DARTMOOR LOCAL PLAN
guiding planning applications in Dartmoor National Park

TOPIC PAPER 4

Vision and Spatial Strategy

Contents

1   Introduction

1.1.1   This Topic Paper is one of ten which form part of the evidence base that support the emerging Dartmoor National Park Local Plan. These topic papers have been produced to coordinate and consolidate some of the evidence used in drafting the emerging local plan. All the topic papers are available to view online at:

www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/planning-policy/background-evidence

1.1.2   The purpose of this topic paper is to gather evidence and serve as a starting point for developing options and alternatives around vision, objectives and spatial strategy. Invariably the paper will cover issues which overlap or compete with those in other parts of the evidence base (e.g.SA/SEA, Flood Risk Assessment, housing, Landscape Character Assessment). In light of this the Topic Paper's aims are to:

- Review key relevant legislation and policy which set the statutory framework for the local plan in this area;
- Identify/review the current Dartmoor National Park Authority vision, objectives and spatial policy framework and its effectiveness;
- identify the key drivers around vision and spatial policy and opportunities for improvement; and
- recommend a potential vision and objectives for the local plan;
- identify and appraise reasonable options for a spatial strategy for the local plan
- review the current approach to settlement boundaries

1.1.3   The topic paper has been updated throughout the course of the local plan review to reflect new evidence or changes to national guidance or policy. The view of the local community, key stakeholders and partner organisations who all have an interest in the future of Dartmoor National Park forms part of the evidence base for the local plan. The Authority have therefore welcomed feedback on this Paper. The following summarises the changes made in each version:

Version	Changes made
Version 1 April 2018	Original topic paper
Version 2 December 2018	Updated to reflect 2019 NPPF Lydford services and facilities updated at Appendix 1
Version 3 September 2019	Update on Management Plan, climate change, plan period, and settlement hierarchy methodology

2 A Vision for Dartmoor National Park

2.1 Context and current visions

2.1.1 National Planning Practice Guidance states:

> "*The development plan is at the heart of the planning system ... Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places. It is essential that plans are in place and kept up to date.*" (Reference ID: 61-026-20180913)

2.1.2 The current local plan for Dartmoor is based around a vision for the National Park. The vision enables an overall direction to be set, an indication of what the plan is aiming to achieve over the long term. Identifying a vision enables an agreement on key priorities. It then serves to unify policy towards an agreed aim, acting as a check upon new policy that it is consistent and not conflicted in what it is aiming to achieve.

2.1.3 At a national level, the UK Government has a Vision for the English National Parks and the Broads[1]. This is a high level aim, given it aims to set direction for national parks as a whole, which are geographically and characteristically diverse, and with a range of different drivers and pressures. The vision therefore seeks to identify key aims which link with national park purposes, and, importantly, with a strong theme of sustainable development.

UK Government Vision for English National Parks and the Broads[1]

By 2030 English National Parks and the Broads will be places where:
- *There are thriving, living, working landscapes notable for their natural beauty and cultural heritage. They inspire visitors and local communities to live within environmental limits and to tackle climate change. The wide range of services they provide (from clean water to sustainable food) are in good condition and valued by society.*
- *Sustainable development can be seen in action. The communities of the Parks take an active part in decisions about their future. They are known for having been pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living. Renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, low carbon transport and travel, and healthy, prosperous communities have long been the norm.*
- *Wildlife flourishes and habitats are maintained, restored and expanded, and linked effectively to other ecological networks. Woodland cover has increased and all woodlands are sustainably managed, with the right trees in the right places. Landscapes and habitats are managed to create resilience and enable adaptation.*
- *Everyone can discover the rich variety of England's natural and historic environment, and have the chance to value them as places for escape, adventure, enjoyment, inspiration and reflection, and a source of national pride and identity. They will be recognised as fundamental to our prosperity and wellbeing*

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[1] Department for Communities and Local Government (2010) *'English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular'*

Current adopted Local Plan Vision

The vision for the Core Strategy is based on the vision for the *Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2007-2012*, reflecting the strong linkages that exist between management of the National Park's resources and the way in which those resources are conserved and developed.

The ancient Dartmoor landscape of deep valleys and rock-crested hills, long-established hill farms and the buried remains of Bronze Age settlements form a major component of the National Park's special qualities. From the blanket bogs and valley mires to the high moors, woodland and enclosed fields: Dartmoor National Park remains a unique and varied landscape, with habitats of international importance, an extraordinary range of wildlife and wide expanses of wildness.

At the same time it is a place where people live, work and play, with consequent competing demands on resources. Farming and tourism need to be encouraged and balanced, both to manage the landscape and to enable it to be enjoyed. The conservation of the ancient fabric of the towns, villages and farmsteads remains a high priority, as does the protection of the moor from creeping urbanisation, such as light pollution and highway infrastructure. A modest degree of expansion is desirable in the larger settlements, to accommodate new employment and to provide housing for a thriving local population. A responsible use of natural resources and a commitment to generating energy in sustainable ways must be fostered in order to minimise damage not only to Dartmoor but to the wider environment.

Crucial to the future is the relationship between the local communities and the National Park itself. Both the working economy and the National Park's cultural identity are vested in the local people. They provide the continuity, support and living heritage that make each place much more than a mere location on a map. This vision for Dartmoor National Park is therefore one of balance, in which both stability and change are beneficial to local people and visitors alike, and the special qualities of Dartmoor are preserved for future generations as well as for those who visit and live in the National Park today.

2.1.4   The adopted Core Strategy sets out a vision for Dartmoor. This vision is very descriptive, almost poetic in its approach to the landscape and Dartmoor's natural environment. It goes on to describe in interaction between people and the landscape, the opportunities for enjoyment, the careful balance of change and priorities and the pressures which threaten the national park's special qualities. Again in seeking this balance sustainable development is a common thread, with responsible use of resources. It might be argued though that whilst the description is at points idealistic, it is not as aspirational as it might be in reflecting the national vision which described national parks being "*pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living".*

2.1.5   The National Park Management Plan is the 'partnership plan' for Dartmoor. It's remit is broader than the local plan, and it's role is draw together all of those individuals, groups and organisations with an interest in the national park, to establish a vision for Dartmoor, a set of ambitions and key actions and objectives which will help to achieve those. In turn, other plans, projects and programmes of work which cover the national park, the local plan included, should seek to achieve its vision, and ambitions.

2.1.6   The 2014 Dartmoor National Park Management Plan ('Your Dartmoor') sets a vision for Dartmoor in 2034. This vision is less descriptive than that of the local plan, it is a short, focussed vision leaning largely on National Park purposes. It is arguably fairly generic and perhaps lacks linkage to Dartmoor's special qualities, or reflects the level of ambition in the

national Vision.

