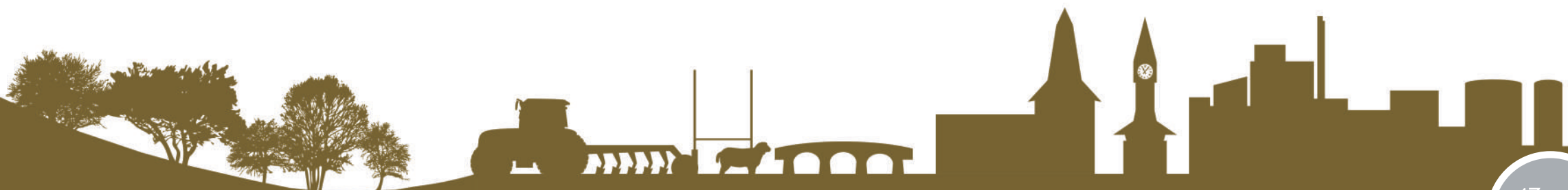
A further Planning application for 100 dwellings (Phase 2 development) was submitted in November 2016, followed up with some amendments in April 2017. In both cases North Tawton Town Council objected to these planning proposals. West Devon Strategic Planning also objected to this application on the grounds that this 'phase 2' development is not an allocated site within the emerging Draft JLP, and that the current site allocation for North Tawton in Draft JLP Policy TTV29 is sufficient to meet the identified housing needs in the North Tawton area.

The Woollen Mill, where there is planning permission for 62 homes and B1 Office space, is no longer an identified site within the Draft JLP. However development of the Woollen Mill site continues to be a priority for residents, whether for housing, employment or alternative use. The redevelopment of this listed building would provide an opportunity to safeguard the future of the building and enhance the surrounding environment.

3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Housing: 'Call for Sites' Process

In 2014 the Neighbourhood Plan Development Group initiated a 'call for sites' - an informal opportunity for individuals and organisations to propose sites within North Tawton, for development. The exercise in itself did not decide whether a site should be allocated for development, nor commit the proposer(s) to applying for planning consent, but enabled the Neighbourhood Plan Development Group to better understand the needs and wishes of the residents, in the context of land that may become available for development.

A further opportunity was provided by West Devon Borough Council in 2016 for developers to come forward with potential sites for development. **HO Appendix 1 'Site information pack'** provides a list of sites presented and the results of the analysis of these sites.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Housing: 'Call for Sites' Process

Although there were other sites identified through the 'Call for Sites' process, only two of these have been prioritised by the Neighbourhood Plan Group as meeting the criteria for development sites as identified from Questionnaire responses - brownfield, level, close to town amenities and suitable for a small development of low density housing or self-build. These sites, which are currently within the West Devon Planning system, are:

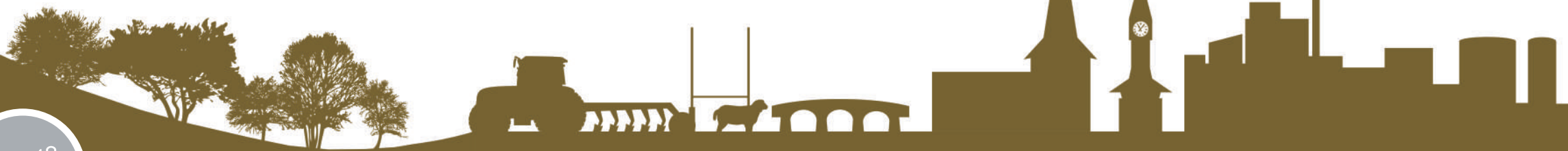
Land behind Bouchers Hill (WD_13_06_13) Davies - This land is currently (2017) subject to an outline planning application for 9 self-build dwellings. There is also a barn on the same site with permitted development permission. Although this site is on Greenfield land there is support within the town for this self-build development. This planning application was approved by North Tawton Town Council and is under consideration by West Devon Borough Council at time of writing. Should this self-build scheme gain approval it is important that any development on this site adheres to Policy HO8 and the '**North Tawton Design Statement' Appendix 5.**

