



# **NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031**

**(V2.8 MARCH 2022)**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

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**Other items to be included above or in an 'Evidence Base':**

**Green Corridors**

**Neighbourhood Survey (mm/yyyy)**

**Landscape/Seascape assessment**

**Biodiversity Assessment (DCC's)**

**Maps**



# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## 1 Foreword

1.1 Thank you for taking the time to read and consider this important document, which contains the policies your contributions have helped to create.

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan represents a significant step for the Town Council in drawing together your views and aspirations for our beautiful area, within which possible future development will take place.

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans are a new and exciting way for communities such as ours to shape the future of the area we live in. I am very proud that our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee has developed your plan to this pre-submission stage..

1.4 The process of writing your Neighbourhood Plan is being led by members of your community and Town Councillors and is part of the Government's revised approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what happens in the area in which we live. Communities like ours have been granted this important new power through the Localism Act of 2011. Ultimately you will all be able to decide whether or not to adopt this Neighbourhood Plan through a referendum.

1.5 The work undertaken by the focus group volunteers and steering group merits a special mention. They have explored a wide range of current and possible future bio-diversity, community, economic, environmental, housing, infrastructure, landscape, transport, and traffic options. It has only been possible to incorporate some of these as possible policies within our plan, because some are covered by national legislation or are the responsibility of authorities other than Northam Town Council. Thank you all for your continued support.

**Cllr. tbc Mayor of Northam Town Council.**



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# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## 2 Introduction

### Northam Parish

2.1 The Parish of Northam is located north of Bideford, along the lower reaches and estuary of the river Torridge, on the western side of the estuary mouth and along the coast. In 2021, the Parish has a combined population of 12,425.

2.2 Northam Parish is made up of three distinct settlements, each with its own character, Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho! Its borders stretch some 3.5 miles along the Torridge estuary to its mouth at the end of Greysands Beach, then south along the beach at the Northam Burrows and the seafront at Westward Ho! for another 2.5 miles until Kipling Tors is reached.

2.3 This Neighbourhood Area covers the full Northam Town Council area, shown on the plan on page 6.

2.4 Northam Town Council is the statutory lead authority for this process. The Plan once made will cover the period from 2022 to 2031.

### Neighbourhood Planning

2.4 Neighbourhood planning for communities was introduced through the Localism Act 2011. Communities can shape development in their areas through the production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan as part of a statutory process. The Northam Neighbourhood Development Plan (NNDP) is part of the Government's approach to planning, which aims to give local communities more say about what development goes on in their areas. The policies contained within them are then used in the determination of planning applications

2.5 The policies in a Neighbourhood Development Plan cannot block development that is already part of the Local Plan. What they can do is to shape where and what future development may be appropriate, what type of development, protect green spaces, the environment and heritage assets, and the design and layout of development proposals.

2.6 The Northam Neighbourhood Development Plan is based on community consultation and evidence to complement, enhance and add value to the Local Plan, which was adopted by Torridge District Council in 2018. If approved at referendum, it will become part of the statutory Development Plan alongside the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2021-2031 and be used to shape future development in Northam Parish.

2.7 The Northam Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of positive places for people to live and work. This is achieved through appropriate development which meets the needs of the people in the Northam Area.

### Process

2.8 To be reviewed, amended and inserted.

The desire for a Neighbourhood Plan was established through meetings with local residents, starting in 2016. Aware that this was an opportunity to create a robust and evidenced community voice, Northam Town Council voted on 31st May 2017 to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan.

2.9 Torridge District Council (TDC) approved the designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area

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boundary on 7th August 2017.

2.10 The NNP Steering Group was set up in 2017, with a mixed membership including Northam Town Councillors and public representatives from each of the wards. The Group's terms of reference were to draft policies for inclusion in the final Neighbourhood Plan.

## Consultation

2.11 The proposals and a draft of a Plan were put to local residents through surveys and meetings in 2018 and 2019, the results of which can be seen in the Evidence Base. The outcomes of these indicated the main concerns of local residents. Once a framework for the Plan was established and draft policies drawn up these went out to further public consultation and the responses were considered and incorporated in to the draft.

2.12 After submitting the final draft to Torridge District Council for comment and further revision the Plan will be submitted to a Government Inspector, revised again and then voted on by Northam residents in a referendum. TO BE UPDATED AS APPROPRIATE.

2.13 From the consultations undertaken (appendix/evidence base?) the overwhelming concerns were the protection of the open countryside, the coastal area and heritage assets, alongside a strong desire to avoid any coalescence between the settlements. The North Devon and Torridge Local Plan (2031), includes policies for the development of 1780 new homes within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Infrastructure improvements, including highways, health facilities, pavements and footpaths, parking, and education provision were all important issues identified through public consultations. These consultations identified the absolute necessity for such infrastructure improvements to be provided with all developments.

2.14 During the period of the Neighbourhood Plan there will be increasing pressure for more housing. The overarching priority must be to ensure that any new development is delivered in a way that protects the environment, green spaces, the coast, countryside and heritage assets. The provision of genuine affordable housing to meet local needs and the creation of local employment opportunities within the Plan area are also of vital importance and would promote a sustainable local economy. Any development should reduce the adverse environmental impacts of traffic congestion, carbon emissions and pollution caused by having to travel out of the area for employment.

## Community Profile

2.15 To be reviewed, drawn from Ward Profiles, supported with notes of services in each of the centres across the plan area.

2.16 The Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises areas which are very distinct in character but which are all influenced through history by their location near to the Torridge estuary and the sea.

2.17 Northam has the largest population, with 4,980 residents recorded in the 2020 Torridge District Council ward profile (**see evidence base**). The original settlement remains, with narrow roads and terrace houses radiating from The Square and dominated by St Margaret's Church which stands on Bone Hill high above the surrounding countryside. Since 2019, Northam ward has included that of Orchard Hill. Orchard Hill developed as a distinct residential area of large 18th/19th century houses straddling what is now the A39, followed by further housing built in the 20th century. The area is somewhat detached from the other settlement areas.

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2.18 Westward Ho! is the premier seaside resort of the Torridge district, with a glorious Blue Flag beach and the natural Pebble Ridge protecting the Northam Burrows Country Park. The settlement was originally developed in the nineteenth century as an affluent resort with large properties. Although considerably expanded by modern development some of the original large Victorian buildings still exist, including what was previously the United Services College where Rudyard Kipling was a pupil. The population is 3,652, recorded in the 2020 Torridge District Council ward profile (see evidence base).

2.19 Following the coast road away from Westward Ho! east towards Appledore one passes the famous Royal North Devon Golf Club, which is the oldest golf club in England. The golf course is situated on Northam Burrows, which is an extensive common and Country Park, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest and part of the UNESCO North Devon Biosphere.

2.20 Located on the Torridge estuary, Appledore (population 3,793 (see evidence base)) is historically a maritime village, boasting an important trading and shipbuilding heritage. This heritage is continued today by skilled workers at one of the largest indoor shipyards in Europe. Appledore is geographically separated from both Northam and Westward Ho! by beautiful open countryside. Its narrow streets and 'drangs', containing many independent businesses, characterful houses and cottages are a major attraction for tourists.

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## Northam Neighbourhood Plan 'Plan Area'



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## 3.0 Vision & Objectives

3.1 The vision for the Neighbourhood Development Plan is that by 2031 we will have built a sustainable, self-reliant community.

**To maintain and enhance the individual characteristics of Northam, Orchard Hill, Appledore and Westward Ho! and to build a more sustainable, self-reliant community of collaboration, connection and a strong sense of collective purpose.**

3.2 The Neighbourhood Development Plan will have ensured the protection of the individual characteristics and distinct identities of the three settlements, Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho!

3.3 Communities will provide facilities for people of all ages, including venues for socialising, sport and recreational, vibrant and flourishing parks, and allotments for rent in all three communities.

3.4 There will be appropriate housing provided to meet local needs. The developed stock will be of good quality design, accommodating energy efficient solutions and a continued program to support retrofitting older properties to reduce energy consumption.

3.5 The Plan will have supported the delivery of Northam Town Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan, achieving carbon net zero in its buildings and significant reductions in the carbon footprint of households and commercial enterprises across the Town area.

3.6 The natural environment will have benefitted from the Council's commitment to protect valuable green spaces. This will be supported by works to maintain and improve biodiversity through tree planting, support of 'life on the verge' and a reduction in the use of pesticides.

3.7 Heritage buildings and sites of historical interest will continue to provide future generations with links to their past and be treasured as places to visit in the local tourism offer.

