



NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL
WINDMILL LANE
NORTHAM
DEVON
EX39 1BY

To: All Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group
Cc: All Northam Town Councillors

Town Clerk: Mrs Jane Mills MILCM
Telephone and Fax: 01237 474976
E-mail townclerk@northamtowncouncil.gov.uk

You are hereby summoned to attend a Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group Meeting on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 6.00pm, to be held on Zoom.

Topic: NNP 23.09.2021
Time: Sep 21, 2021 06:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89882276329?pwd=YUduVnZ3RHpHS2xTcDRjRHVvYTTVCUT09>

Meeting ID: 898 8227 6329
Passcode: 209758

The Agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Members of the public will be admitted at the start of the meeting.

M J Mills

Mrs Jane Mills Fd Community Governance MILCM, PSLCC
Town Clerk

Date of issue: 16th September 2021

The following are Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group:
Councillors Chalmers, Hames (Vice Chairman), Mrs Hodson, Laws, Newman-McKie, Sargent and Shelley (Chairman).
Non-Councillors, Mr G Allen, Ms Bartleman, Ms J Smart.
All Members of the Council are entitled to attend.



Lords of the Manor



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Office open: Monday to Friday mornings



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AGENDA

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Chairman's announcements**
- 3 Declarations of interest:**
Members are reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.
- 4 To agree the agenda as published**
- 5 To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held 9th September 2021**
(herewith)
- 6 Public Participation**
Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.
- 7 To consider the action points (herewith)**
- 8 To receive an outline of the steps of production of a Neighbourhood Plan**
(herewith)
- 9 To receive an updated budget for the consultant's time associated with the production of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan**
- 10 To consider the compatibility of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan with additional grant funding from *Locality.org*.**
- 11 To review the wording of the below listed policies/sub policies:**
 - i) Affordable Housing *(herewith)*
 - ii) Business *(herewith)*

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group Meeting held by Zoom on Thursday 9th September 2021

Present: Cllrs Hames, Hodson, Sargent, Laws, and Shelley
Non-Councillor Members: Ms J Smart.

In attendance: Mr G Langton – Deputy Town Clerk.
One member of the public.
Mr G Townsend - Advisor

2109/505 Apologies
Apologies were received from Cllr SA Newman-McKie, Mrs E Bartleman and Mr G Allen.

2109/506 Chairman's announcements
The Chairman reported that having postponed the meeting to the 9th September, it allowed the Deputy Town Clerk and Mr Townsend to report on their meeting with the Officers at Torridge District Council, held earlier that day. The report would be received at agenda item 8 (minute 2109/512).

2109/507 Declarations of interest:
Members were reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.

2109/508 To agree the agenda as published
It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed: Cllr Sargent, Seconded Cllr Laws (all in favour)

2109/509 To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held 20th July 2021
It was **resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held 20th July 2021
They would be signed at a later date.
Proposed: Cllr Shelley, Seconded: Cllr Sargent (all in favour)

2109/510 Public Participation
It was announced that members of the public were permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public would be entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and should not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

The member of the public that attended addressed the meeting regarding the order of policies presented for review (minute 2109/512), noting concern that heritage should not only be considered as part of the built environment, but also landscape, depending on the individual site.

He further noted that the height of the curtilage wall at Richmond Dock, recorded in the relevant policy as 13 feet, had since been measured and found to be between 9 and 11 feet in height. He requested the policy be amended.

Finally, he addressed the meeting regarding the wording of *Tourism: sub-policy (d)*. He noted contradictions with sub-policies (a) to (c).

The Chairman thanked him for his input.

2109/511 To consider the action points.

Regarding action point 2 Deputy Town Clerk to include a new policy on **Public Parking** in the Neighbourhood Plan, the detail of which would be considered at a later date, it was agreed that the wording for such a policy would be presented to a future meeting for consideration.

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to research and present suitable wording for a Public Parking policy to present to a future meeting of the group.

The remainder of the action points were noted.

2109/512 To consider the suggested outline Policy Sections, subsections and policies contained therein.

The meeting heard from the Deputy Town Clerk and Mr G Townsend a summary of the points raised by the Torridge District Council Officers at their meeting earlier that day. The meeting heard that TDC's Officers were concerned that the policies as currently presented were both disjointed or stand-alone, and repetitive, not forming a narrative. There was also concern noted that the current presentation and method of consideration could have led to there being more individual policies than may be necessary and a number were considered to be out of date. Finally, it was noted by the Officers that the majority of the land allocated for development in the Torridge and North Devon Local Plan 2031 had been granted some form of permission, which had not been the case at the start of the process.