2.1.7   The Dartmoor National Park Management Plan is currently being reviewed. This will include a review of the Vision. The Local Plan should, though, draw from the current adopted Vision in Management Plan.

> *Dartmoor – an inspirational place where, in 2034:*
>
> - *the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage are conserved, **sustained** and enhanced;*
> - *local people and visitors **enjoy** and learn more about the National Park; and*
> - *local communities and businesses **prosper** and benefit from Dartmoor's human and natural resources.*
>
> *The National Park is an exemplar in delivering a range of public benefits, and leading the way in developing new approaches and thinking.*
>
> *The Vision is set around achievement of National Park purposes:*
>
> - *to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and*
> - *to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.*
>
> *And the duty to:*
>
> - *seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.*
>
> *It contributes to the government's vision for National Parks in England.*

2.1.8   The differences between the national, local plan and management plan visions perhaps also is a reflection on the point in time at which they were prepared. In times of economic uncertainty and austerity, visions perhaps inevitably become more realistic than aspirational. This is important in the context of the local plan, as the ability to be ambitious and challenge what we might seek to achieve, is tempered by a reality of constraint and policy deliverability.

2.1.9   Furthermore, this might relate not just to viability or funding availability, but also to the existence of the appropriate policy tools at a national level to achieve the ambition. Returning again to the national vision seeking that national parks are "pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living", there exists a key barrier to achieving this where government policy allows planning authorities only limited scope to require higher standards, for example relating to sustainability, thus immediately restricting the authority's own ability to achieve the vision. There is further discussion on this in Topic Paper 3: Design and the Built Environment.

2.1.10 Finally, the matter of 'balance' should be considered again. Whilst we may seek a vision which is locally distinctive for Dartmoor, this vision should reflect not just the government vision for national parks, but also other potentially competing government ambitions around economic growth and housing, for example. The principal challenge for the local plan vision is therefore seeking to steer policy to an appropriate balance of competing priorities in a way which reflects what is best for Dartmoor as a National Park.

2.2   Issues Paper Consultation - Vision

2.2.1   The Issues Paper published for consultation between October 2016 and January 2017 asked a number of questions designed to help shape the vision and objectives for the next Local Plan. These are summarised in the table below.

Questions	Summary of response (most relevant to vision)
1.1 What makes your village or town a good place to live, and what do we need to do to protect it, or improve it?	• Strong sense of community • A good balance of people, houses, and services • Enough recreational and artistic and cultural amenities to support a community without the need to travel • Schools, community halls etc as a focal point • Key services where possible, post office, bank, shop • Mix of employment opportunity • Infrastructure: broadband, public transport, parking, access to road network • Demographic balance, farming community, young professionals, families, older people, first time buyers/renters • Respect and protection of surrounding environment, and easy access to it, sense of rurality
2.1 How should the local plan strike the right balance between protecting habitats and wildlife, and allowing new development?	• DNPA should remember its priorities and not be pressured by government to focus on housing and economy • New development should be focussed within and around existing settlements • Focus on brownfield over greenfield • Need to recognise importance of habitat connectivity • Recognise the role farming plays in protecting habitats and wildlife • Consider dark night skies
2.2 How should we protect Dartmoor's landscape from inappropriate change?	• Recognise that change is inevitable • Require development to have a low impact on the environment • Consider impacts of change outside the National Park • Focus development in existing towns and villages and not the open countryside
2.3 How should the local plan conserve and enhance Dartmoor's archaeology, conservation areas and historic buildings?	• Important to focus on protecting finite archaeological resource • Consider reasonable changes needed to protect historic building
3.1 Should we plan to meet Dartmoor's entire housing requirement, or should we continue to prioritise local need and affordable housing?	• Prioritise affordable housing for local needs • Prioritise affordable housing to buy and rent • Consider the range of housing needs in the area • Recognise need for open market housing for balance and viability
5.1 How do we ensure farming on Dartmoor can be sustainable, both in economic and environmental terms?	• Through diversification • Support small business and rural enterprise • Return to traditional farm scale and methods • Modernise and commercialise farming
5.2 The current local plan focusses on expanding existing business sites and premises. Should the new local plan give	• Yes, support new incoming small business in appropriate places (most comments) • Encourage into existing buildings and premises • No, the national park should not have new business (some comments)

more opportunities for new business to locate in the National Park?

2.2.2 The responses to the consultation identified, perhaps inevitably, a number of competing priorities for future policy.

2.2.3 **Sustainable Development:** Responses included a desire to be more ambitious around sustainable development, and included reference to low carbon economy and One Planet Development. It is clearly important that sustainable development should be at the core of the local plan for the National Park. Importantly, though, whilst a vision may reflect this, there is the need to consider what is meant by sustainable development, how it is weighed against other potentially competing pressures (such as development viability), and whether the National Park Authority has the complete range of policy tools to achieve a more ambitious vision.

2.2.4 Breaking down the key elements which will seek to achieve a sustainable development through the local plan, these are:

- Settlement strategy (locating development where it reduces the need to travel)
- Sustainable building (using brownfield land and existing buildings, reducing energy consumption)
- Resource use (reducing waste, local and secure food production, generating sustainable energy, locally sourced materials)

2.2.5 **Affordable Housing**: Affordable housing is considered a priority by local communities. Importantly local people make of a strict distinction between 'affordable housing' in the defined sense, and 'housing which is more affordable', for example through its size or specification. Importantly, perhaps irrespective of tenure, its future availability as 'affordable' is of value to communities. In summary of comments, whilst 'affordable' and 'for local people' are the key comments, points are raised around second home ownership, and around homes for older people to downsize into. A key theme is actually therefore around balanced and viable communities, and homes for people who value and participate in the community where they live.

2.2.6 **Agriculture and Forestry**: There is a view that forestry and woodland, and its management, is not currently given sufficient prominence in the local plan. There is a balance again to strike, given Dartmoor's woodlands can play a role in landscape character and biodiversity, and in sustainable development, but may be marginal in their commercial viability and may have a limited need for constant active management.

2.2.7 Agriculture (and upland farming in particular) features highly on priorities for local people and agencies and organisations with an interest in Dartmoor. A common theme in consultation is the recognition of farmers as 'custodians' of the landscape. However the marginal viability of farm businesses, the need to diversify, and the limited ability to realise the inherent value of farming and farmland to the tourism and resource sectors presents a challenge. Increasing interest in natural capital accounting will explore this further, but this is perhaps tempered by significant changes and challenges which may arise from the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union.