3.8 The Neighbourhood Development Plan will have supported the establishment of an improved network of cycle and walking routes, supported by improved and sustainable transport routes. These will link the settlements to major hubs for extended bus routes, coach stations and local railway stations to deliver national travel connectivity. Support proposals for better traffic management.

3.9 Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! will be vibrant and commercially successful settlements with a buoyant economies offering a range of employment opportunities. New and additional businesses will have been developed and skills and training will have enhanced the profile of emerging maritime and marine employment opportunities with specific priority given to Appledore Shipyard and the Appledore Torridge economic development area.



**POLICIES ARE GROUPED UNDER 4 MAIN HEADINGS, WITH TRANSPORT RELATED POLICIES SPLIT BETWEEN THOSE HEADINGS AS APPROPRIATE.**

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**HOW THE NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
MEETS THE BASIC CONDITIONS.**

***TO BE INSERTED.***

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## 4.0 Community Community Facilities

4.1 A number of community buildings and locations provide venues for activities and functions across the area. With the exception of the Northam Hall, these are in the ownership of either charitable bodies, community organisations or local faith groups. These facilities will be supported in order to provide enhanced services and opportunities for all residents and businesses of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

4.2 These assets are designated as “Community Hubs” to ensure a commitment to improve community facilities, locations for events and accommodation for local support services. The Plan also supports additional community hubs to provide services across the settlements of Northam, Ap-pledore and Westward Ho!.

4.3 Protection of community facilities from development will be prioritised, seeking their listing as “Assets of Community Value” if appropriate. This would provide a firm foundation for legal challenge should change of use be sought, resulting in the loss of a building or recreational space which would be detrimental to the well being of the community. Development proposals will be supported which add new, or enhance current provision of facilities. This will enable people to develop all forms of creative expression, performing arts, sport and recreational activities, personal and team building challenges.

### **POLICY: CF1 COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- i. Community Facilities should be protected from loss through the planning process where there is evidence of ongoing demand and community value. The Town Council may seek their listing as Assets of Community Value where necessary and appropriate.**
- ii. Development proposals that increase the availability of open spaces for sport and recreation purposes will be supported, subject to policies on the protection of Green Spaces and Coalescence (see tourism).**
- iii. Development proposals will be supported which add new, or enhance current provision of facilities.**

**Conformity: ST11 ST22 NOR NOR6 NOR7 NPPF83 NPPF91 NPPF96-97**

### **What is an Asset of Community Value?**

4.9 An Asset of Community Value (ACV) is land or buildings nominated by the Town Council or certain local voluntary or community groups which Torridge District Council decides meets the requirements to be listed as an *Asset of Community Value*.

4.10 Listing as an ACV gives the local community an opportunity to make a bid for the asset when it comes up for sale. To qualify as an ACV the actual current (or recent past) use of the nominated land or building must further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community. It must also be realistic to think that there can continue to use of the land or building that will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community. Examples of land of buildings that might qualify as ACVs include: village shops, public houses, community centres, libraries and playing fields.

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## **What is the implication of listing as an Asset of Community Value**

4.11 Once listed as an Asset of Community Value, the local community will be informed if they are put up for sale within the five-year listing period. If they express a wish to do so, local community interest groups then have the chance to 'pause' the sale for a period of 6 months so they can prepare to bid for it, known as the Community Right to Bid. The property cannot be sold within this 6-month period, but at the end of this time the owner still has the right to sell to whomever they choose.

4.12 Indoor and outdoor facilities, providing locations for activities and creative pursuits accessible to local people are spread across the Neighbourhood Plan area. The opportunity for formal and informal, structured or less structured activities is more limited for people in full time education and of working age.

4.13 To provide young people with access to a range of challenging activities which help foster growth mindsets. It is intended that provision of sport and recreation facilities, and opportunities for creative expression across the NNP area will be monitored on a regular basis, assessing how open spaces and future developments might better serve the needs and aspirations of young people. It is the intention to support proposals for business development and start-ups that directly benefit young people.

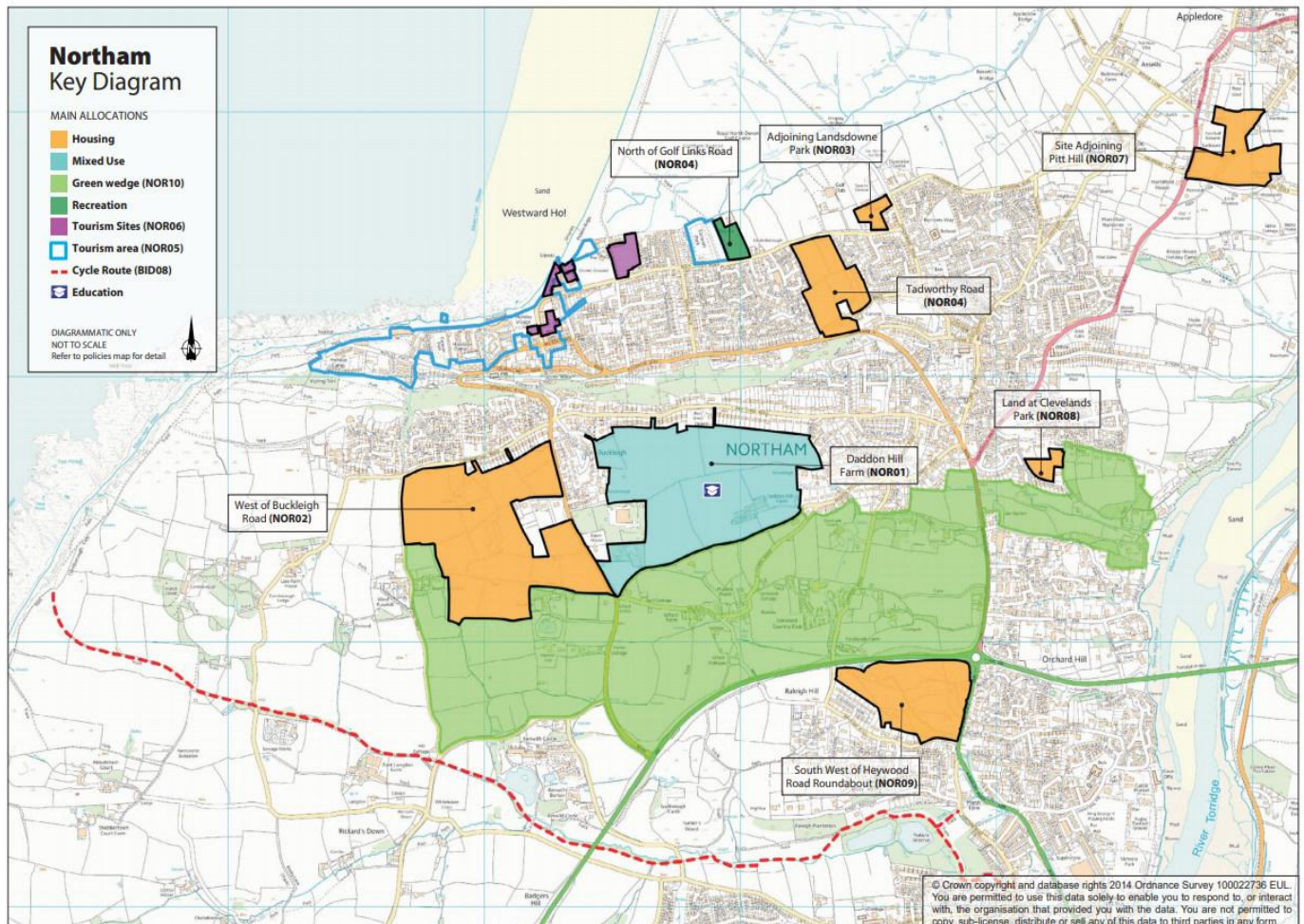
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## 5. HOUSING

5.1 There is an identified need for housing in the area covered by the Northam Neighbourhood Plan. This is evidenced in the Northam Town Council housing needs survey 2017, which highlights the need for affordable dwellings, for either purchase or rent, and an identified need for more bungalows. Many recent housing developments have not sufficiently addressed the needs of the local population, but have certainly attracted new residents to the area.

5.2 Many of the new homes built have been purchased as second homes or holiday lets, which can detrimentally affect the housing provision available for local people. The policies put forward in this Plan are in line with the vision and objectives of enhancing the area, and ensuring new housing developments include a mix of housing to meet the needs of local people, and that those developments are designed to be in keeping with the existing character of Northam, and to create a strong sense of place.

