

Policy S1

Sustainable development priorities

The following strategic priorities outline what will need to be achieved to deliver the Vision and address the key issues that have been identified in Mid Devon. All development will be expected to support the creation of sustainable communities by:

- a) A development focus at Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton as Mid Devon's most sustainable settlements, with long-term growth to the east of Cullompton and a limited level of development in identified villages;
- b) Building a strong, competitive economy through access to education, training and jobs, infrastructure, the creation of new enterprise, economic regeneration and flexibility of uses to respond to changing circumstances;
- c) Ensuring the vitality of town centres and communities through a hierarchy of centres, defined town centre shopping areas, a diverse retail offer at Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton, through controls on Junction 27 retail and support for the vitality and viability of defined villages;
- d) Supporting a prosperous rural economy through the conversion of suitable existing buildings and well-designed new buildings in suitable locations, diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses, support for equestrian activities, retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, and the promotion of sustainable rural tourism and leisure development;
- e) Promoting sustainable transport by delivering appropriate infrastructure, reducing the need to travel by car, integrating public transport and other forms of sustainable travel such as walking and cycling, and providing safe environments while recognising Mid Devon's rural locality;
- f) Supporting high quality communications infrastructure by supporting the expansion of telecommunications and high speed broadband throughout Mid Devon;
- g) Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes through a diverse housing mix and by meeting the housing needs of all sectors of the community including the provision of accessible housing for the elderly and disabled, those wishing to build their own home, affordable housing and gypsy and traveller pitches;
- h) Requiring good sustainable design that respects local character, heritage, surroundings and materials, creates safe and accessible environments, designs out crime and establishes a strong sense of place;
- i) Promoting healthy communities through the delivery of social, educational, recreational and cultural facilities and services, access to high quality open space, public rights of way, recreational trails, accessible land and other green infrastructure, and opportunities for sport and recreation and the designation of Local Green Space;
- j) Meeting the challenge of climate change by supporting a low carbon future, energy efficiency, increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, managing flood risk and conserving natural resources. Encourage the effective use of land, taking into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- k) Conserving and enhancing the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes including the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks, providing accessible green infrastructure, and preventing significant harm to soil, air, water, noise and visual quality, in particular air quality as a local issue at Crediton and Cullompton;
- l) Minimising impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity by recognising the wider benefits of ecosystems, delivering natural environment objectives, providing a net gain in biodiversity and by the protection of international, European, national and local designated wildlife sites; and

- m) Conserving and enhancing the historic environment through the identification and protection of designated and non-designated heritage assets and assessing the impact of new development on the historic character of Mid Devon's landscapes and townscapes.**

2.17 It is a legal requirement that Local Plans contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Council will work in partnership with town and parish councils and other public bodies to ensure that all new development reinforces and delivers sustainable communities in line with guiding principles set out in Policy S1, which correspond to the vision and strategy for the district.

2.18 The sustainable development priorities aim to deliver varied and vibrant places by concentrating activities and facilities in accessible locations. The strategy aims to build a strong, competitive economy through inward investment and deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. Development will provide or utilise accessible green infrastructure networks including public open spaces, public rights of way, cycleways and other green linkages. Sustainable modes of transport include walking, cycling and public transport, though it is recognised that the private car will continue to play a significant role given the rural nature of Mid Devon. The strategy requires good design which conserves and enhances the historic and natural environment, promotes healthy life styles and reduces pollution. The supply of renewable energy should not be supported where it harms the special qualities of protected landscapes or their setting.

2.19 The Council will monitor development to ensure that the Local Plan delivers sustainable development.

Policy S2

Amount and distribution of development

The diverse development needs of the community will be met through the provision of a minimum of 7,860 dwellings and 147,000 square metres of commercial floorspace between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2033.

Development will be concentrated at Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton, to a scale and mix appropriate to their individual infrastructures, economies, characters and constraints. Other settlements will have more limited development which meets local needs and promotes vibrant rural communities. In addition, development as proposed at Junction 27 of the M5 meets a tourism / leisure need in a location which is suitable for its regional role with a controlled retail element supporting the tourism and leisure aspects of the proposal.

Development targets are approximately as follows:

Location	Total Residential (commitments and allocations; dwellings)	Total Commercial (commitments and allocations; square metres)
Tiverton	2,358	29,400
Cullompton	3,930	73,500
Crediton	786	14,700
Rural areas	786	29,400
Total	7,860	147,000