2.2.8 **Business and Economy**: Whilst economic development sits high on the government agenda, consultation suggests it is a lesser priority for local people. Business growth is nonetheless an important area for the local plan to address. The traditional perception of business and employment growth through planning, as perhaps employment sites, is not the reality of a developing rural economy. The national park is a place where a broad range of

business activities take place, increasing at home, with more flexible and remote working enabled by an improving superfast broadband network.

2.2.9 **Historic Environment:** Dartmoor is characterised by, and locally, nationally and internationally recognised for, its historic environment. This includes the vast archaeological resource painting a picture of Dartmoor's evolution and past occupiers, to more recent historic buildings, farmsteads and townscapes. This is a finite resource which requires careful management through the planning process. Again a balance must be struck, though, finding where appropriate sustainable future uses for buildings, and balancing farming and environmental management practise with the need to keep archaeological sites in good condition.

2.2.10 **Biodiversity**: Wildlife and habitat conservation is a purpose of national park designation. National Parks are perceived as 'havens' for wildlife, and Dartmoor's extensive open moorland and wooded valleys play an important role in habitat provision and biodiversity. Whilst there are significant levels of protection, for example through SSSI and SAC designation across the National Park there remains a challenge to balance development ambitions with environmental protection.

2.2.11 **Landscape**: Dartmoor's landscape is valued locally, nationally and internationally. Exploration of special qualities through the management plan frequently describes Dartmoor's 'presence' in the Devon landscape as a significant land mass and its 'sense of place', tranquillity, and dark night skies. There is a perception that Dartmoor has a 'capacity' and that development is causing a loss of valued landscape. The reality is that development levels on Dartmoor remain very small, but a vision and subsequent spatial strategy should reflect a need to focus development where it has the least impact.

Climate Change

2.2.12 In May 2019 the UK Parliament approved a motion declaring a climate change emergency and for the Government to achieve net zero emissions before 2050. The motion was approved without a formal vote and demonstrates the will of the House of Commons but does not legally compel the Government to act.

2.2.13 There is no precise definition of what constitutes action to meet a climate emergency but the purpose is to put climate (and environment) at the centre of policy and practice. Many local authorities and other organisations have declared a climate change emergency in recent months.

2.2.14 The declaration of a climate change emergency marks a renewed sense of urgency in tackling this issue. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advises that carbon emissions must reduce globally by at least 45% by 2030 (from 2010 levels) and reach net-zero by 2050 if we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change by keeping warming below 1.50C. The actions of Greta Thunberg; the broadcast of David Attenborough's documentary Climate Change: The Facts and protests by environmental group Extinction Rebellion have done much to raise the public's awareness of climate change.

2.2.15 At a local level the Authority was approached by a range of community groups and individuals calling for DNPA to declare a climate emergency. In July 2019 DNPA declared a climate emergency, signed the Devon Climate Declaration and agreed to continue to work with the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG) to collaborate on producing a Devon-wide Carbon Plan

2.2.16 Within the Local Plan there is a range of policy requirements which already seek to reduce,

impact the National Park, its residents business and visitors, have upon climate change. Alongside the declaration, and following the first draft Local Plan consultation (Regulation 18) officers have identified other policy areas in which in which we can seek, through the local plan, to best reflect the greater prominence and priority given to climate change. Alongside this is would therefore correspond that the vision statement should reflect this greater priority also, and it is recommended that the vision changes from 'reducing' to 'minimising' our contribution to climate change.

Recommendations: key components of a Local Plan Vision for Dartmoor National Park

2.2.17 From the above discussion it is possible to distil the key components of a Vision for Dartmoor National Park. These are as follows:

- **Decent homes**
  There is access to well designed, energy efficient and affordable housing for those who contribute to Dartmoor's thriving communities

- **A place to do business**
  Businesses which respect and value Dartmoor's special qualities have the opportunity to thrive and innovate

- **Sustainability – living within environmental limits**
  Dartmoor's natural resources are conserved, and there are opportunities for innovation in the way in which we live and work, which allow us to achieve and maintain an environmental, social and economic balance and minimise our contribution to climate change.

- **Making best use of resources**
  Dartmoor's land, resources and buildings are used efficiently, effectively and sustainably. Development prioritises previously developed land and minimises empty homes.

- **Culture and arts**
  The National Park's special qualities provide a continual source of inspiration and are celebrated in culture and the arts.

- **Exemplars for outstanding development**
  All new development has a character which respects local distinctiveness, vernacular and materials, and leads the way on sustainable building

- **Community involvement and participation**
  Dartmoor is a place where people work together with a collective goal to respect and protect the National Park, and to promote and embrace positive change.

- **Prosperous and vibrant communities**
  Dartmoor's towns and villages provide opportunities for communities to thrive.

- **Farming, Forestry and Land Management**
  Farming and forestry have the opportunity to evolve and innovate, sustaining their vital role in conserving and enhancing Dartmoor's distinctive cultural heritage, nationally important landscapes and precious biodiversity

- **Resilient landscape**
  Dartmoor's nationally important landscape character is conserved and enhanced. Its wider landscape setting is respected.

- **Thriving habitats and species**
  A cohesive network of habitats allows species to thrive and be resilient to climate change.

- **An historic environment in excellent condition**
  Dartmoor's cultural heritage, archaeology and historic built environment is understood, protected and available as a source of inspiration and education. Development delivers

significant enhancements, including through appropriate re-use.

- **Opportunities for access and enjoyment**
  Dartmoor's special qualities are respected, available as a resource for health and well-being, and accessible for everyone to understand and enjoy. Development helps manage visitor impacts in a way which protects the National Park for the benefit of future generations.

2.3   Plan Period

2.3.1   NPPF states "Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure" (paragraph 22)

2.3.2   In response to comments received at Regulation 18 draft consultation and to align with the NPPF the plan period for the Local Plan should be such that it allows for a period of 15 years post-adoption. Assuming adoption in 2021 the period should run to 2036. Recognising the commencement of the Local Plan preparation and the timing of key evidence, a start date for the plan period would reasonably be 2018

Recommendations for policy

2.3.3   The Regulation 19 draft Local Plan should have a revised plan-period of 2018-2036.

3   A Spatial Strategy for Dartmoor National Park

3.1   Sustainable development principles

3.1.1   The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states

"Plans should;
- *Be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development*
- *Be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable (para 16)*

3.1.2   The spatial dimension of a local plan is fundamental to good planning; towns and villages vary in their size, make up, and location relative to other settlements or connections. It follows therefore, that some policies cannot be generic, and it would not be appropriate for them to apply park-wide. For example housing development is likely to be better directed at some settlements and not others, business development may be more appropriate where it is best connected with the resources it needs and the market it supplies. In some cases the market will dictate this, but in others it is necessary for it to be controlled through the planning system. For example, a person may desire to build a house in an isolated location for its view or sense of peace, rather than live in a more sustainable location where there is less reliance on the private car, and less impact on the National Park's landscape.