### Northam Development Areas as identified in the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2031



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## Local Housing Need

5.3 In order to meet the housing needs of local people, it is necessary to bring greater balance and mixture to the local housing market and create new opportunities for people to live and work here, and to strengthen our community and the local economy.

5.4 In answers given to the question on housing in the two consultation leaflets issued, the comment given over and over again was that there was too much new open market housing being purchased as second homes and holiday homes. Priority should be given to providing housing for full time residency. In 2012 3.28% of housing in the Torridge District were registered as second homes. In the Northam Parish area the percentage is 5.8% some 390 homes. (Strategic Housing Market Assessment up-date Dec.2012) (TDC Ward Profile 2020).

5.5 To safeguard the sustainability of the distinct settlements within the Northam, especially parts of Appledore and Westward Ho!, where communities are being eroded through the amount of properties which are not occupied on a permanent basis, and to address the lack of affordable housing for local people, the following policies will be applied.

## Size and type of dwellings

5.6 One of the main issues regarding the provision of dwellings for families and retired people is the size of the property. It is the aim of the plan to provide housing that is less expensive to buy/rent and maintain.

5.7 There is a proven need for more bungalows this would provide suitable homes for those who wish to downsize possibly freeing-up family sized homes. People with some physical disabilities also require ground floor living provision. There is also a need to cater for more single person households. Family dwellings of one, two and three bedrooms, terraced, single or semi-detached are also required and will be encouraged.

5.8 In the Northam Town Council 2017 housing needs survey to the question how many bedrooms do you require, 54% answered two, 28% three and 15% one. Only 3% answered 4 or more.

5.9 Projected household types 2011-2031 show a large increase in

- one person households
- lone parent with dependent child/children
- couple with no dependent children, a couple, and
- one or more adults.

The study identifies the demand and increasing need for more one and two bed bungalows and houses. (SHMA Torridge and North Devon update).

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## **POLICY: HO1 SIZE OF DWELLINGS**

- i. The provision of smaller dwellings (those with one, two or three bedrooms) will be supported, with particular emphasis on the provision of more bungalows. (Rooms otherwise designated on plans, but clearly capable of use as bedrooms, will be counted as bedrooms for the purposes of this policy)**
- ii. Dwellings of 5 bedrooms or more will, exceptionally, be allowed where evidence is provided that this is needed to provide the main residence of a household with a minimum fifteen-year residency in the area.**
- iii. New dwellings should be designed to be flexible, adaptable and accessible in order to cater for the changing needs of a typical household.**
- iv. All new homes will be required to meet the Lifetime Homes standard.**

**Conformity: ST01 ST02 ST18 DM22 NPPF5 NPPF12**



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## Affordable Housing

5.10 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, rental costs and house prices with evidence that residents have some of the lowest earnings in the UK.'

5.11 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.

5.12 The Torridge Ward Profiles (2020) records markedly higher ratios of residents over 65 in Northam and Westward Ho! (as in the table below) compared with the Torridge 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 Torridge District average but the continuing lack of affordable housing can only contribute to the further loss of young people from the whole area.

<b>Population Age</b>	<b>0-4</b>	<b>5-15</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-44</b>	<b>45-64</b>	<b>65-74</b>	<b>75-84</b>	<b>85+</b>
Appledore ward	4.5%	11.1%	6.1%	19.1%	29.7%	16.2%	10.2%	3.1%
Northam ward	3.4%	8.3%	5.5%	15.6%	28.0%	19.6%	12.8%	6.8%
Westward Ho! ward	3.5%	6.7%	6.8%	17.0%	27.7%	21.2%	12.6%	4.6%
Torridge District	4.7%	11.6%	7.9%	19.0%	29.7%	15.5%	8.4%	3.3%

5.13 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.

5.14 The objective of this Plan is:

- i. 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,
- ii. to ensure that affordable housing quotas are not unfairly reduced because of ill-founded or outdated viability assessments,
- iii. to encourage and support the provision of social housing for rent, either by Northam Town Council, or other organisations, actively investigating its provision.
- iv. to encourage affordable housing in the NNP area through the establishment of Community Land Trusts, Community-led housing initiatives and other means of provision.



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5.15 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. The policy supports and strengthens NDAT Local Plan ST18 and addresses the identified problem with viability assessments.

5.16 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, but the methodology for valuing land conforms to that set out in Ministry of Housing PPG Viability 2014, as updated 1 September 2019. Existing use value (EUV) 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.

## **POLICY: HO2 NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- i. 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.**
- ii. Provided they comply with all other relevant NNP policies, proposals brought forward by Community Land Trusts or Community-led initiatives or self-build projects will be supported for the re-use for affordable housing of empty or derelict buildings, infill plots and new builds within development boundaries. The tenure mix of such developments is expected to reflect local needs.**
- iii. Viability assessments that make affordable housing levels subject to returns expected by developers will only be accepted:**
  - (a) If 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) If the benchmark land value is the existing use value of land plus a reasonable premium based on the circumstances applicable to the development.**
  - (c) 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.**

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

5.17 On many developments over recent years available amenity space surrounding dwellings has been reduced. There is concern that over-development can result in large dwellings with small gardens which are less suitable for permanent occupation, less affordable, and encourage second and holiday homes.

5.18 Allowance in the size of external amenity space also needs to be made, for the possible future extension or adaptation of the dwelling. This policy is also intended to meet concerns regarding adequate off-road parking, and the retention of adequate garden space for occupiers, which encourages biodiversity and protects the characteristics of an area. Northam Town Council housing needs survey 2017.

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5.19 In order to allow for a garden and adequate parking, we want to encourage a sustainable population by providing housing that would be suitable for families. Gardens are needed to give children room to play and exercise, space to grow vegetables etc. as well as encouraging wildlife and providing a quality environment for our area.

5.20 The mix of dwellings, whether new, redeveloped or replacement will need to consider density, form, materials and colour which will strongly influence the quality of the residential environment. The design and layout of dwellings will also affect residents' quality of life, and matters to be addressed include the provision made for amenity space, privacy, daylight, freedom from nuisance and space for household activities and possible expansion.

## **POLICY: HO3 NEW, REDEVELOPED AND REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS**

- i. Adequate amenity space should be provided to meet the needs of intending occupiers and allow for movement space.**
- ii. Where development abuts the private garden areas of existing properties, a separation distance greater than 20m will be required to minimise overlooking, with a minimum of 10m between the rear of new houses and the common boundary unless the design of the proposal affords equivalent protection. Enhanced separation distances may be necessary for development on sloping sites.**
- iii. Development layout should ensure that sufficient space is provided between dwellings and existing trees to be retained to prevent possible overshadowing. New tree planting close to buildings should be deciduous to allow access for sunlight and daylight during the winter.**
- iv. If a dwelling is being designed to be adaptable overtime to meet changing needs, then the impact of such future extension should be taken into account in its orientation, plot size and relationship to other properties.**
- v. An increase in height over any replaced building will only be acceptable where this is compatible with the appearance of adjacent buildings and the amenity of their occupiers.**

**Conformity: ST01 ST04 ST15 NOR DM01 DM04 DM07 NPPF61 NPPF124 NPPF127 NPPF128 NPPF130**

## **Housing design**

5.21 One of the most important features of any new development should be the quality of design. Particular attention should be focussed on housing development, enhancing the area where people live.

5.22 All new development must reflect local character and context and create a strong sense of place. New Development applications should include proposals for greening the area under consideration, to include new tree lined roads and avenues and stone and/or brick boundary walls where appropriate with more open grassed, shrub and flower planted areas.

5.23 Of crucial importance will be the density, massing, height, landscape, materials, arrangement of streets and spaces with appropriate landscaping. The defining characteristics of the area should be evaluated taking into consideration the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

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5.24 It is not the intention to discourage innovative change where appropriate, and is accepted that new modern architecture can sit alongside the historic when sensitively designed.

5.25 All applications, at the appropriate level, need to set out a clear design vision with as much clarity as possible, so that local people can consider what is likely to be acceptable.

5.26 Comments received in the two consultation leaflets mention issues such as "*builders not providing quality builds*"; "*soon the area will be similar to London if we build on every little bit of green*"; "*stop cramming so many match-box houses on tiny scraps of land*"; and "*too much inappropriate development going on in Westward Ho!*".

5.27 It is clear from these and other comments that effective Design and Access statements should accompany new development proposals and that the layout of roads and streets should be more than just transport routes. Design policies should be developed with the local community these would provide a framework for creating a high quality of design.