Land East of Devonshire Gardens (WD_13_05_08/13) South West Water - The land, owned by South West Water, is currently (2017) subject to two outline planning applications. One for 11 open market dwelling plus 2 assisted living units and allotments and the other for 14 dwellings (including affordable housing) and allotments. North Tawton Town Council submitted a neutral response to the first application due to the lack of guarantee that the planning proposals were deliverable, and didn't support the second as the proposed application brought no demonstrable benefit to the town. West Devon Strategic Planning objected to both proposals due to the incongruous extension of the settlement boundary. At time of writing no final decision has been made on either application by West Devon Planning authority.

This land, known as the Depot, has been registered by North Tawton Environmental Trust as an Asset of Community Value. This allows them a right to bid for this site if offered on the open market.

North Tawton Neighbourhood Plan supports the Environmental Trust in its right to bid for this designated site. Members of the Environmental Trust, in their feedback to the Consultation Event (10th December 2016), raised objections to this site being developed for housing. They cited concerns about losing a valuable natural environment for families in the community. Concerns were also raised about their ability to fund the purchase of this site should it become available for sale. Whilst acknowledging the concerns and objections raised by the Environmental Trust it is clear that South West Water wish to sell this site for development, demonstrated through the above planning applications, within the life time of this plan. The site has been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan as being in accordance with many of the desired requirements for developments from the community consultation, e.g. brownfield, level, close to town amenities and suitable for a small development of low density housing, including assisted living units. Therefore, should the bid by North Tawton Environmental Trust be unsuccessful, the Neighbourhood Plan would support a specific type of small development whilst maintaining the important wildlife features and its importance to the community. This would include no dwelling exceeding two storeys, good sized gardens, assisted living type accommodation, adequate parking for residents, visitors and allotment holders, and dedicated allotment space to be used by members of the Environmental Trust and the community. This dedicated Allotment space will be designated as a 'Local Green Space' under Policy CH1.

For both these sites there are identified access and traffic congestion issues in relation to North Street and the junction with The Square. These have been raised as objections to the development of both sites and have also contributed to these sites being classified as 'amber' in the Call for Sites process. However Independent Traffic reports have been commissioned by the landowners which have concluded that such concerns can be overcome. Robust evidence that such issues can be mitigated will need to be provided for planning to be accepted, and any recommendations from independent traffic reports will need to be carried out as part of the development. Policy IN4 requires developers to consider the implications for traffic congestion in their development proposals.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO1: New Dwellings

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The eight Neighbourhood Plan Housing Policies identified below seek to meet the Objectives set out in this Housing theme. The following sections of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) underpin these policies with specific paragraphs listed before each policy:

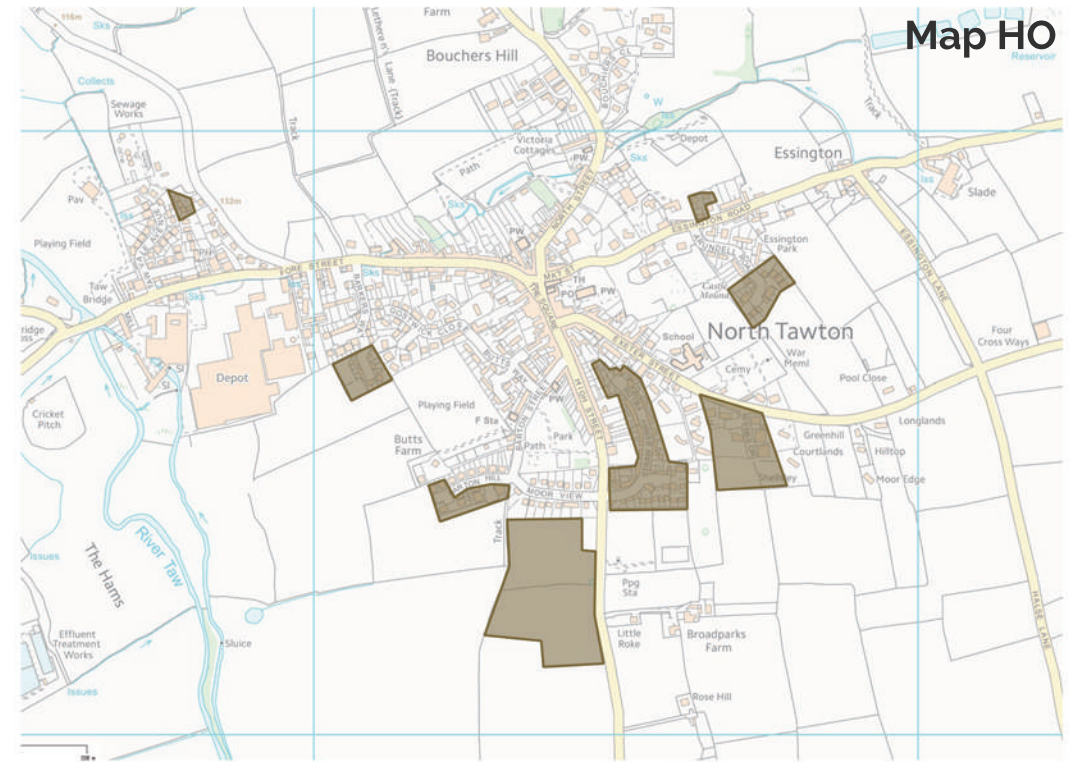
- Delivering a wide choice of quality homes
- Requiring a good design
- Promoting healthy communities
- Protecting greenbelt land
- Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding.

Since 2000 there have been a number of developments adding a range of new dwellings to the town. These include Strawberry Fields to the south, Taylors Field and Webbs Orchard, Barton Hill and Barkers Way, providing much needed social and affordable housing to the west, Richina Drive and Shiptons site providing smaller dwellings and flats and most recently Batheway Fields where 61 dwellings are currently under construction. These can be found on **Map HO**.

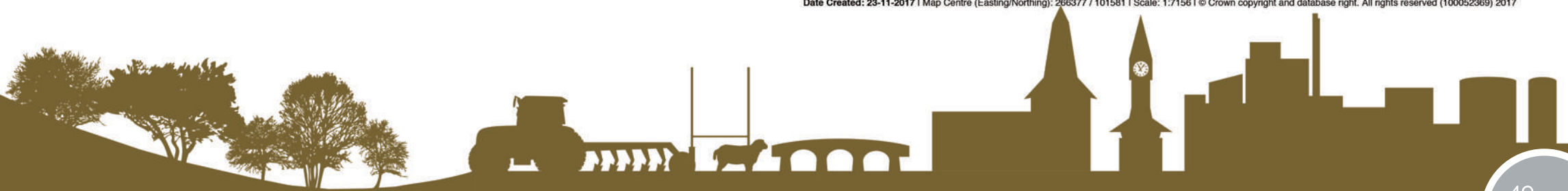
The residents of North Tawton made it very clear in the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire responses that there is a preference for small scale rather than large developments in the town. 69% of respondents said they preferred the use of Brownfield sites for any new development, which should be a mix of small developments (70% of respondents) rather than one new estate. The public response to the 'Call for Sites' exercise undertaken in 2014, also indicated that smaller sites were preferred. This view was further supported by residents in their feedback following the Consultation Event on 10th December 2016.

Consultation with residents

There is an expectation from the North Tawton Town Council that for any significant development within the town there should be consultation with residents. This provides the opportunity for developers to present their plans, including any benefits to the town, for consideration by residents.



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3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO1: New Dwellings

Policy HO1 has been informed by the expressed views of residents of North Tawton through the responses to a number of relevant questions within the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire and in feedback from the Consultation Event (10th December 2016).

The current housing stock in North Tawton provides a good cross section of types of property, but the future increase in house numbers should be kept to a minimum, with traditional style housing on Brownfield sites preferred. There was a clear preference from respondents for three- bedroom properties, some bungalows and larger gardens than those provided in the last development at Strawberry Fields and the development at Batheway Fields.