3.1.3   The role of the local plan is therefore to avoid development in places where it would cause harm to the National Park, and direct it to places where there are the best opportunities for sustainable living in the rural context. The local plan should deliver sustainable development. This means policy must direct development in more sustainable locations, and avoid unnecessary development in locations where there are limited services and facilities, fewer connections and a greater reliance on private transport.

3.1.4   In reality it is not as simple as described. Behaviourally there may be a perception we live, work and recreate in a certain way, and that community living makes this more sustainable. Whilst this is to a degree true, the reality, particularly in a rural context is more mixed. For example providing employment land (and therefore job opportunities) alongside housing does

not mean that those people will work in those jobs; they may commute out, whilst employees commute in from elsewhere. Ensuring housing growth takes place where there is access to a shop does not mean it is used, people may prefer to shop where they work, or use a convenience store on their way home from another trip. Equally there is an increasing reliance on online retail, online services, and delivery.

3.1.5   Whilst a spatial strategy which aims to enable the most sustainable way of living and working is more complex in reality, the principle of aiming to reduce travel, and promote community is robust. Indeed it is evident in the Issues Consultation that many people recognise the value of community, of clubs, organisation, socialising and recreation, and of services and facilities on their doorstep.

3.1.6   In addition to the functional justification for a spatial strategy, there are also important benefits around the availability of the most suitable land for development. Existing settlements are most able to offer land which has been developed before (brownfield), land with access to roads and utilities connections, and sites where housing or employment premises relate well to existing development and therefore have a more limited impact upon the landscape.

3.1.7   The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out a number of policies which underpin the need for a spatial strategy, in particular it states that planning policies should…

"recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres…" (para 85)

"enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities …" (para 83)

"The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering genuine choice of transport modes." (para 103)

"avoid new isolated homes in the countryside…" (para 79)

"new development should be planned for in ways that: avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change…; and can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design." (para 150)

3.2   Issues Paper Consultation – Spatial Strategy

3.2.1   The Issues Paper published for consultation between October 2016 and January 2017 asked a number of questions designed to help inform the settlement strategy for the next Local Plan. These questions and the most relevant responses are as follows:

Questions	Summary of response (most relevant to settlement strategy)
1.1 What makes your village or town a good place to live, and what do we need to do to protect it, or improve it?	• Strong sense of community • A good balance of people, houses, and services • Enough recreational and artistic and cultural amenities to support a community without the need to travel • Schools, community halls etc as a focal point • Key services where possible, post office, bank, shop • Mix of employment opportunity • Infrastructure: broadband, public transport, parking, access to road network • Demographic balance, farming community, young professionals, families, older people, first time buyers/renters

	• Respect and protection of surrounding environment, and easy access to it, sense of rurality
1.2 The current strategy concentrates development in larger villages and towns with just development which is needed locally in some smaller villages. How do we get this balance right in the new local plan?	• Resist second homes, continue to focus on affordable housing • Value community-led development (e.g. community land trusts) • Accurate assessments of housing need and not a pursuit of government targets • A broader range of small development, including in small villages, not just larger villages and towns • Not all smaller villages are the same and some could better accommodate new development • Matching improved infrastructure or employment to housing growth • Current approach seems to work well • Increased levels of conversions and self-builds • Reduce opportunity for new homes in open countryside • Continue the balance of managing communities with environment
1.3 Does the approach of supporting different levels of development in Local Centres (larger villages and towns), and Rural Settlements (smaller villages) need to change, if so how?	• Increase options/flexibility • Need to increase the opportunity for smaller villages to avoid stagnation • Housing growth should focus in larger towns where the infrastructure exists • Current strategy works, no change is needed • Focus on local need not wider housing targets • Avoid sprawl • Consider opportunities around conversions • More development should be allowed • Too much development is currently allowed • Reduce the level in the open countryside and focus on settlements • Support low impact greenfield development
5.2 The current local plan focusses on expanding existing business sites and premises. Should the new local plan give more opportunities for new business to locate in the National Park?	• Yes, support new incoming small business in appropriate places (most comments) • Encourage into existing buildings and premises • Support new land based business • No, the national park should not have new business (some comments)
7.1 We must show we can deliver housing over the life of the local plan, or we will not be able to defend planning decisions in the future. What is the best way to make sure Dartmoor's towns and villages have enough land for housing?	• Allocate land for housing • Allocate in the local centres • Consider carefully the viability of allocations in line with the NPPF • Plan for a mix of housing on different sites, and different delivery including Community Land Trusts (CLTs) • Focus on brownfield over greenfield • Make best use of underused or derelict sites • Allow towns and villages to expand

3.2.2   There is significant challenge presented by the consultation response, where there is wish from local communities in particular to see an increase in the consistency of decision making, whilst at the same time seeking greater flexibility in policy. This is arguably not possible to achieve, where more flexible policy leaves greater scope for interpretation (be that by members of the public, applicants, members or planning officers) and therefore a potentially greater range of outcomes from similar proposals. The desire to achieve this is not a bad one, though.

3.2.3   Perhaps more readily considered is a common theme around increased opportunity for development in smaller villages. Whilst it is important to refer to earlier comments that increased housing does not necessarily mean the retention or improvement of services and facilities, there is a clear desire on the part of many respondents to provide greater development opportunities with this outcome in mind. Furthermore there is a desire to consider more flexibly the mix of type and tenure of housing. Whilst a Housing Topic Paper will consider this in more detail, it is important to bear in mind when considering spatial strategy that communities may seek greater scope or choice in the new housing they may wish to see.

3.2.4   Importantly, a spatial strategy is not a policy tool operating in isolation. Other policies within the local plan will provide checks and balances which will add detail, clarify opportunity, or mitigate less desirable implications. Housing and economic development policy will interact closely with the settlement strategy. Housing policy may identify specific types or tenures as appropriate in specific settlement types. The requirement for evidenced need can also reduce the opportunity for development and focus it upon what the requirements are in that specific community. In the absence of this policy at this stage in plan preparation it is important therefore to recognise that we can only explore spatial strategy so far, and that refinements may be needed in responses to strategic housing and employment policy.