## **POLICY: HO4 QUALITY OF DESIGN**

**All development within the NDP area must be of a high standard, reflect local character and context, and create a strong sense of place.**

- i. Proposals must include supporting information which clearly demonstrates how existing key features and assets of the site such as biodiversity, natural views, built structures, landmarks including mature trees, water courses and hedges are impacted by the proposal. Any negative impact on these features must be accompanied by appropriate mitigation measures.**
- ii. The use and re-use of traditional materials, with the use of low ecological impact materials and techniques will be sought.**
- iii. Proposals will be expected to be visually attractive as the result of good architecture, layout and appropriate effective landscaping, and function well adding to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term, but also over the lifetime of the development.**
- iv. Suitable provision for general storage space should be provided in all dwellings. Externally accessible space should be provided for storing garden equipment and tools, as well as play equipment and bicycles.**
- v. Refuse storage space should be externally accessible from the front of the house. The refuse storage space should be accessible from the kitchen without having to go through a living room.**

**Conformity: ST04 ST14 DM04 NPPF124 NPPF125 NPPF127 NPPF130 ST05**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## **Energy Conservation and Carbon Reduction**

5.28 The UK is committed under the Climate Change Act 2008 to significantly reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% of 1990 levels by 2050, and this commitment is reinforced in the NPPF and in the NDAT Local Plan 2011-2031. However, the IPCC report on global warming published in 2018 concluded that global warming is occurring at a faster rate than was previously thought and that the World has arguably eleven years to take measures to avoid a catastrophic rise in the average global temperature of two degrees.

5.29 Northam Town Council has declared a Climate Emergency and aims to achieve carbon neutral emissions in the area by 2030. The following policy (HO5) is designed to help achieve the aims of the Northam Town Council carbon reduction plan (see appendix).

5.30 Energy conservation measures and alternative energy generation make a significant contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions. Energy conservation will help contribute to a reduction in the cost of living. The Torridge District Council area has the second lowest weekly gross pay in the UK (357.50). Overall gross disposable income in the Torridge District Area is the second lowest in Devon with a total of £1,066,000 in 2015 (source: TDC Torridge Profile 2017).

5.31 To support improved energy efficiency systems in new dwellings in order to increase the number of zero carbon homes. The introduction of alternative energy systems for new and existing homes, and support for community scale alternative energy generation. It is also the intention to support the aims of Northam Town Council's climate emergency action plan.

### **POLICY: HO5 ENERGY CONSERVATION AND CARBON REDUCTION**

- 1. New residential development or improvement to existing dwellings will be supported where:**
  - a) It incorporates increased energy efficiency measures with the aim of increasing the number of zero carbon dwellings;**
  - b) It incorporates alternative energy systems, such as solar panels, micro-wind generation, heat pumps, and the introduction of grey water storage or such new technologies that become available; and**
  - c) in the case of new dwellings, in order to promote energy efficiency, consideration is given to the orientation of dwellings in order that living rooms can benefit from passive solar gain.**
- 2. Development of new dwellings and other buildings will be supported where:**
  - a) Electric car charging points are incorporated where appropriate; and**
  - b) Rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling systems are incorporated where appropriate.**
- 3. Proposals for community scale alternative energy systems will be supported where there is no adverse impact on residential amenity, landscape setting or biodiversity. Proposals should be accompanied by an independent assessment of their siting, scale and setting in the landscape and impact on biodiversity.**

**Conformity: ST02 ST05 St16 NPPF 151-154**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Parking Provision

5.32 In the two consultation leaflets issued, parking and road congestion featured prominently in responses received, and the level of car parking provision on developments was an issue.

5.33 Whilst every effort is made to reduce the dependence on the car for many it is essential, with two cars per household being the norm in the Northam area. (TDC Ward Profiles 2017).

5.34 National planning restrictions in respect of parking provision were abolished in 2011 and the NPPF allows local parking standards for developments. The Secretary of State called for new developments to be built with sufficient parking to reflect local market demand. (Technical Consultation on Planning 31/7/2014 sections 2.77 & 2.78)

5.35 The main objectives in making provision for parking are to enhance the visual character of the development, by ensuring that cars and bicycles are an unobtrusive part of the scene through the appropriate location, layout and detailed design of the parking spaces.

5.36 To reduce the use of cars and conserve land by providing no more than the minimum number of vehicle parking spaces required to meet future demands, and to encourage cycling, by providing sufficient numbers of bicycle parking spaces to meet future demands.

5.37 To help make parking provision visually unobtrusive the layout of the development as a whole should be designed to make building plots wide enough and deep enough to plant trees and shrubs to soften the visual impact of in-curtilage parking provision located in front of the building line. The use of trees and shrubs to soften the visual impact of on-street parking and cars parked in grouped parking areas would add greatly to the visual amenity of an area.

### **POLICY: TR1 RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROVISION**

- i. New dwellings must provide off-street spaces as follows:  
1 bedroom dwellings – 1 space per dwelling  
2 bedroom dwellings – 2 spaces per dwelling  
3 bedroom dwellings – 2 spaces per dwelling  
4 bedroom dwellings – 3 spaces per dwelling  
Houses in multiple occupation – 1 space per 2 bed spaces.**
- ii. A suitable number of spaces for the purpose of drop-offs should be provided.**
- iii. The need for more spaces will be based on the views of the Highway Authority.**
- iv. Proposals for apartments providing communal provision will be assessed separately in consultation with the Highway Authority.**
- v. Housing developments of four or more dwelling units will be required to provide one further off-street parking space per four dwelling units.**
- vi. Provision of publicly accessible and private electric vehicle charging points within the curtilage of the development will be supported.**
- vii. All housing developments should incorporate secure and accessible cycle parking, preferably covered from the weather, and providing one space per bedroom for each dwelling and one space per five dwellings for visitor bicycles.**

**Conformity: DM06 NPPF105 NPPF106**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## **Accommodating a diverse and ageing population**

5.38 With a higher than national average of retired residents, increased provision of nursing and care-homes is envisaged during the plan period. It is imperative that such proposals adequately provide the type of facility which takes into account the varied needs of potential residents.

5.39 In all four Wards of the Northam Town Council area the age profile of the over 65's is well above the Torridge average of 26.5% rising to a high of 39.7% in Westward Ho!. Likewise the retired persons profile is also above the Torridge average of 20.5% with a high of 27.1% in Northam itself.

5.40 As may be expected those with bad or very bad health and limited long term illness or disability are also above the Torridge average (Torridge DC Ward Profiles 2020).

5.41 With the increase of retirees moving into the Northam area it can be expected these statistics will in all likelihood rise, and we must be prepared for the increased need we can expect. The ONS 2016-based subnational population projections project that the population aged 75 and over in Devon will rise from 124,900 in 2016 to 205,400 in 2036, an increase of 80,500. This would require between 14,500 and 20,100 additional units of specialist accommodation.

### **POLICY: HO7 RESIDENTIAL CARE AND NURSING HOMES**

**Proposals for Residential Care and Nursing Homes will be supported where:**

- i. The site lies within the development boundary and is well related to the public transport service and within reasonable walking distance of services.**
- ii. The accommodation includes a dedicated outdoor amenity space for the exclusive use of residents.**
- iii. Adequate on-site parking provision is provided for staff and visitors.**

**Conformity: NDAT Local Plan ST01 ST02 ST04 ST05 ST06 ST17 DM01 NPPF8**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## THE ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

6.1 The NNP area faces the following challenges:

- i. Pressure for development, especially in the green gaps between the settlements of Northam and Appledore.
- ii. The vulnerability to development of undesignated heritage assets and buildings, amenity space, wildlife and valued views.
- iii. The need to adopt more sustainable local energy use and the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions working towards zero emissions in an effort to combat climate change.

6.2 In the first round of consultation for the NNP respondents voted heritage and green spaces second in importance out of eleven options listed. In the second round of consultation, heritage and green spaces came first out of seven options listed. In total 42% of respondents listed environment as the aspect of the NNP they valued most.

6.3 The NNP sets out the following objectives with regard to the environment in the area it covers:

- i. To improve, protect and enhance attractive and accessible green spaces, walking and cycling networks for all residents and visitors to enjoy.
- ii. To ensure the three settlements of Northam/Orchard Hill, Appledore and Westward Ho! retain their physical and community identities by protecting their setting in the landscape and open countryside, and the special character of the area provided by the coastal and estuarine location.
- iii. To preserve specified views of community value in order to maintain a sense of place, well-being and community identity in the NNP area.
- iv. To protect and enhance buildings and places of heritage and community value, ensuring that the NNP area retains its rich historic environment and sense of place.
- v. To protect and enhance areas of biodiversity to ensure that the NNP area continues to have a species-rich and diverse range of flora and fauna.
- vi. Climate Emergency Declaration to take urgent action to reduce carbon emissions in the NNP area.