The Questionnaire revealed that 65% of respondents would not want to see any more than 100 new houses built within the town over the next 20 years. Only 27% of respondents thought between 76 and 100 was acceptable, with 38% preferring less than 76. 21% of respondents did feel that more than 100 new houses would be acceptable.

An analysis, undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan, of the density of new developments built over the past 10 years within North Tawton, informs the preferred density of dwellings per hectare in **Policy HO1**.

69% of respondents expressed a preference for the use of Brownfield sites for any new development, which should be a mix of small developments (70% of respondents) rather than one new estate. 54% expressed this as their least preference with only 19% preferring one large development. A mix of open market/affordable/social housing was preferred by 63% of respondents.

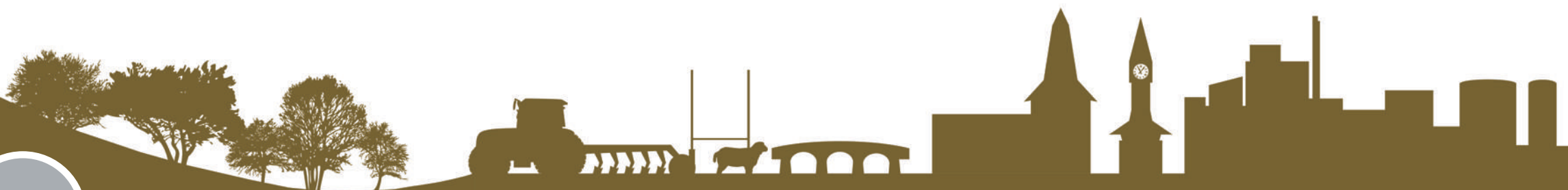
In relation to the type of new housing, 53% of respondents preferred 2 storey dwellings with the same number expressing 3 storey houses as their least preference. 63% expressed a preference for more traditional style dwellings.

In response to whether residents would welcome dwellings using environmentally friendly technologies to reduce carbon foot print and running costs, 67% respondents expressed agreement. The Questionnaire also revealed that 72% of respondents identified Parking as a very serious issue for the town, with a further 16% viewing it as a concern. Car parking provision for residents was seen as a major concern for 59% of respondents, with provision of car parking for visitors a serious concern for 49%.

In relation to accessibility any new development must comply with the Draft JLP Policy DEV9 4 1&2.

Related district and national Policies

- *Draft JLP: Strategic Objectives SO8, SO11, Policies TTV 1,2, 29, DEV7,8,9: 4 1&2,10*
- *NPPF: Paragraphs 17, 29-30,47,50,56,58,61,69,75, 94-95,99-100.*



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO1: New Dwellings

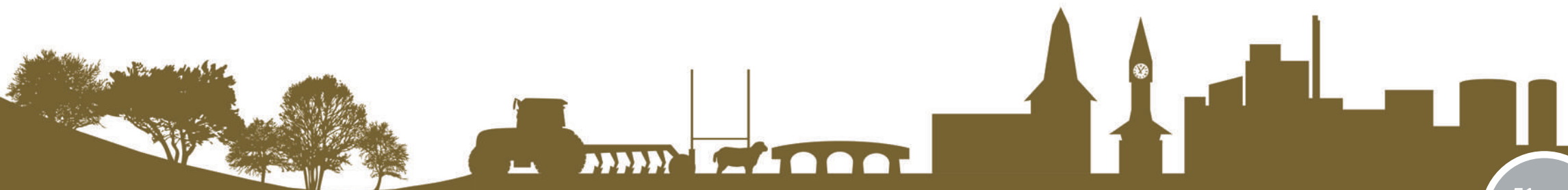
Policy HO1- New Dwellings

Proposals for development on sites of 12 or more new dwellings will only be supported where they:

- i) provide, on average, a density of 30 dwellings per hectare;
- ii) provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes commensurate with the needs of local households in North Tawton, with the majority being 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings
- iii) utilise rainwater harvesting and/or grey water recycling within dwellings to reduce water disposal from sites;
- iv) do not contribute to increased flood risk and use Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to mitigate this risk. Where SuDS are put in place, developers should consider positive solutions for landscape incorporation and biodiversity improvements as part of the schemes;
- v) provide adequate off road car parking facilities through provision of a garage and/or driveway which should be held in perpetuity only for parking provision;
- vi) provide safe, convenient and pleasant cycle and pedestrian routes to the town centre and to principal facilities including schools; safe and convenient crossing of roads, where the location of the proposal suggests a need for such routes;

Developers are encouraged to:

- vii) utilise small plot sizes of approximately 12 dwellings in keeping with the traditional character and plot sizes associated with North Tawton;
- and,
- viii) consider the use of previously developed land (brownfield) sites before greenfield sites.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO2: Affordable Housing

In the 2013 Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment undertaken for North Tawton by West Devon Borough Council, 67 affordable homes a year were identified as being required within the town. In October 2014, a Housing Needs survey was undertaken. The questions asked within the survey were intended to provide a headline figure to advise what housing provision may be needed within the town over the next 5 years.

The conclusion of the **Housing Needs Survey (Nov 2014 HO Appendix 2)** was that the number of new homes needed to meet "local needs" was currently zero, largely due to the development under construction at Batheway Fields. This takes into account the number of homes currently in the planning process and the provision of 11 units at Barkers Way which was completed in 2014. On the basis of the results of this survey, these units will adequately meet the affordable housing needs of the local community for the next three to five years. However, any future development required will need to provide affordable housing either on-site or through a financial contribution. Any applications submitted will be required to demonstrate how they meet Policy DEV8 of the Draft JLP which states that developments of 11 plus dwellings must provide at least 30% affordable housing.

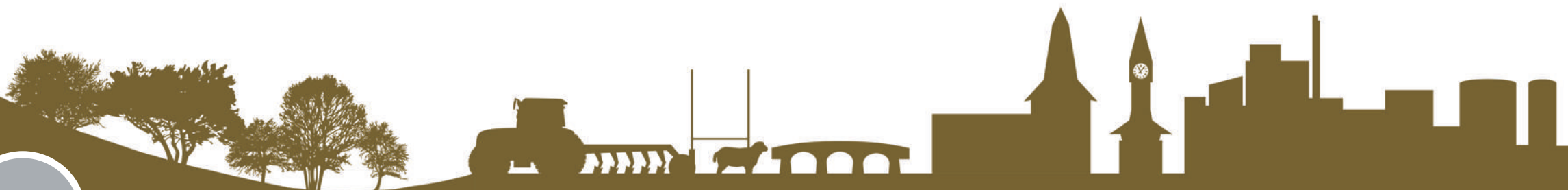
Related district and national Policies

- *Draft JLP: Policies DEV7,8,9*
- *North Tawton Housing Needs Survey Nov 2014*
- *West Devon Borough Council Affordable Housing Policy*
- *NPPF: Paragraphs 47,50,54*

Proposals for housing development will be required to satisfy requirements for affordable housing set out in the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan, and should demonstrate how they address local housing needs identified in the most up-to-date housing needs survey.

In addition, all proposals for affordable housing should:

- demonstrate how they meet relevant requirements set out in the North Tawton Design Statement; and,
- demonstrate how they meet local needs for dwelling sizes (bedrooms) and type (for example, bungalows, semi-detached, terraced, maisonettes, apartments / flats, detached).



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO3: Occupancy of Affordable Housing

Affordability will continue to be an issue for people looking to buy or rent in North Tawton. All of the applicants who completed the Housing Needs Survey lived within North Tawton and many had relatives in the area. Therefore all applicants responding met West Devon Borough Council's Local Allocation Policy and would meet the Local connection criteria set out for the area. Policy HO3 sets out clear guidelines for all future occupancy of affordable housing within the town.