It was noted that the Northam Neighbourhood Plan had been commenced in 2017 and that the detail of the policies may have been overtaken by external events. There was concern noted that to complete the process for the Plan local council elections in 2023 may be ambitious, though it was hoped a Plan could be finalised by April 2022.

Regarding the structure, comments were made regarding the detail of the layout, though the broad structural headings were welcomed, which included: Community; The Environment (subdivided to Built and Natural); Housing; and Economic Development.

It was **resolved** to accept the outline of the structure presented for consideration, assimilating all approved policies.

Proposed: Cllr Shelley, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to redraft the Northam Neighbourhood Plan using the approved structure, assimilating the policies and supporting text as and where appropriate.

2109/513 To receive V1.8 of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan

The draft was received.

2109/514 To receive Ward Profiles provided by Torridge District Council

The profiles were received. It was noted that they would provide a source of evidence for the final plan.

2110/515 To receive an update on the wording of a policy concerned with *Principal and Full-Time Residence*.

It was noted that Torridge District Council Officers had been approached to provide up to date figures for second home ownership, drawn from the Council Tax data.

It was noted that the number of second and holiday homes were, according to the ward profiles presented to the meeting, at 3.4% (compared with 1.8% across the District as a whole) but that the rate may be higher in certain parts of the Town area, such as central Appledore and parts of Westward Ho!

The meeting noted that any policy could only effect new properties and that the majority of allocations identified in the Local Plan 2031 had already been granted permission, thus would not be affected by any policy.

The meeting discussed focusing policies more acutely affordable properties, including those for social renting, on new developments, making reference to the issues of second-home ownership and properties operated as holiday lets.

It was **resolved** to not pursue a full time residence policy, given the scant evidence base but to acknowledge that it is significant issue for the Town Council area and it would influence the development of an affordable housing policy.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Shelley (all in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to include this amendment in the next update to the Plan.

Mr G Townsend left the meeting at this juncture.

2111/516 To review the wording of the below listed policies/sub policies:

- i) Tourism sub policy (d)

It was **resolved** to delete point (d), noting that the matter was covered in the body of the text and that the policy was thus approved.

Proposed: Cllr Shelley, Seconded Cllr Hodson (all in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to include this amendment in the next update to the Plan.

- ii) Provision for Young People

It was **resolved** to relocate this policy to the 'Community' section of the revised plan and absorbed within the narrative on general community facilities.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Laws (all in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to include this amendment in the next update to the Plan.

Cllr Laws left the meeting at this juncture.

- iii) Affordable Housing

It was **resolved** to defer consideration of this policy to the next meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Laws (all in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to include on the next agenda.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:25pm

Signed

Dated.....

Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group

Action Points

Arising from 24 June 2021:	Update	Complete?
1. Deputy Town Clerk to contact Mr G Townsend regarding his feedback concerning Primary Residence .	Mr Townsend to address the Advisory Group at the July 2021 meeting.	Yes
2. Deputy Town Clerk to include a new policy on Public Parking in the Neighbourhood Plan, the detail of which would be considered at a later date.	To be included in V1.8, ongoing.	Yes
3. Policy numbers to be removed from the Neighbourhood Plan during its drafting stages, so as to avoid confusion as the order of policies evolves.	Completed in V1.8.	Yes
4. An item to review the agreed policies for currency to be included on the next agenda.	On the agenda.	Yes
5. Deputy Town Clerk to review and if necessary revise the order, format and structure of the Plan as current policies are confirmed and new ones emerge, with reference to the policies included commonly in adopted Plans.	A suggested revised order is on the agenda.	Ongoing
6. Cllr Hodson to share the detail of the demographic figures used to evidence the Affordable Housing policy with the Deputy Town Clerk.	Deputy Town Clerk received data from TDC and circulated.	Yes
7. Members of the Advisory Group to share information they have and gain from their networks regarding the Affordable Housing and any other policy with the members of the Advisory Group.	On the agenda.	Ongoing
The Affordable Housing policy would be returned to a future meeting for consideration.	On the agenda.	Ongoing
8. Deputy Town Clerk to revise the wording and layout of the Broadband and Utilities policy.	Suggested split part of order review above.	Ongoing
9. Deputy Town Clerk to revise the wording and layout of the Business policy.	Suggested split part of order review above.	Ongoing
10. Cllr Chalmers to draft a policy on Community Business Hubs for review at a future meeting.	Timescale for circulation of first draft to be agreed	Ongoing
11. Deputy Town Clerk to upload all relevant minutes to	Uploaded 5 th July 2021	Yes

the Sharepoint site.