### Local Green Spaces

6.4 In 2012 the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the National Planning Policy Framework, which allows local communities to identify for protection local green areas of particular importance to them. Planning permission will only be granted for development of a Local Green Space in very exceptional circumstances. The neighbourhood survey showed general concern at the loss of green space in the NNP area. The NNP area includes various pieces of land that meet the requirements for designation for Local Green Spaces.

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

6.5 The intention of the policy is that proposals for development in these areas will only be supported where there will be no adverse impact on Local Green Spaces.

6.6 These designations of important and valued open spaces in the NNP area as Local Green Spaces are in accordance with the criteria in the NPPF 99-101. Being in reasonably close proximity to the community served, these spaces hold a particular local significance, they are local in character and are not extensive tracts of land.

## **POLICY: EN1 LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

**The following locations (see Map B1) are designated as Local Green Spaces and potential Assets of Community Value (ref section & policy on community facilities). Development that does not enhance the value of these areas as Local Green Spaces will not be supported unless exceptional circumstances apply, for example, it is essential to meet specific necessary infrastructure needs and no alternative site is available.**

**i. Rectory Gardens, Fore Street, Northam**



**ii. Allotments South of Marshford, Churchill Way, Northam**



**iii. Land known as Blackies, Torridge Road, Appledore**



**iv. The Cricket Ground, Golf Links Road, Westward Ho!**





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**v. Humpty-Dumpty Field, Great Burrow Rise, Westward Ho!**



**vi. Westward Ho! Park, Golf Links Road, Westward Ho! (owned by NTC)**



**vii. Escarpment Woodland between Bay View Road and Atlantic Way**



**viii. Anchor Park, Appledore (owned by NTC)**



**ix. Village Green, The Backfield, Appledore**



**x. Hillcliff Gardens, Irsha Street, Appledore**



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**xi. Tors View, off Cornborough Drive,  
Westward Ho!**



**xii. Village Green, Westward Ho!**



**xiii. Appledore Football Club Ground,  
Churchill Way**



**xiv. Bideford Blues Junior FC Sports  
Complex.**



**xv. Green Corridor, Knapp Wood  
(to be removed?)**

**xvi. Burrough Farm (owned by NTC)  
Move to recreational space policy  
area/wording?**

**Conformity**  
NPPF 99-101 DM09: *Safeguarding Green Infrastructure.*

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Prevention of Coalescence between Settlements

6.7 The setting, identity and distinctiveness of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! are framed and protected by the area of countryside between the settlements and their locations on the coast and Taw/Torridge estuary. The character of the area includes its tranquillity and dark skies. The phrase 'dark skies' refers to low levels of artificial lighting making possible clear views of the night sky.

6.8 The relatively small green gap between Northam and Appledore is of particular amenity value to residents and visitors alike, and is the only area of traditional Devon countryside easily accessible on foot or by bicycle from those settlements. Despite this, it has been seriously reduced by development, and its rural character eroded. Any further new development risks uniting the settlements and removing their separate identities.



6.9 In the NDAT Local Plan 2011-31 there is a specific *green wedge* policy (NOR10) covering the land between Northam and the A39, north of Orchard Hill and Raleigh Hill, there is no specific *green wedge* policy covering the land between Northam and Appledore, or Northam and Westward Ho!. Instead Policy NOR (h) requires and 'avoidance of development that would contribute to coalescence between Northam and Appledore' (NDAT 2031 NOR(h)), but the area mentioned is not defined on any map.

6.10 In addition there is no policy to protect the setting of Northam Burrows or the South West Coastal Footpath. NDAT Local Plan policies ST09 and NOR (h) go some way to address this, but continuing pressure for further development necessitates a more robust and coherent set of area specific policies.

6.11 Numerous comments on the Area Design Statements for Appledore, Westward Ho! and Northam support the rural gap between settlements (source: Area Design Statements for Appledore, Westward Ho! and Northam Statement of Representations November 2008). Public consultation in Spring 2019 gave strong support for the policies 'Local Green Spaces' and 'Prevention of Coalescence between Settlements'.

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

6.12 This Policy seeks to retain the separate identities of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! by resisting development that contributes to coalescence between those settlements. Where, exceptionally, development is permitted, policy EN3 aims to mitigate any harm done to the rural character of the area by restoring and enhancing traditional boundaries.

6.13 The provision of landscaping may not necessarily overcome the presumption against development for the following reasons; even if landscaping mitigates some of the harm done by development, the development might still be unduly harmful to the rural character of the area, and the addition of landscaping could still harm the open character of the rural landscape.

## **POLICY: EN2 PREVENTION OF COALESCENCE**

**Development that would lead to or contribute to coalescence between the development boundaries of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! as defined on Map B2, will be refused to ensure the distinct identities of the respective settlements are maintained.**

**Conformity: NDAT Local Plan ST09 DM08(a) NOR(h) NPPF 170, 180**

## **Rural Landscape and Character**

6.14 Paragraph 10.348 of the NDAT Local Plan notes that the current form Appledore, Northam and Westward HO! reflects the 'maintained desire to avoid coalescence between settlements'.

That Policy conforms to NDAT Policy NOR(h) and extends the policy to the land between Appledore and Westward Ho! it also provides the benefit of a clearly defined map B2.

6.15 This Policy seeks to retain the valued rural landscape character of the area to protect the setting of Northam Burrows and the South West Coastal Footpath and to ensure new development is easily and safely accessible.

6.17 The Policy on Retaining the landscape character between settlements conforms to ST09 DM17 and DM18 of the NDAT Local Plan. The open and rural landscape character of the area is defined in the Joint Landscape Character Assessment report. It should be noted that the most sustainable location for new tourism developments is within the development boundaries of settlements as stated in the NDAT Local Plan para 453. The form of traditional boundaries is discussed in the Landscape Character Assessment report.

6.18 Where development is permitted, this policy aims to mitigate any harm done to the rural character of the area by restoring and enhancing traditional boundaries.

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## **POLICY: EN3 PROTECTING RURAL AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

**Within the area shown on Map B2 new development will be supported provided that:**

- i. The development does not detract from the un-spoilt character, rural atmosphere and appearance, dark skies and tranquility of the area.**
- ii. Any development should conserve, restore or add traditional earth banks or hedgerows as boundaries, with the use of native broadleaf tree and hedgerow species, to integrate the development with the rural character of the area.**
- iii. Development does not harm the setting of Northam Burrows or the South West Coastal Footpath.**
- iv. There is safe convenient access to the development by foot, bicycle, vehicle and public transport.**
- v. That development is required because it cannot reasonably be located outside the area defined on Map B2.**

**Conformity: NDAT Local Plan ST09 ST14 DM08a DM18 NOR(h) NPPF 170 180**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Valued Views

6.19 NPPF 170 (a) states that planning policy and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. The NDAT Local Plan also emphasises the importance of preserving views in numerous instances.

6.20 All the views listed in this Policy are accessible to the public. The detailed justification for retaining and protecting these views are set out in Appendix 2: Detailed Justification for Valued Views.

6.21 The predominantly open and undulating landscape of the NNP area, both seaward and landward, is framed by a green setting of woodland, fields and marshes and this gives the area beyond the development boundaries of each settlement a distinctively rural sense of place. The attractiveness of this landscape depends on its uninhibited views towards the countryside, across open spaces and to the sea, and should be retained in order to protect the tourism offer, and residents' sense of local pride and identity.

6.22 The Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge Districts divides the rural area of Northam Parish into two landscape types: 4F Dunes and 5B Coastal Undulating Farmland. The Assessment identifies Northam Burrows as Landscape 4F and the remaining area of the parish outside the settlements as Landscape 5B (see Appendix).

6.23 Although the Joint Landscape Character Assessment recommended a strategy to protect the role of Landscape 5B (Coastal Undulating Farmland) as a working agricultural landscape with open sea views providing a distinctive sense of place. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes a delivery mechanism to support these aims, by identifying valued views and viewpoints, which have been identified through consultation. Furthermore, the NDAT Local Plan 2031 does not have a policy for protecting specific valued views in Northam Parish.