Related district & national Policies

- *West Devon Borough Council Local allocation policy*
- *NPPF: Paragraphs 47,50 &54*

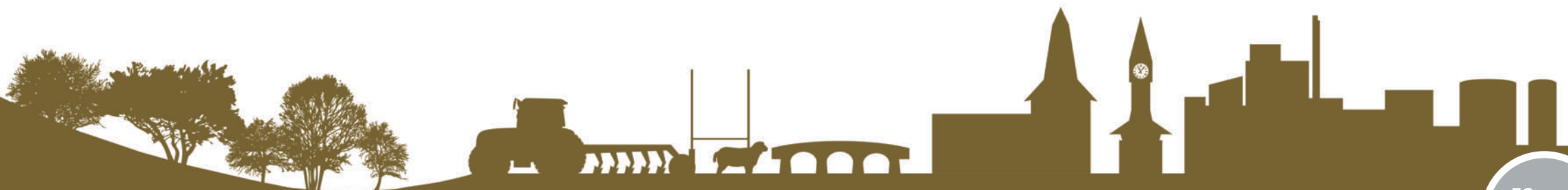


Initial and subsequent occupancy of the affordable housing will be restricted to a person(s) with a local connection who:

- a) does not have access to open market housing;
- b) is a resident of North Tawton, or has a local connection with the town because of family ties or a need to be near their workplace.

In the event that an occupier who fulfils both (or either) of criterion (a) or (b) cannot be found within a reasonable period of time, then (b) will be widened:

- i) firstly to a person(s) with a local connection to neighbouring parishes because of family ties or a need to be near their workplace;
- ii) secondly to a person(s) with a connection to Okehampton because of family ties or a need to be near their workplace;
- iii) and thirdly to a person(s) with a connection to the wider West Devon Borough.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO4: Retaining Affordable Housing for the Local Community

Policy HO4 seeks to ensure that a mechanism exists for developing housing schemes which will remain affordable. In the light of changing Government Policy in relation to 'Right to Buy' this policy will require regular monitoring.

Related local and national Policies

- *NPPF: Paragraph 53*

Affordable housing should be provided in perpetuity, where feasible, for example, through a Community Land Trust or other community housing scheme / mechanism which retains stock for the benefit of the local community at an accessible cost. Community housing schemes will be supported.

Private Rear Amenity Space (Gardens)

In the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, 56% of respondents expressed a strong preference, and 23% a preference, for any new developments to have larger rear gardens than those provided in the last development at Strawberry Fields (average being 48 Square metres). An analysis of rear garden size within recent developments in North Tawton, undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan, revealed an average size of 60 square metres. This analysis therefore informs the minimum size for a rear garden within Policy HO5.

Related local and national Policies

- *Draft JLP: Policy DEV10*
- *NPPF: Paragraphs 47,50,54*

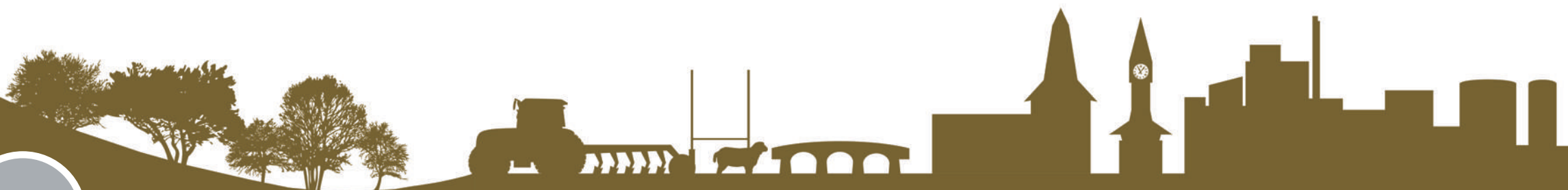
Policy HO5 - Private Rear Amenity Space (Gardens)

New residential development proposals should demonstrate, through a design and access statement or planning statement, that adequate well-located private amenity space is provided of an appropriate size and type for reasons of good quality design, amenity of residents, accessibility, privacy, enabling adequate light (sunshine) and the provision of healthy living environments. This should normally be provided as rear garden space.