12. Deputy Town Clerk to re-issue the invites to the Sharepoint site. The link was shared on 5th July 2021. Yes

13. Deputy Town Clerk to redraft meeting schedule. Schedule redrafted for the 2nd to last Tuesday of each month, circulated for comment and on July agenda for approval. Yes

Arising from 20 July 2021:

14. Deputy Town Clerk and Mr Townsend to find mutually convenient dates in weeks commencing 6th and 13th September 2021 to offer the Officers of Torridge District Council. Meeting arranged for 9th Sept 2021 Yes

15. Deputy Town Clerk and Mr Townsend to review the possible content of a policy to protect community buildings and facilities, in the light of the established processes in respect of assets of community value, and the policies contained within the Torridge District Council Local Plan 2031. To be considered with TDC Officers at meeting above. Ongoing

16. Deputy Town Clerk to provide the Council with the new dates. Emailed to all members. Website updated Yes

17. Mr Townsend to draft wording of a policy for sales of new properties as principal residences only in advance of the August meeting to enable members to review it prior to that meeting. Circulated Ongoing

Arising from 09 Sept 2021:

18. Deputy Town Clerk to research and present suitable wording for a Public Parking policy to present to a future meeting of the group. Ongoing

19. Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to redraft the Northam Neighbourhood Plan using the approved structure, assimilating the policies and supporting text as and where appropriate. Ongoing

20. Deputy Town Clerk to include the approved wording for the Tourism and Provision for Young People policies into the revised plan as appropriate. Ongoing

21. Include consideration of the Affordable Housing policy wording on the 21st Sept 21 agenda On agenda Complete

Key stages for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan

As the Northam Neighbourhood Plan has been in development since 2017, and the membership of the steering group has evolved over the years, it may be helpful to remind members of the stages to complete the process.

The Stages as defined by central government are available ([Make a neighbourhood plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/make-a-neighbourhood-plan); [Neighbourhood planning - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/neighbourhood-planning) and [Plan-making - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making)).

The University of Reading has also undertaken research into Neighbourhood Plans, which may be access on their website at [Neighbourhood Planning - information, resources and events \(reading.ac.uk\)](https://www.reading.ac.uk/neighbourhood-planning).

In researching this paper, I found numerous local pieces of guidance for those preparing a Plan, and have drawn the list below together from various sources.

Of the 11 steps identified:

- the first two are complete
- the next four are in progress
- the final 5 steps remain to be completed.

Step 1 – Designate a Neighbourhood Area – Complete.

To designate a Neighbourhood Area, an application must be made by a parish/town/town council or a neighbourhood forum (or a community organisation in the case of a Community Right to Build Order) to Torrington District Council. This must include a statement explaining why the proposed neighbourhood area is an appropriate area, a statement that the Parish/town/Town Council is the 'relevant body' for the purposes of section 61G of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990; and a map with the parish/town boundary (or the part of the parish/town) indicated on it.

Step 2 – Publicise Neighbourhood Area – Complete.

The Council publicises the application and statement across the District and invites representations from the general public before making a formal decision to designate the area.

Step 3 – Parish/town Council prepare Neighbourhood Plan – Current.

The parish/town council or neighbourhood forum now become the qualifying / responsible body for the Neighbourhood Plan and can now officially start to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. It is at this stage the parish/town council may wish to develop a working group to prepare the plan. To start the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, a Qualifying Body (QB) should think about what resources they have i.e. staffing, funding and set out a realistic timetable in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Following this, a QB should carry out a robust community consultation to establish what the needs and aspirations of the local community are, involving key stakeholders (business, schools and local services) to help identify key priorities for a Neighbourhood Plan to address. It is good practice for groups to identify an issues and aspirations report to summaries key points which can be used for evidence later on in the stages.

Step 4 - Building evidence for your plan – Current.

The independent Examination of a Neighbourhood Plan will expect any proposals and policies to be supported by a robust evidence base, if it is to be made. Therefore QB's should approach the District Council for guidance on what evidence exists. QB's should review any relevant technical assessment to identify what future development and infrastructure is needed for the Neighbourhood Area and check to see if there are any links with the needs identified in the community consultation. Providing there is a link, technical evidence would help justify the need for a policy or proposal to deliver future development and help achieve a robust Neighbourhood Plan. Technical evidence can be obtained from the local authority and can include a number of studies i.e. a recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Strategic Housing Land Availability 2 Assessment, transport studies, or conservation appraisals.