6.24 For details of how the views were identified (see appendix).

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## **POLICY: EN4 PROTECTING VALUED VIEWS**

**Development will be supported where it sits well in the environment, does not harm the identified on Map B3 and detailed in Appendix 2 with the photo-vistas attached.**

**Development proposals that have a significant visual impact on the open landscape in terms of height, massing and scale of buildings, must provide a landscape impact appraisal, undertaken by the applicant.**

**These viewpoints are:**

- i. Pimpley Bridge, Northam Burrows looking North East to Staddon Hill, Appledore and East towards Northam/Westward Ho!.**
- ii. Bone Hill, Northam looking North and North West towards Appledore.**
- iii. Bidna Hill looking East and South East along the South West Coastal Footpath.**
- iv. Lookout Field, Staddon Hill, Appledore looking South West towards Westward Ho!.**
- v. Windmill Lane, Northam, from the field access looking North and North East in the direction of the ridge extending from Bidna to Diddywell.**
- vi. Village Green, Backfield, Appledore, looking North towards Blackies Wood.**
- vii. Staddon Road, Appledore, looking South West towards Long Lane and Northam Burrows.**

**Conformity: NDAT Local Plan ST09 ST14 ST15 NOR(1) NPPF 127 170**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Heritage Assets

6.26 Heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, landscapes and townscapes, which have architectural and historic significance. Protection of such assets is important not only to safeguard the significance of the asset itself, but also to protect the wider historic environment. The NNP area includes many heritage assets that are listed in the Devon and Dartmoor Historic Environment Record (HER).

6.27 Although the HER describes their significance, many of these heritage assets are not scheduled or protected by any other designation such as Conservation Areas. They are therefore vulnerable to development that would harm their significance and the historic environment of the NNP Area.

6.28 The Localism Act 2011 requires Local Authorities to maintain a list of assets of community value, nominated by the local community. This list can include heritage assets. Currently in 2019 there is no Local List of Heritage Assets for the NDAT Local Plan area, however NDAT ST15 seeks to identify and protect locally important buildings that contribute to local character and identity.

6.29 In the first round of consultation for the NNP respondents voted heritage and green spaces second in importance out of eleven options listed. In the second round of consultation heritage and green spaces came first out of seven options listed. Public consultation in Spring 2019 showed strong support for this policy.

The Northam Parish List of Locally Important Heritage Assets is in Appendix 3. and includes detailed justification for each of the heritage assets listed based on the criteria detailed above.

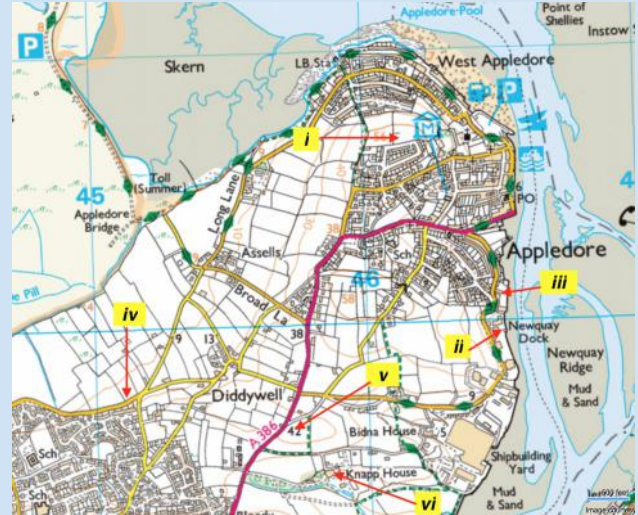
6.31 This Policy aims to protect and enhance the significance and setting of otherwise unlisted heritage assets, historic buildings and sites considered to be of local importance within the NNP area in order to contribute to local identity, local distinctiveness, well-being and economic vitality.

6.32 To achieve this aim the policy establishes the Northam Parish List of locally important Heritage Assets. It is intended that the list will be reviewed and if necessary amended on a regular basis. Assets identified by historical research and/or archaeology as meeting the criteria for inclusion may be added to the list at this review. At the same time heritage assets that have since received other protective designations may be removed from the list. It is the intention that the Northam Parish List will eventually form part of a Local Heritage List produced by Torrington District Council.



# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## POLICY: HE1 PROTECTION OF HERITAGE ASSETS



- i. **Great weight will be given to conservation and enhancement of heritage assets listed in the Northam Parish List of Local Heritage Assets (NPLLHA)**
- ii. **Development proposals will be supported only where they conserve and enhance the archaeology and/or fabric, setting and significance of a heritage asset listed in the NPLLHA.**
- iii. **Development proposals which impact upon a heritage asset listed in the NPLLHA will be supported providing they propose increased opportunities for access, education and public appreciation of the historic environment, or propose other viable uses for the asset consistent with its conservation.**
- iv. **Where a heritage asset listed in the NPLLHA shows signs of neglect or deliberate damage, the harm done to the asset will be accorded no weight in any decision on its future.**
- v. **Development of any designated or non-designated heritage assets in the NNP area will be supported where proposals use vernacular design and materials, thereby reinforcing local character and distinctiveness and a strong sense of place.**

**Conformity: NDAT Local Plan ST15 DM07 NPPF 184-202**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Biodiversity

6.37 The NNP area is home to a rich and diverse range of habitats, with wild plant and animal species to be found in Local Nature Reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest alongside other undesignated areas of biodiversity. It is considered from consultation responses received, that the undesignated areas require urgent protection, with particular emphasis on the network of wildlife corridors in the plan area, which provide the connectivity enabling wildlife to flourish. (see Appendix E). Problems of particular note include the loss of Saltmarsh in the river Torridge Estuary, fragmentation of habitats which reduces the resilience of ecosystems, and pressure for development along the coastline.

6.38 Various surveys show that the maintenance and encouragement of biodiversity plays a very important role in people's quality of life. Wildlife is also an important factor in the attraction of the plan area to tourists. The Government is committed to halting the decline in biodiversity in the UK (Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England's wildlife & ecosystem services) and there is a duty for public authorities under legislation such as (Town & Country Planning (Trees) regulation 1999 and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000). The NPPF requires the planning system to contribute to minimise impacts on biodiversity and where possible to provide a net gain (NPPF 8c).

6.39 The policy seeks to protect, maintain and increase a diversity of native plant and animal species in their varied habitats and green corridors that exist in the plan area.

### **POLICY: EN5 PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY**

**Proposals which are likely to have an adverse impact on local biodiversity, will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is no alternative which would cause a less harmful impact, or mitigation measures which can be introduced resulting in a net enhancement to the sites biodiversity. As a last resort, acceptable local alternative habitat must be provided which increases biodiversity compared to the development site.**

**Development proposals will be supported where:**

- i. They retain and/or enhance the biodiversity of the site, including mature trees, hedgerows, hedge banks and areas of woodland. Also improving the connectivity of wildlife areas through green corridors, and/or improve the wildlife value of the landscape, including domestic garden habitats.**
- ii. If adjacent to or within primary green corridors as defined in Map (\*\*) they maintain and enhance the corridors function and demonstrate measures to secure connectivity of the corridor, thus supporting continued free movement of species through the site.**
- iii. They conserve, protect and enhance non-statutory and undesignated wildlife areas as listed in Appendix E and also listed in the Devon Biodiversity Records for Northam.**

**Conformity: DM08 ST14 NOR10 NPPF 170-175**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Transport

6.40 Increasing emphasis in Government policy is placed on promoting walking and cycling, rather than reliance on the car, with the aim of walking and cycling becoming the norm for short journeys by 2040. The NPPF and the NDAT Local Plan 2011-2031 require developers to provide good linking pedestrian and cycle routes to and from proposed developments.

6.41 The Government want walking and cycling to become the norm for short journeys by 2040 (Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy 2017) to this end numerous policies in the NPPF and the NDAT Local Plan 2011-31 require developers to provide good linking pedestrian and cycle routes to and from developments. In 2020 the Government also introduced an Active Travel strategy and offered financial incentives and other forms of support. Survey results show that the impact of cars in the NNP area is of great concern, leading to traffic congestion and pollution, including carbon emissions impacting on global warming, and it is accepted that walking and cycling would help to reduce those impacts.

6.42 To help reduce the use of cars and carbon emissions, to encourage walking and cycling for exercise and to provide links to public transport and main settlements the routes provided for pedestrians and cyclists should be laid out and designed to be as direct as practicable in relation to local facilities, and bus stops. They should accommodate conveniently and safely the numbers of pedestrians and cyclists likely to use the routes, minimising the hazards associated with vehicular traffic. Within a housing development, to help enhance its visual attractiveness, space for planting should be provided along the routes, which should use the easiest practicable gradients (taking into account the special needs of people whose mobility is impaired).