3.2.5   Another key tool which relates closely to spatial strategy is settlement boundaries, and the role of sites allocated for development. Settlement boundaries in particular can mitigate impact, for example where a spatial strategy may identify a village as having greater opportunity for development, but a settlement boundary then clarifies the application of policy and might seek to reduce sprawl and limit opportunities to land well contained within the village. Settlement boundaries and allocations are considered in more detail later in this Topic Paper.

3.3   The aims of a strategy

3.3.1   The aim of a spatial strategy is therefore to provide direction for the application of other policy. It should add a spatial dimension to policy, promoting opportunities for development and change in the most appropriate locations. Conversely it should, alongside other policy, resist in certain places development which would be inappropriate or undesirable.

3.3.2   More specifically, for Dartmoor a spatial strategy should:

- Focus the majority of development opportunities in the most sustainable locations, and where it relates well to existing development
- Enable appropriate opportunities for development in other less sustainable locations, where it is justified and relates well to existing development
- Avoid development in locations which are not sustainable
- Direct development away from areas of sensitivity or importance

3.4   Options and alternatives: different approaches to a spatial strategy

3.4.1   The following section will explore a number of potential different approaches to a settlement hierarchy for Dartmoor National Park. A settlement hierarchy is the key policy tool which delivers the spatial strategy. For example the current settlement hierarchy in the 2008 Core Strategy identifies a top tier of 8 larger more sustainable settlements (the 'Local Centres'), a second tier of 34 smaller villages (the 'Rural Settlements') and considers everywhere else within the National Park 'Open Countryside' for planning policy purposes.

3.4.2   Four options (one being the current strategy) are considered which take different approaches to identifying settlements, different numbers of 'tiers', and therefore lead to settlements being

classed differently, with implications for future policy as this is developed.

3.4.3   Importantly the option of having no settlement hierarchy is not tested. It is considered that the above discussion around national policy, the need for sustainable development and to avoid development in inappropriate locations means that this option is not reasonable.   Equally more ambitious approaches such as new communities/garden villages, are not considered appropriate in the National Park context given the small scale of anticipated growth, the availability of suitable land and the viability of this type of development at a National Park scale.

3.4.4   Principally, two different approaches are tested. The first of these is a functional hierarchy approach; this looks at the services and facilities available within a settlement in order to judge its relative sustainability.   Settlements with either key services and facilities, or a broader offer of services and facilities would be considered more sustainable locations for development. Those with fewer might sit in a lower tier, and therefore have more limited opportunities for development. The options below explore the current two tier approach, an alternative three tier approach, and a third approach based more around distribution and clusters of settlements.

3.4.5   A forth option is based around scale and character. This approach comes from a consideration of a settlement's capacity or ability to accommodate new development, taking into account its physical size, character and specific attributes which might limit opportunities for change. This option therefore draws less from the functional sustainability of a settlement, but instead from the physical environmental appropriateness of change.

3.5   Option 1 – the current two tier approach

Description of approach:

Settlements are split into categories of 8 Local Centres, and 34 Rural Settlements. Everywhere outside of these areas is classed as open countryside.

Local Centres: intended to meet at least 60% of the anticipated housing provision in the National Park, scope for maintaining and improving employment opportunities, and ensure a range of local services are maintained and where possible enhanced.

Rural Settlements: acceptable locations in principle for small scale development essentially servicing identified needs arising from within a settlement and its parish.

Open Countryside: development necessary to meet the proven needs of farming and forestry, development conserving important buildings, small scale growth of existing businesses, and other householder development.

Pros	Cons
• Established and familiar for communities and applicants • Relatively simple approach • Consistent with national policy • Focusses development in largest settlements • Protects open countryside from unchecked growth	• Relies more heavily upon separate policy for specific settlement issues • Mixed success in achieving intended spatial distribution • Places together a broad range of medium/small sized settlements • Limits some opportunities in medium sized settlements

3.6   Option 2 - Settlement size and character approach (two tier)

Description of approach:

An alternative model could see settlements being split into categories of 8 Local Centres and 34 Rural Settlements. Everywhere outside of these areas is then classed as open countryside. Whilst this approach results in a similar hierarchy to Option 1 above, this approach differs in that it is based more upon the size, overall role, and capacity or sensitivity to growth, as well as an element of settlement services and facilities.

Local Centres: The largest and more thriving communities. Intended to meet the majority of the anticipated housing provision in the National Park. Appropriate locations for allocated mixed use and housing sites, development of infill sites and conversions to residential use. Appropriate locations for employment development for new and expanding business.

Rural Settlements: Villages which are better connected and have some capacity for growth or change. Appropriate locations for small scale development of infill sites, conversions within the built form of the settlement, and exception site development with an element of cross subsidy where this is necessary for viability. Appropriate locations for small scale development for new and expanding business.

Open Countryside: development necessary to meet the proven needs of farming and forestry, development conserving important buildings, small scale growth of existing businesses, and other householder development.

Pros	Cons
• Focusses development in largest settlements where capacity is greatest • Specifically protects more sensitive settlements • Protects open countryside from unchecked growth • Better recognises the needs and constraints of different settlements	• Altered strategy would take time to test and become familiar • Challenging to establish how to identify each tier • Requires degree of subjective judgement and could become an area for significant discussion with communities

Implications/mitigation/discussion

This approach seeks to add a range of other considerations to the identification of different settlements into different tiers. It therefore adds a further 'sense check' to the approach, by further recognises that settlements will have different sensitivity to change.

Instead of a functional categorisation based upon the provision of services and facilities alone, this approach looks also at the relative size and sensitivity of different settlements in order to place them into different tiers.

As a result, though, this approach is more subjective in its application. The evidence relating to each settlement will be broad ranging and require a degree of professional judgement in order to then place each settlement in an appropriate tier. It is particularly important in this case to recognise that it is a tool to facilitate a spatial strategy, and not a scientific approach to policy and decision making.

In order to classify the settlements the following criteria may be used to judge each settlements relatively sustainability and sensitivity to change. However it is also important to recognise that specific communities may have an appetite either for greater opportunity for development, or for less. In cases where this appetite runs at odds with the below approach to classifying the settlements it could present challenges and community discontent. Whilst the criteria below will add some structure there is inevitably a degree of judgement, and the need to consider more subjective issues around sensitivity and sense of place, which cannot

be identified by specific evidence on its own.