Step 5 – Developing a vision, key aims and objectives – Current.

Identifying key issues and aspirations, can help set out a vision and key aims and objectives to include in a Neighbourhood Plan. This is not essential but it is good practice as it sets out a framework of how local needs and aspirations will be achieved. This exercise can also help inform options about the type of development that is needed and where, in order to address key issues that have been identified in the consultation. QB's can start to see what proposals and policies will be required to deliver and support the Vision and aims of the plan. QB's may find that the aim of the Neighbourhood Plan can be achieved through a Neighbourhood Plan Order and not a Neighbourhood Plan. Please click on the hyperlink to learn more about a [Neighbourhood Development Order](#).

Step 6 – Writing the Neighbourhood Plan – Current.

There are no set guidelines for what a Neighbourhood Plan should contain, though it is likely that the plan will include a series of policies and or proposals to show where future development is supported and not supported. A Neighbourhood Plan should be easy to use and navigate with so that it is efficient in determining planning decisions. A proposals map is always useful to indicate what future development is supported and where. In reviewing the evidence base, it is important that QB's are aware of what the Basic Conditions are and how they will be met because it is these that the Examiner will test throughout an independent examination. Therefore, it is good practice to assess existing strategic and local policy (the Local Plan 2031 for North Devon and Torridge) to understand where and what development is supported and to avoid repetition. Neighbourhood Plan policies must relate to land use and development and seek to address the key issues identified from the consultation. It is important that proposals and planning policies are SMART; Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time sensitive. Please click on the following hyperlink to see a guide on [how to write planning policies](#).

Step 7: Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (SEA) Requirements – To start.

One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent Examiner is whether the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with [European Union obligations \(including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive\)](#). After the QB are certain of the policies and proposals to take forward in a Neighbourhood Plan, the QB must circulate a draft Neighbourhood Plan to the Council at the earliest opportunity and request that a screening assessment is carried out on the draft plan to ascertain if any significant environmental effects are likely to occur as a result of the plan. The Council

will carry out a screening assessment to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment will be required and invite representations 3 from Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England on the assessment. Where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment a Strategic Environmental Assessment must be carried out and an Environmental Report must be prepared in accordance with [paragraphs \(2\) and \(3\) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#).

Step 8 - Pre-submission Consultation – To start.

At this stage, a Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan should be prepared for consultation. Under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Neighbourhood Plans are required to undertake a minimum of **6 week consultation** inviting representations from local people, neighbouring councils and other statutory consultees. The Regulations state Neighbourhood Plans must be:

- Publicised in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area". The Parish/town Council needs to include:
 - a. Details of the Neighbourhood Plan proposals;
 - b. Details of where and when the Neighbourhood Plan proposals can be inspected;
 - c. Details of how to make representations; and
 - d. The date by which any representations must be received, being no less than 6 weeks from the date of publication.
- Consult any 'consultation body' referred to in [Schedule 1](#) who may be affected by the proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Send a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Council. It may be useful for the QB to consult on a summary of the Neighbourhood Plan which focuses on the proposals and policies instead of the whole Neighbourhood Plan.

Please note: Groups should consult the District Council before the final draft is publicised for consultation. This is to ensure the final draft including its proposals and policies are compliant with the Basic Conditions and there are no underlining issues or uncertainties.

Step 9: Submission of Neighbourhood Plan – To start.

Following the pre-submission consultation, the QB's should prepare a Consultation Statement, which should include the following details:

- Details of people and organisations consulted.
- Details of how they were consulted
- Summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation process
- Descriptions of how these issues and concerns have been considered and addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The QB must also prepare a statement explaining how the Neighbourhood Plan fulfils the Basic Conditions. The basic conditions are set out in [paragraph 8\(2\) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) and state that a Neighbourhood Plan:

- Must be appropriate having regard to National Policy
- Must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- Must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area
- Must be compatible with human rights requirements
- Must be compatible with EU obligations.

The submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to the District Council must include the following:

- A map or statement which identifies the area to which the plan relates
- A consultation statement: explaining the consultation undertaken in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan
- The proposed Neighbourhood Plan
- the Basic Conditions Statement
- A copy of a Screening Assessment or Environmental Report (if necessary).

Step 10 – Publication Consultation and Independent Examination – To start.