### **POLICY: TR2 CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES**

- i. Development proposals will be supported where;**
  - a) they deliver safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes, including within and from the site, to main settlements, local facilities, bus stops, existing footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways in the area;**
  - b) footpaths and cycle ways are provided where this would create safer and more convenient routes than pavements and roads;**
  - c) new pedestrian and cycle-ways to and from the development should use the easiest practicable gradients and include planting schemes to create attractive routes; and**
  - d) they incorporate cycle parking facilities.**
- ii. Proposals to upgrade or extend existing footpaths, cycle-ways and bridleways will be supported, providing such proposals, including their materials and any lighting, do not harm the rural character of the area.**
- iii. BID08 of the NDAT Local Plan 2011-2031 regarding Kenwith Valley from Westward Ho! To Bideford will be supported for the development of a pedestrian and cycle way where the proposed route lies within the Northam Neighbourhood Plan area.**
- iv. The creation of a cycle and pedestrian link from Heywood Road to the Torridge Bridge and across to the Tarka Trail will be supported.**

**Conformity: ST02 ST10 NOR(j) NPPF 84,91,102,104,110**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## **Public Transport**

6.43 While buses serving Northam, Westward Ho! and Appledore are reasonably frequent and reach Bideford, Barnstaple and then finally Ilfracombe there are recent housing developments at Cornborough Road, Daddon Hill and Buckleigh Road which are not served by public transport.

6.44 Buses do not synchronise well with rail services in Barnstaple and with school times. Buses do not always arrive at the published times due to increasingly congested roads in Northern Devon.

6.45 In Appledore there is particular pressure on parking spaces for residents' cars. Greater usage of the bus service, improvements to the service, and provision of alternative public transport could help residents make the decision to no longer use private vehicles for their transport.

6.46 In Appledore high visitor numbers during the summer season put extra pressure on the limited parking available. Encouragement to use the bus service could help relieve this pressure, together with alternative public transport services, in alignment with policy TR4 Public Parking.

6.47 The Government's £5 billion bus funding scheme designed to encourage bus use and intended to be part of a National Bus Strategy was announced in February 2020 and has been taken into the Bus Back Better strategy, announced in 2022. The aim of the strategy is to achieve higher frequency services, more 'turn up and go' services, more bus priority routes, simpler, more affordable fares and provision of electric and hydrogen buses.

# **NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031**

## **Policy TR3: PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

- 1. Engage with the public transport provider and the County Highway Authority to achieve a local public transport system that meets user needs.**
  - i. Encourage and support plans to achieve a reliable and frequent bus service for housing developments at Cornborough Road, Daddon Hill and Buckleigh Road .**
  - ii. Encourage bus services which link effectively with rail services in Barnstaple.**
  - iii. Encourage bus services which enable schoolchildren and students to travel to local schools and colleges at the required times.**
- 2. Applicants for new housing developments will be required to show that a proposed development would link well with existing public transport.**
- 3. Encourage proposals to provide alternative bus services to those running regularly on main routes, such as community buses, ring and ride services and car sharing .**
- 4. Regarding Appledore encourage proposals to promote greater bus use and use of alternative public transport facilities in order to reduce pressure on parking spaces in the village.**
- 5. With reference to Northam Town Council's Climate Emergency target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030 the provision of electric and hydrogen powered public transport will be supported and encouraged.**

**Conformity: TBC**

# **BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT**

## **Business and employment**

7.1 The NNP recognises that the provision of local employment opportunities is crucial to support a thriving community, and would minimise the number of people who have to undertake long journeys to work. There is a need to increase well paid and quality employment opportunities across all sectors in the NNP area, reducing the need to travel for work, thus helping to reduce pollution and traffic congestion.

7.2 The plan will encourage business and employment development to secure a prosperous economic future by supporting and encouraging more business start-up development to broaden the economic base. There is a shortage in the area of modern employment sites, with good connection to high-speed broadband. This is essential in supporting local job opportunities.

7.3 The Business Policy supports existing businesses and encourages the establishment of new ones in appropriate locations. A prime aim is to enable residents to work in the area, including from their homes. The Plan seeks to support the reinvigoration of maritime and coastal business, including: Fishing industry, Hospitality, Aquaculture, Ship and boat building and repair, Tourism, Community Business Hubs and Workspaces, Agriculture and Rural Business, and Camping and Caravan Sites.

7.4 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.

## **POLICY: ED1 BUSINESS**

- i. Within development 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.**
- ii. Within development boundaries, proposals for live/work home units will be supported provided they are not detrimental to the amenity of neighbours.**
- iii. Within the development boundary of Appledore and the Appledore Maritime Employment Zone defined on Map (tbc) development proposals for maritime, engineering and allied trades or associated industries will be supported providing they conform to the appropriate character policies for the location.**
- iv. Outside settlement boundaries and the Appledore Marine Employment Zone, small scale proposals for i) farm diversification schemes and ii) 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.**
- v. Loss of existing employment uses will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer required or viable, and that the premises/site/business has been actively marketed for at least twelve months at an appropriate market price.**

**Conformity: ST06 ST09 ST11 DM09 DM11a DM12 DM13 DM14 DM15 NPPF80-84**

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## Public Parking

7.5 The community consultation exercises identified that the provision of car parking across the Neighbourhood Plan area as an important issue. Current car parking is mostly in public ownership across the Plan area, though some private car parking areas do exist.

7.6 The old centres of Northam and Appledore were laid out before cars. This causes problems for residents and visitors alike, with some roads so narrow that parking restrictions are in place on both sides. In both Appledore and Northam's case, the main retail and service centres are the same areas. There are public car parks close to each centre, Bone Hill in Northam and Odun Road, Churchfields and Appledore Long Stay in Appledore. All of these car parks see significant numbers of day-long and overnight users as a result of the layout of the centres, limiting access for quick trips to the centres.

7.7 In Westward Ho!, the village centre and seafront are more modern in layout and served by several car parks, two public and one private.

7.8 To improve the vitality and viability of the centres as retail and service destinations, the number of car parking spaces serving those centres should be safeguarded. Combined with efficient public transport, a two-stage approach of improving sustainable travel linkages to the centres and safeguarding existing car parks will help to support the role and function of these centres.

7.9 During the public consultation, residents identified on-street parking being a barrier to effective pedestrian access to the centres. National and local planning policy seeks to promote sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. It seeks to move away from the use of private cars to help tackle climate change, pollution and congestion. It is notable that only Churchfields car park provides publicly accessible EV charge points.

7.10 However, many local residents, visitors and tourists will continue to need to rely upon use of the private car to get around. The ambition to grow the three centres as retail, service and visitor destinations is therefore reliant upon adequate, accessible, convenient, safe and secure car parking provision.



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## **POLICY: TR3 PUBLIC CAR PARKING**

- i. The loss of public car and motorcycle parking spaces serving the three centres will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the loss of any such spaces would not adversely affect the vitality and viability of that centre as a retail, service and visitor destination.**
- ii. Development proposals will be supported where they maximise the potential for cycling and walking linkages to, between and within the centres in the Plan area.**
- iii. Support will only be given to the development of additional car parking provision through the redevelopment of existing brown- and grey-field sites, amending or adding to their existing usage. and conforms to EN2 and EN3.**
- iv. Support will be given to the development of a park-and-ride or park-and-change site to relieve the pressure on the centre of Appledore, provided that it is of an appropriate scale, layout and design and has appropriate regard to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the Conservation Areas and other heritage assets and conforms to EN2 and EN3.**
- v. Support will be given to improving the quality of public and on-street parking in the centres so that it is convenient, safe, secure and available for short-stay use in order to protect the vitality and viability of the centres as retail, service and visitor destinations.**
- vi. The loss of any privately owned or controlled parking provision within the centres will be unacceptable where it will result in additional on-street parking or reliance on public car parking provision.**

**Conformity: TO BE CONFIRMED**

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## Tourism

7.11 Tourism is a major employer and economic driver for the local economy. Sustainable tourism, offering high-quality year-round provision of accommodation and attractions is crucial. When providing sustainable tourism, it is essential that development is delivered without detriment to the environmental and heritage assets, which make the area attractive to visitors.

7.12 Distinction is therefore drawn between development proposals within settlement boundaries and the areas covered by Policies EN2 and EN3. In the two community consultation exercises, the combined responses show green spaces and heritage, and infrastructure were the two most important issues for residents (see evidence base).