- **Provision of services and facilities:** The availability of services and facilities in or nearby to the settlement
  - o **Primary Services:** Community Hall, Primary School, General Store, Super-Fast Broadband, Children's Play Area
  - o **Secondary Services:** GP Surgery, ATM, Bank (including mobile), Post Office, Public House, Place of Worship, Library, Pharmacy, Dental Surgery, Garage (fuel), Sports Pitch
- **Settlement size:** This would look at the number of 'address points' in the settlement (the number of homes and businesses) as a measure of relative size
- **Connectivity:** This would consider the relative accessibility of the settlement in relation to highways
- **Extent of conservation area:** This would consider the size of the conservation area relative to the size of the settlement as a whole. In particular it might consider where there is little more contemporary development between the Conservation area and the surrounding open countryside.
- **Relative landscape sensitivity:** This will draw, where possible, from the Landscape Sensitivity Study and the Landscape Character Assessment
- **Listed buildings:** This will identify particular sensitivities around the number of location of listed buildings
- **Designations on surrounding land:** This will consider the extent to which land near or around the settlement has designations such as Section 3, SSSI, Common Land etc.

Applying the above approach is more complex than Option 1. A scoring system has been developed which will consider the above factors. It should be recognised that the subjective nature of this approach and a scoring system is likely to lead to significant discussion in some communities where some residents feel their settlement either should or should not be in a specific tier. The likelihood for debate around this must therefore be taken into account in considering the merits of this approach.

Applying the approach and scoring, a full list of settlements which may then be in each tier is set out below.

Local Centres	Rural Settlements
Moretonhampstead	Bittaford
Yelverton	Cheriton Cross
Buckfastleigh	Mary Tavy
Ashburton	Christow
South Brent	Cornwood
Chagford	Dousland
Horrabridge	Buckfast
Princetown	Liverton
	Whiddon Down
	Sticklepath
	Walkhampton
	South Zeal
	Bridford
	Dunsford
	Ilsington
	Hennock
	Dean Prior
	Sourton
	Holne

Lydford
Shaugh Prior
Lustleigh
South Tawton
Scorriton
Postbridge
Peter Tavy
Drewsteignton
Widecombe in the Moor
Manaton
Belstone
North Brentor
Meavy
Throwleigh
North Bovey
Teign Village

3.7   Option 3 - Settlement size and character approach (three tier)

Description of approach:

This approach mirrors Option 2 in respect of methodology, but instead splits the settlements into three categories of 8 Local Centres, 16 Rural Settlements, and 18 Villages and Hamlets. Everywhere outside of these areas is then classed as open countryside.

Local Centres: The largest and more thriving communities. Intended to meet the majority of the anticipated housing provision in the National Park. Appropriate locations for allocated mixed use and housing sites, development of infill sites and conversions to residential use. Appropriate locations for employment development for new and expanding business.

Rural Settlements: Villages which are better connected and have some capacity for growth or change. Appropriate locations for small scale development of infill sites, conversions within the built form of the settlement, and exception site development with an element of cross subsidy where this is necessary for viability. Appropriate locations for small scale development for new and expanding business.

Villages and Hamlets: Villages which may benefit from some development necessary to support the community, but with limited capacity for growth or change given their location or sensitivity. Acceptable locations in principle for small scale development essentially servicing identified needs arising from within a settlement and its parish, including affordable housing and the expansion of existing employment sites and premises.

Open Countryside: development necessary to meet the proven needs of farming and forestry, development conserving important buildings, small scale growth of existing businesses, and other householder development.

Pros	Cons
• Focusses development in largest settlements where capacity is greatest • Seeks to respond to a desire for greater opportunity in smaller villages (the current 'Rural Settlements') • Specifically protects more sensitive settlements • Protects open countryside from unchecked growth • Better recognises the needs and constraints of different settlements	• Creates a more complex approach (slightly more than Option 2) • Altered strategy would take time to test and become familiar • Challenging to establish how to identify each tier • Requires degree of subjective judgement and could become an area for significant discussion with communities

Implications/mitigation/discussion

This approach builds upon the more wide ranging criteria described in Option 2, but also seeks to respond to the community consultation responses which sought an increased opportunity for small scale development in some of the smaller settlements.

It also recognises the limitations of a two tier approach, which leads to 34 settlements ranging in size from 404 to 13 address points within the same tier. It also enables a greater degree of consideration for settlements which may be more sensitive to change, by placing them in a lower tier which (depending on associated policy) could allow for local needs development where this is evidenced, but perhaps limit other windfall opportunities which might be appropriate in some other larger or less sensitive settlements.

Recognising this distinction it is then necessary to consider the role of associated policy in direct different levels of opportunity and constraint to the different tiers. It is critical that the benefit of this, and ability to make policy distinction between in particular the Rural Settlements and the Villages and Hamlets, outweighs the further complexity of the additional tier.

This approach seeks to add a range of other considerations to the identification of different settlements into different tiers. It therefore adds a further 'sense check' to the approach, by further recognising that settlements will have different sensitivities to change.

Instead of a functional categorisation based upon the provision of services and facilities alone, this approach looks also at the relative size and sensitivity of different settlements in order to place them into different tiers.

As a result, though, this approach is more subjective in its application. The evidence relating to each settlement will be broad ranging and require a degree of professional judgement in order to then place each settlement in an appropriate tier. It is particularly important in this case to recognise that it is a tool to facilitate a spatial strategy, and not a scientific approach to policy and decision making.

In order to classify the settlements the following criteria may be used to judge each settlements relatively sustainability and sensitivity to change. However it is also important to recognise that specific communities may have an appetite either for greater opportunity for development, or for less. In cases where this appetite runs at odds with the below approach to classifying the settlements it could present challenges and community discontent. Whilst the criteria below will add some structure there is inevitably a degree of judgement, and the need to consider more subjective issues around sensitivity and sense of place, which cannot be identified by specific evidence on its own.

- **Provision of services and facilities:** The availability of services and facilities in or nearby to the settlement
    - o **Primary Services:** Community Hall, Primary School, General Store, , Children's Play Area
    - o **Secondary Services:** GP Surgery, ATM, Bank (including mobile), Post Office, Public House, Place of Worship, Library, Pharmacy, Dental Surgery, Garage (fuel), Sports Pitch
- **Settlement size:** This would look at the number of 'address points' in the settlement (the number of homes and businesses) as a measure of relative size
- **Connectivity:** This would consider the relative accessibility of the settlement in relation to highways
- **Extent of conservation area:** This would consider the size of the conservation area

relative to the size of the settlement as a whole. In particular highlighting where there is contemporary development between the conservation area and the surrounding open countryside.

- **Relative landscape sensitivity:** This will draw, where possible, from the Landscape Sensitivity Study and the Landscape Character Assessment
- **Listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments:** This will identify particular sensitivities around the number and location of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments
- **Designations on surrounding land:** This will consider the extent to which land near or around the settlement has designations, such as Section 3, SSSI, Common Land etc.