On submission of the Neighbourhood Plan and the associated documents stated above, the Council checks that the submitted documents satisfy the legal requirements before the Neighbourhood Plan is subject to a **minimum 6 week public consultation**. During the consultation period, the Council will arrange to appoint an Independent Examiner in agreement with the QB. The Council will submit the Neighbourhood Plan and the associated documents along with the representations received for independent examination. Please note: During the examination, the Examiner will test that the Neighbourhood Plan fulfils the Basic Conditions (as stated above) and nothing else. The Examiner will issue a report for the Council to publish and consider. The Council must consider the Examiner's report and reach a decision whether to refer the Plan to public referendum or refuse the plan.

Step 11 – Referendum and Adoption – To start.

In reaching a decision, the Council will publish a decision statement and make arrangements to organise a public referendum. **Not less than 28 days before the date of the referendum**, the Council must publish on their website and make available an information statement and specified documents in relation to the referendum. This information must be available throughout the referendum period. Where a referendum results in a majority yes (over 50% plus 1) the Council must make (adopt) the Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible, unless the Neighbourhood Plan is considered to breach EU obligations or Convention Rights. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, it then becomes part of the Local Plan for the District.

Extracted from [Grant Funding - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)

Additional Grant Funding

Groups meeting the eligibility criteria are able to apply for additional grant of up to £8,000 (in addition to the basic grant). This will take the total amount of grant available to you to £18,000.

Any grant support you have received since 2015 will be taken into account when assessing how much grant you can apply for.

You will need to have submitted your end of grant monitoring on previous grant applications before you can apply to the current programme. If there is any underspend this will need to be returned to Groundwork before a new grant can be approved.

All grant funding needs to be spent by the end of the financial year. To find out more about how you can spend your additional grant funding, read the '[Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Notes](#)'.

Eligibility for Additional Grant Funding

Are you at least one of the following:

- Allocating sites for housing
- Including [design codes](#) in your plan
- A designated business neighbourhood plan
- A cluster of three or more parishes writing a single plan
- A Neighbourhood Area with a population of over 25,000
- A designated neighbourhood forum
- A group based in an area which has a high level of deprivation (where 30% or more of the neighbourhood area or population is in the 20% most deprived areas in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation)

If the answer is yes to any of the above you can apply for an additional £8,000 grant.

You are still able to apply for [technical support](#) (provided that you meet the technical support eligibility criteria) along with grant funding.

New Affordable Housing (Revised Draft Text for review)

Issues

The NDAT Local Plan identifies ‘a substantial need for additional affordable housing across northern Devon’ and asserts that ‘Open market housing is out of reach to many, due to a significant imbalance between wages and house prices with evidence that residents have some of the lowest earnings in the UK.’

In the Northam Housing Needs Survey 2017 86% agreed that affordable housing should be available to anyone living in, or homeless (but formerly resident) in the Northam parish, who cannot afford to rent or buy on the open market.

The *Torrige Ward Profile (2020)* records markedly higher ratios of residents over 65 in Northam and Westward Ho! (as in the table below) compared with the Torrige District, while the proportions of those aged up to 44 reflect reduced rates in these wards. The figures for Appledore are more on a par with the Torrige District average but the continuing lack of affordable housing can only contribute to the further loss of young people from the whole area.

Population Age	0-44	45-64	65+
Northam	32.8%	28.0%	39.2%
Westward Ho!	34.0%	27.7%	38.3%
Appledore	40.8%	29.7%	29.5%
Torrige District	43.2%	29.7%	27.2%

In NDAT Local Plan strategic policy ST18 – *Affordable Housing on Development Sites*, the expectation is that for proposals of 10 or more dwellings 30% of the total number will comprise affordable housing. Some developers have reduced this percentage using viability assessments agreed by the LPA. Also, assumptions made in such assessments may prove to be incorrect or outdated by changing market conditions, with larger profits made than forecast and the affordable housing quota unjustifiably reduced.

Policy

1. Proposals for residential housing development will be supported where they conform to NDAT Local Plan ST18 and deliver the level of affordable housing stated in that policy.

2. Viability assessments that make affordable housing levels subject to returns expected by developers will only be accepted if:

(a) conducted on the basis of an ‘open book’ financial appraisal open to public scrutiny, including the developer’s justification for the expected level of return;

(b) the benchmark land value is the existing use value of land plus a reasonable premium based on the circumstances applicable to the development.