7.13 The intention therefore is to protect, enhance and support the existing tourism facilities, as well as attracting new ones, ensuring the provision of modern holiday accommodation and year-round facilities in the area.

### **POLICY: ED2 TOURISM ATTRACTIONS AND ACCOMMODATION.**

i. Within the defined settlement development boundaries, proposals for sustainable tourism attractions, leisure developments, a diverse range of new tourist accommodation, and associated tourism facilities and services will be supported where they do not detract from the character of the area or affect protected landscapes, residential amenity, environmental or heritage assets.

ii. Within the area defined on Map B2 a-c, proposals which provide for extensions to existing tourism attractions or tourism accommodation will be supported provided:

(a) They cannot reasonably be located outside the area defined on Map B2 a-c.

(b) In the case of tourism accommodation, they are for the reuse or conversion of existing buildings; and

(c) Proposals comply with policies EN2, EN3 and ND and T Local Plan policy DM17.

iii. Outside the defined settlement development boundaries and the area defined on Map B2 a-c, proposals which provide for extensions to existing tourism attractions or tourism accommodation will be supported provided:

(a) They cannot reasonably be located within settlement development boundaries; and

(b) Proposals comply with ND and T Local Plan policies DM17 and DM18.

**Conformity: ST09 ST13 ST14 NOR NOR05 NOR06 DM08A DM17 DM18 NPPF 166-169**

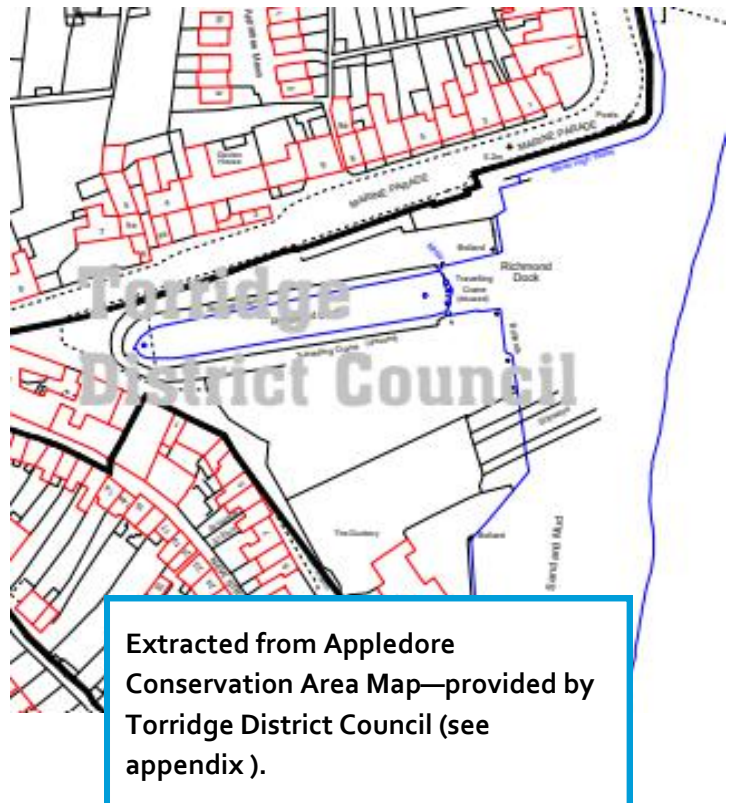
# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031

## Appledore's Maritime past, present and future.

7.14 Richmond Dock is a prominent site in the centre of the village of local and national importance, and this is recognised with a Grade II\* listing. It makes a great contribution to the character and identity of Appledore, but this historic dock has been neglected and is in a state of disrepair. The site probably contains archaeological remains of dock buildings, historic shipbuilding and other maritime activities. It adjoins the Appledore and New Quay Street conservation areas, as well as the South West Coastal Footpath. Any unauthorised entry to the deep dock area poses a possible health and safety issue.

7.15 That the overriding principles guiding development, were that the dry dock remains in working order and that the historic structure and its setting are protected, is shown by the Appledore Area Design Statement (Adoption Draft) November 2006. Those same principles informed the planning inspector's report in the Richmond Dock Appeal in 2011 (APP/W1145/E/11/2144897).

7.16 The following policy seeks to establish the potential of creating a sustainable heritage attraction in Richmond Dock which will draw visitors to Appledore enable continued maintenance and preservation of the historic structure and its setting, enhancing the adjacent conservation areas.



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## **POLICY: HE2 RICHMOND DOCK**

The NDTLP Spatial Vision for Northam states that Appledore will develop further as ‘a centre for maritime activities’.

This objective is supported and the Richmond Dock site (Map B5) is allocated for redevelopment as a visitor attraction, with a dry dock capable of admitting ships, which may be combined with small business units.

Proposals for the site will be supported where:

- i. They enable public access to the historic site and enhance the tourism offer of Appledore
- ii. The design, massing and materials used in any new buildings, enhances the setting and integrity of the dry dock and the adjacent conservation area.
- iii. Any new building would not exceed the height of the existing Grade II\* listed perimeter wall, being approx. 10ft, and further comply with the appropriate policies of the TDC Local Plan.
- iv. The dry dock remains capable of its original use, with sufficient vehicular access and clear working space.
- v. There is no adverse impact on the amenity of residents in the area, or on the existing flood defences on the site.
- vi. The construction methods do not adversely impact on the historic structure and setting.
- vii. The future maintenance of the dry dock, dock gate mechanism and curtilage walls to be secured through the provision of a legal agreement. (eg a S106 provided mechanism)

**Conformity: ECD3 ECD4 NOR ST09 ST15 NPPF185-189**

## **Appledore Employment Zone**

7.10 The Appledore Maritime Employment Zone identified on Map (tbc) includes Appledore Shipyard, the Fish Dock, the sand and gravel dock and Middle Dock. Local support in 2018 for the continued use of Appledore Shipyard for shipbuilding was very high (see Appendix). Appledore Shipyard is designated as employment land in the ND&T Local Plan.

7.11 NDAT Local Plan Policy NOR Northam Spatial Vision and Development Strategy section (d) states: employment will be supported by safeguarding and developing upon important economic resources, significantly in relation to Appledore Shipyard, port facilities and tourism assets

7.12. Policy ED3 conforms to ND&T Local Plan DM13, which seeks to retain designated employment



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land. It is also in conformity with ND&T Local Plan ST11 (3) regarding a working partnership between Councils, Businesses and local communities.

7.13 Policy ED1 seeks to sustain the local economy by supporting the employment potential and economic importance of maritime, engineering and allied trades or associated industries in the Appledore Employment Zone.

7.14 NDAT Local Plan policies ST09, ST14 and DM04 refer to protecting the Undeveloped Coast, UNESCO Biosphere sites and heritage assets such as Tapeley Park House and grounds. The NPPF in policies quoted seek to promote economic growth, encouraging planners to identify strategic economic sites, whilst supporting a mix of uses across an area including employment uses in order to minimise journeys to work

7.15 Any redevelopment in the Appledore Maritime Employment Zone for other employment purposes would need to take account of its prominent riverside position. It is highly visible from the east side of the River Torridge and impacts on the setting of listed Tapeley House and grounds. The zone also adjoins the South West Coastal Footpath, UNESCO Biosphere Buffer and Transition Zone and a Torridge SSSI.

7.16 Any commercial redevelopment of the Appledore Maritime Employment Zone would need to address possible effects on the amenity of residents who may be affected by noise or environmental pollution. The impact of any increased traffic flows onto Wooda Road, Churchill Way and the Heywood Road and roundabout would also need careful consideration.

## **POLICY: ED3 APPLEDORE EMPLOYMENT ZONE**

**This policy would be triggered in the event of closure of the shipyard.**

- i. As a former employment site, proposals for the redevelopment of the Shipyard site (MapB6) for non-employment uses will not be supported, unless such proposals meet all the requirements of policy DM13 of the NDAT Local Plan.**
- ii. Proposals for the redevelopment of the Shipyard site for employment purposes will be supported, subject to the following being met:**
  - a. That there is no detrimental impact on the amenity of occupants of neighbouring properties.**
  - b. The design, massing and materials used on any building does not harm the setting of Tapeley Park House, or the character of the Undeveloped Coast.**
  - c. Any Development proposal must include traffic and transport assessments, detailing measures to mitigate the impact of the development on the highway network.**

**Conformity: DM13 NOR ST09 ST11 ST14 DM07 NPPF80-82 NPPF104**

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## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

# **NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021 - 2031**

# NORTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021 - 2031