Applying the above approach is more complex than Option 1. A scoring system has been developed which will consider the above factors. It should be recognised that the subjective nature of this approach and a scoring system is likely to lead to significant discussion in some communities where some residents feel their settlement either should or should not be in a specific tier. The likelihood for debate around this must therefore be taken into account in considering the merits of this approach.

A further complexity compared with Option 2 is the need to consider further thresholds on scoring which will divide the list of classified settlements into three tiers (as opposed to two).

Applying the approach and scoring, a full list of settlements which may then be in each tier is set out in below.

Local Centres	Rural Settlements	Villages and Hamlets
Moretonhampstead	Bittaford	Dean Prior
Yelverton	Cheriton Cross	Sourton
Buckfastleigh	Mary Tavy	Holne
Ashburton	Christow	Lydford
South Brent	Cornwood	Shaugh Prior
Chagford	Dousland	Lustleigh
Horrabridge	Buckfast	South Tawton
Princetown	Liverton	Scorriton
	Whiddon Down	Postbridge
	Sticklepath	Peter Tavy
	Walkhampton	Drewsteignton
	South Zeal	Widecombe in the Moor
	Bridford	Manaton
	Dunsford	Belstone
	Ilsington	North Brentor
	Hennock	Meavy
		Throwleigh
		North Bovey
		Teign Village

3.8   Option 4 – a spatial or clustered approach

Description of approach:

This approach offers a distinctly different strategy from the above. Instead of identifying settlements individually it aims to group settlement geographically. Whilst challenging to identify, the aim of this approach is to consider how communities function together, how they relate to each other, and to allow for development to occur in the most suitable location within a cluster of settlements.

If this option is considered to merit further more detailed consideration a more detailed methodology and analysis of likely clusters or groupings would be required. This would also likely require specific community engagement with those clusters to test and identify the merits of alternative boundaries or groupings. Whilst the limitations of the below are recognised, for the purposes of an initial consideration of this option 10 clusters have been identified, as having

- A reasonable geographic spread
- A functional or community relationship
- Where possible, a larger settlement within the cluster

Further analysis could be considered which might aid in developing criteria, in consultation with communities, which seek to provide a more structure rationale behind the potential clusters, and as part of that process lead to a reasonable number of clusters. This might take into account factors such as:

- A population level for each cluster which indicates a certain level of sustainability or self-containment
- Analysis of functions, services, employment and other movement to better understand functional relationships
- The constraints and opportunities in the different settlements within a cluster
- An understanding of the willingness of those in housing need to consider options in alternative nearby locations
- From that the likely implications in respect of development scale or opportunity
- Analysis of interactions with emerging housing policy and the need to ensure both housing and employment policy complement a clustered strategy.

Within the clustered approach a settlement strategy would remain, with general policies ensuring the development takes place within or adjoining classified settlements, and including a policy for the open countryside. In this respect the key differences between this approach and others is the identification of the scale and location of development to meet needs within a broader area (i.e. the cluster, rather than an individual settlement), and not an indication that change in the open countryside would be any more appropriate than in the other options.

East Dartmoor 1 – Ashburton, Ilsington, Liverton, Widecombe, Holne,
East Dartmoor 2 - Buckfastleigh, Buckfast, Dean Prior
South East Dartmoor – South Brent, Bittaford, Wrangaton, Cornwood
South West Dartmoor – Yelverton, Horrabridge, Shaugh Prior, Dousland, Meavy
Teign Valley – Christow, Hennock, Dunsford, Teign Village
Bovey Valley – Moretonhampstead, Lustleigh, North Bovey, Manaton
Upper Teign – Chagford, Drewsteignton, Whiddon Down
North East Dartmoor – South Tawton, Belstone
West Dartmoor – Mary Tavy, Brentor, Lydford
High Moor – Princetown, Postbridge

Pros	Cons
• Provides greatest flexibility to provide development in most appropriate location • Protects open countryside from unchecked growth	• Creates a more complex approach • Could place a greater burden upon development management and decision making

- Could recognise the needs and constraints of different settlements

- Could lead to unmet need in certain settlements
- Particularly challenging to establish
- Requires co-operation between communities
- Difficult to draw a line between areas – may not get consensus

Implications/mitigation/discussion

This option is a very different approach to a settlement strategy. Instead of considering settlements individually this approach groups them together. The groupings are geographical, aiming to place related settlements together more so than their size or the services and facilities they offer.

The aim of this approach is to provide for a greater degree of flexibility and co-operation between communities. It enables communities as a related group or cluster, to collectively consider how and where best to meet their housing and employment needs.

A fundamental challenge around the cluster approach is considering the number of clusters. The above approach proposes 10 clusters, based largely around the larger settlements, together with the surrounding villages and rural hinterland. There is an important balance to strike; whilst a larger number of clusters may resolve the difficulties which exist as a result of more extensive rural areas, this will lead to greater complexity and clusters with only small settlements. Conversely a lower number of clusters will lead to limited community relationship and extensive rural areas in between.

It is inevitable that this approach would lead to a significant amount of discussion amongst communities. The challenge of identifying each cluster (and the knock on effect of each discussion to adjoining areas) should not be underestimated.

Furthermore it is important to recognise the extent of additional discussion and support requirements at the decision making stage. It is likely that this approach could lead to larger and more complex discussions around identifying need, and the most appropriate places to deliver new development. This could protract the delivery process, and potentially lead to non-delivery where consensus cannot be reached.

A consequence of this, and even delivered development, is that smaller settlement where, for example a housing need may be evident, may either resist or not be able to deliver schemes to meet a locally identified need within their own community. Whilst well intended this approach is based upon a generalisation around the way in which communities and individual households operate. For example, it should not be assumed that a family in housing need will be willing to live in the next village simply because it is a more appropriate place for development.

A potential mitigation to these issues could be a fundamental shift in policy towards proactively encouraging neighbourhood plans. The application of this approach where it is instead community led places the onus upon individual communities to work collectively to identify, plan for and meet their need.

Whilst such an approach has the potential to work positively with a clustered settlement strategy, the appetite for neighbourhood planning, and the progress made to date on Dartmoor, does not indicate that a shift towards a fundamentally different approach of community based plans would be successful. Perhaps inevitably, the few neighbourhood plan area designations within the National Park are currently parish based. It would not be

possible to require groups to alter their geographical area, nor might it be desirable or achievable.

The practical reality is therefore that whilst this approach could offer a significantly different approach to a settlement hierarchy for the Local Plan, it is unlikely to be a feasible and deliverable model.