New dwellings should have a minimum of 60m² of useable private garden (amenity) space, where feasible

Amenity spaces should be well-designed and fit for purpose and therefore;

- be practically shaped (preferably rectangular), having a useable area and be accessible and well planned in relation to the dwelling's living spaces;
- provide a private 'sitting out area' not overlooked by a window of a neighbouring property;
- be secure; and
- receive direct sunlight for part of the space for at least part of the day.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO6: Residential, Supported Care and Sheltered Homes

In 2014 18.5% of the total population (2067) of North Tawton were aged 65 - 84 (382 people) and 2.6% were aged 85 and over (54 people). **Source: Devon JSNA Community Profile 2016 HO Appendix 3.** Although within the average for the South West, this is above the England average. Key messages in the **North Tawton Parish Profile (2014) Appendix 4** indicate that the population will become more elderly with implications for health and social care and that demands for specialist housing, support and health facilities may increase. This is based on a forecasted percentage increase of 36% in the 65-84 age group and in the 85+ age group, of 89.2%. (Figures for Okehampton market town area which includes North Tawton). The population of West Devon Borough will grow because more people are likely to move into the area than leave it.

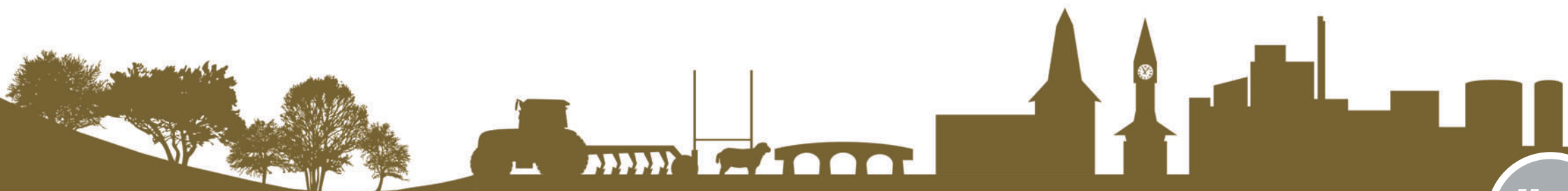
In the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 36% of respondents expressed a strong preference for sheltered housing for elderly, infirm or disabled people to be provided within the town, with a further 35% of respondents expressing some preference. Some 30% expressed a strong preference for Care/Nursing provision within the town. Another key message from the Parish Profile (2014) is that further consideration should be given to how the needs of the elderly can be met.

Further evidence from the Medical Practice indicates that provision for elderly care within the communities served by the practice is limited. A number of patients have had to move to reside in Okehampton, Crediton, Hatherleigh and Holsworthy to access suitable provision to meet their needs. A facility within the local area, providing some form of social care accommodation for the parish community, would be warmly welcomed by the Medical Practice.

Related local and national Policies

- *Draft JLP: Strategic Objective SO11, Policy DEV7, 8*
- *NPPF: Paragraph 39*

To help ensure provision for the ageing population within the Parish of North Tawton, proposals for development of residential care, assisted living and sheltered accommodation for the elderly will be supported. Such proposals should take account of factors such as levels of need, affordability, accessibility and suitability of sites.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO7: Parking in Residential Development

Policy HO7 seeks to reduce on street parking, improve road safety and to mitigate problems being experienced within the town in relation to car parking and congestion issues.

The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire revealed that 72% of respondents identified parking as a very serious issue for the town, with a further 16% viewing it as a concern. Car parking provision for residents was seen as a major concern for 59% of respondents, with provision of car parking for visitors a serious concern for 49%.

The Questionnaire also revealed that 80% of respondents had up to two cars per household – 44% with one car, 36% with two. 12% had three or more cars per household.

Identifying additional sites for car parking within the town for both residents and visitors produced 112 responses in the Questionnaire, including the suggestion of more off road parking within any new housing developments as referenced above in HO1(v). As a number of residents have commercial vehicles it is important that there is provision made within any new development for parking such vehicles to avoid further congestion in residential areas.