(c) an affordable housing provision below policy compliance is agreed in order to provide a developer with a commercially acceptable return, with that return monitored on an open book reporting basis. If the return provided for in the viability assessment is exceeded, then an additional financial contribution towards affordable housing shall be paid to the LPA in accordance with a formula set out in a developer obligation attached to the planning permission.

3. Provided they comply with all other relevant NNP policies, proposals brought forward by Community Land Trusts or Community-led initiatives will be supported for the re-use for affordable housing of empty or derelict buildings and infill plots within development boundaries. The tenure mix of such developments is expected to reflect local needs.

Objective

1. To ensure that viability assessments, including Section 106 commitments, are carried out to high standards of transparency, open to public scrutiny and including the developer’s justification on the expected level of return.

2. To ensure that affordable housing quotas are not unfairly reduced because of ill-founded or outdated viability assessments.
3. To encourage and support the provision by Torridge District Council of social housing for rent and also to actively investigate its provision by Northam Town Council.
4. To encourage affordable housing in the NNP area through the establishment of Community Land Trusts, Community-led housing initiatives and other means of provision.

Conformity

NPPF 2019 para 57, 62-64; NDAT ST18: *Affordable Housing on Development Sites*

Justification

1. The definition of 'affordable housing' in this policy is that set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF and the required tenure mix set out in the NDAT Local Plan.
2. The policy supports and strengthens NDAT Local Plan ST18 and addresses the identified problem with viability assessments.
3. The policy conforms to PPG (Planning Practice Guidance) standards of transparency for viability assessments. It is expected that these assessments and all supporting documents will be published online. Genuinely confidential passages may be redacted.
4. Methodology for valuing land conforms to that set out in Ministry of Housing PPG *Viability* 2014, as updated 1 September 2019. Existing use value (EUUV) refers to the open market land price, assuming it continues in its existing use with no expectation of that use changing in the foreseeable future, other than in line with any permitted development rights or allocations applicable to the site.

Business & Employment (Draft Text for review)

Issues

The NNDP recognises that the provision of local employment opportunities crucial to support a thriving community, and to minimise the number of people who have to undertake long journeys to work. The plan will encourage business and employment development to secure a prosperous economic future by providing adequate sites for current and future employment needs, and by supporting and encouraging more business start-up development to broaden the economic base. Well paid quality employment in the local area would help to alleviate the daily out-of-area commute and ease traffic congestion. The beautiful Northam area is an ideal location for the establishment of high-tech employment opportunities. There is a shortage in the area of modern employment sites, with good connection to high-speed broadband, which are essential in supporting local job opportunities.

Policy - Business

- a) **Within settlement boundaries, proposals will be supported for new business premises and the expansion of existing ones, or new start-up/incubator units, with preference given to brown-field sites, provided that proposals demonstrate they will benefit the local economy.**
- b) **Within settlement boundaries, proposals for live/work home units will be supported provided they are not detrimental to the amenity of neighbours.**
- c) **Within the development boundary of Appledore, development proposals for the fishing industry will be supported providing they conform to the appropriate character policies for the location.**
- d) **Outside settlement development boundaries, small scale proposals for farm diversification schemes and other rural business enterprises which require a rural location will be supported providing an economic need is demonstrated which benefits the local economy, and which cannot reasonably be met within development boundaries and also provided that proposals comply with Policies on Coalescence and Protecting the Rural Character between settlements.**
- e) **Loss of existing employment uses will only be supported where it can be demonstrated the existing use is no longer required or viable, and the premises/site/business has been actively marketed for at least twelve months at an appropriate market price.**

Objective

The following policy is focused on supporting existing businesses and encouraging the establishment of new ones in appropriate locations. One aim is to enable residents to work in the area obviating the need to travel. A re-invigorated local fishing industry is also to be encouraged. It is also the intention of this policy to ensure that any future business development respects the sensitive landscape setting of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho!, and its heritage assets, community spirit and distinct sense of place between those settlements.

Conformity

ST06 ST09 ST11 DM09 DM11a DM12 DM14 DM15 NPPF80-84

Justification

In the Spatial Development Strategy of the ND&T Local Plan 2011-31 Northam is designated as a Main Centre. ST06 states, The Main Centres will support appropriate levels of growth that will increase the towns' capacities to increase self-containment, to meet their own needs and those of the surrounding communities where such is sought through the local vision. There is a need to increase employment opportunities across all sectors in the NNDP area, and to reduce the need to travel for work outside the area thus helping to reduce pollution and traffic congestion.