Related local and national Policies.

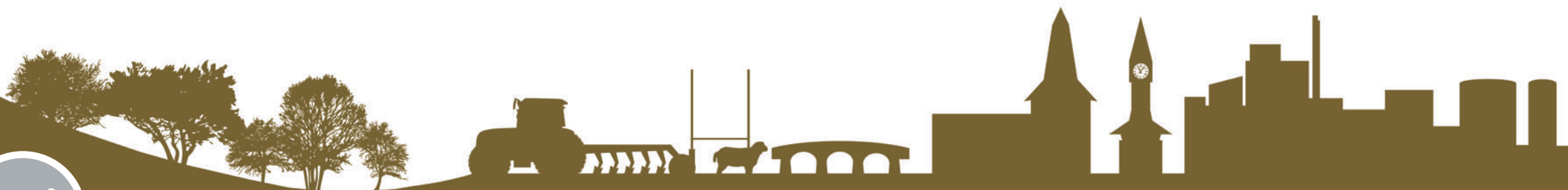
- NPPF: Paragraph 50

New residential development should provide adequate off-road parking for residents and visitors with roads being of sufficient width and an appropriate layout to ensure easy two-way vehicular access, without compromising the safety of pedestrians or cyclists.

Proposals for development will be supported where they demonstrate, through a Transport Impact Assessment or Planning Statement, how they comply with standards set out by the Highways Authority in its most up-to-date standing advice, including the provision of 'Plug in' facilities for charging electric cars.

Proposals are encouraged to exceed this standard where viable:

- to help ensure that existing parking problems in North Tawton are not exacerbated;
- to provide the opportunity to maintain good and safe accessibility on local roads;
- to take realistic account of vehicle ownership (and use of commercial / business vehicles) per household in the town; and,
- to ensure that that the layout of any planned development provides easy access for residents and their visitors, for service vehicles (for example refuse vehicles) and for emergency service vehicles.



3.0 Policies - Theme 4: Policy HO8: Small Scale Self-Build Housing

Self-build housing, which includes 'custom build housing', is defined by the Government (in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, 2014) as a dwelling built by (or commissioned by) someone to be occupied by them as their sole or main residence for at least 3 years. This is a desirable expectation to ensure that plots are purchased by people committed to self-build and remaining in the community as opposed to a developer building the property to sell on.

Self-build can offer a lower cost solution to local residents as well as supporting the local economy by providing work for local builders, architects and trades people. It can also help to "free-up" the availability of market housing (private rent and owned) as a self-builder will usually be resident in the parish already and will vacate their home when their self-build home is complete.

There is growing support for this method of delivering housing, with the Government having introduced the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act in 2015. This is borne out by the response in the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire where 42% of respondents expressed a strong interest in custom built/self-build housing, and 25% expressing interest in this form of development within the town. Also 42% of respondents expressed a strong interest in affordable community self-build developments.

A requirement of the Housing Act is for Local Authorities to maintain a register of people interested in finding or developing a self-build plot. The preference would be that such self-build opportunities would be prioritised for local people who may be constrained by the availability and market cost of properties, and who would not normally qualify for affordable or shared equity housing, but who wish to remain within the parish.

There should be compliance with the 'North Tawton Design Statement', in relation to the design of the houses, gardens and surrounding area.

At time of writing there have been two outline planning applications within North Tawton to develop sites for self-build dwellings, both of which have received support from North Tawton Town Council. One of these, for three dwellings next to Devonshire Gardens has been approved, the other, for nine dwellings at Bouchers Hill, awaits a decision.

Related local and national Policies

- *Draft JLP: Policy DEVg*
- *NPPF: Paragraphs 47,50*
- *Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, 2014*
- *Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act in 2015*

Policy HO8 - Small Scale Self-build Housing

To help achieve localised organic housing growth which supports our rural community and help meet the Government's objective of encouraging custom and self-build, proposals for innovative self-build dwellings will be supported. Any such development must comply with the Self-Build & Custom Housebuilding Act and the North Tawton Design Statement.