3.9   Recommendations

3.9.1   The above options represent a reasonable number of alternative approaches to a spatial strategy for the next local plan.

3.9.2   It should be recognised that there were no responses to the Issues Consultation, no evidence at this stage which indicates a fundamental problem with the existing strategy. Whilst evidence indicates that the proportion of development is not distributed precisely as might have been intended, it is likely this is more a product of the relative opportunity or constraint provided by associated policy in the application of the spatial strategy.

3.9.3   However there was a consistent response to the Issues Paper that a degree of further opportunity should be afforded to the current Rural Settlements, some of which have seen little or no new housing or employment development over the life of the current Local Plan.

3.9.4   Option 4 is a fundamentally different approach to a spatial strategy for Dartmoor. Whilst it has the potential to facilitate an alternative collaborate and flexible approach to planning within wider community areas, there are a number of reasons described which indicate a significant degree of risk in pursuing this approach in the next Local Plan.

3.9.5   Options 2 and 3 seek to respond to the weakness of the current approach, by providing a more well-rounded approach to the identification of settlements within the hierarchy. This methodology would add greater depth and a clearer distinction between settlements, which cannot be achieved by looking at their services and facilities alone. Whilst this approach adds a 'sense check' to the settlement hierarchy by recognising the relative constraint and opportunity in different settlements, it does in turn add a degree of subjectivity to assessment. Whilst this may present some challenges through the preparation of the plan, it is arguably more robust in the long term, and 'front loads' these discussions, rather than leaving significant areas of debate for the planning application process (as may be the case in Option 4, and arguably in Option 1 where a loss of services might undermine a settlement's presence in a specific tier).

3.9.6   Options 2 and 3 propose respectively the application of the same methodology, but resulting in either a split of two tiers, or three. A key advantage of the three tier approach is the ability to recognise the clear difference between settlements, their relative sensitivity and opportunity, which is currently lost where 34 settlements are within the same tier. This disadvantage could be mitigated for by associated development management policies which enable a case by case consideration of development in individual settlements, based upon the merits of a specific site. Equally though, there are benefits in turn to being clearer up front which settlements may be more appropriate for a wider range of development opportunities, and others less so.

3.9.7   In conclusion it is considered that, on balance, Option 3 represents the most suitable approach to pursue in the Local Plan. It is important to recognise that the role of this Topic Paper is to explore this issue in more detail, discuss options and consider recommendations. The strategy ultimately proposed in the Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan will be subject to a range of discussions in advance, as well as Strategy Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal.

4   Settlement Boundaries and Site Allocations

4.1   The purpose of settlement boundaries

4.1.1   The current Local Plan includes settlement boundaries for each of the Local Centres; the 8 largest settlements. Settlement boundaries were brought in the 2013 Development Management DPD, in order to better apply spatial policy.

4.1.2   In essence, current policy might describe development as being appropriate either 'within' or 'adjoining' a settlement. Similar terminology was used in the previous (2004) Local Plan but the provision lacked clarity and led to lengthy pre-application and in application discussions, as well as a number of appeals. These debates around the interpretation of whether a site was 'within', 'adjoining' and also therefore 'outside' a settlement were time consuming for both the Authority and the applicant. There was uncertainty for the applicant and the community in respect of the relevant policy which would apply and the likelihood of a development coming forward.

4.1.3   The provision of settlement boundaries sought to resolve this, and has indeed been successful in doing so in the Local Centres. The methodology prepared at the time remains relevant. It stated "settlement boundaries provide clarification for the application of policies by identifying, in essence, the division between the built up area of the settlement and the surrounding open countryside. In the context of the Core Strategy a settlement boundary identifies whether a site proposed for development would be within, adjoining or outside of the Local Centre. Settlement boundaries therefore support policy by preventing the encroachment of development into the open countryside."

"The inclusion of an area within a settlement boundary does not automatically mean development would be acceptable. Any proposal within a settlement boundary would still be subject to all of the relevant Development Plan policies and other material considerations."

4.2   Consultation response

4.2.1   The Issues consultation drew very few comments relating to settlement boundaries, such that any views expressed were the opinion of only person each time thus it would be inappropriate to place any great weight upon these views.

4.2.2   The consultation with Parish and Town Councils on the Settlement Profiles and other specific issues asked "In the current Local Plan the Local Centres have settlement boundaries, the Rural Settlements do not. Do you believe your settlement should have a settlement boundary? Please tell us why?" The response was quite mixed, and with no particular distinction between larger and smaller settlements. Many Parish/Town Councils did not provide an answer to the question. This leads us to believe that in the absence of greater detail around settlement boundaries, their purpose, and advantages/disadvantages the responses, none of which had any great reasoning or evidence behind, should not be relied upon. It does flag however the need for a clear explanation around both the methodology and purpose of settlement boundaries at the next stage of consultation.

4.3   The Methodology

4.3.1   The current Settlement Boundaries are based upon the following methodology. There have through planning applications or appeal been no notable challenges to the approach to settlement boundaries or any specific matters relating to certain settlements.

The settlement boundaries are drawn using the following key principles in order to be robust, consistent and precise.

1. *Settlement boundaries will be drawn for settlements identified in the Local Plan as Local Centres and Rural Settlements.*

2. *Settlement boundaries should, wherever possible relate to defined physical features such as field boundaries, roads or water courses. The width of roads or rivers should normally be excluded.*

3. *Settlement boundaries will be drawn tightly around the built form of the settlement including any land allocated for development or land with a current planning permission (for a land use listed under point 5). Land allocated, or with a current permission for affordable housing which is not well contained within the settlement form will be excluded; such land may only be included once the development is complete.*

4. *Settlement boundaries can include greenfield areas that are not allocated for development or carrying a current permission only where they clearly form part of the settlement and are defined by strong boundary features. They would not normally exceed 0.3 hectares in size.*

5. *Settlement boundaries should normally include the following land uses; residential, settlement services and facilities (including shops, schools, community buildings, health services), employment uses, permanent hard surfaced car parks, identified recreation or community open space (including sports fields, allotments or cemeteries).*

6. *Settlement boundaries should normally exclude the following land uses; agriculture, forestry, equestrian, minerals extraction or landfill sites. Areas of water or other open space, and public utilities (such as covered reservoirs, water treatment works, telephone exchanges and electricity sub-stations) which are not well contained within the settlement form will be excluded. Equally buildings or structures associated with these uses should normally be excluded.*

7. *Whilst settlement boundaries must not necessarily be continuous, isolated areas of development separated from the settlement by an excluded land use by a distance of 25m or more should be excluded.*

8. *Settlement boundaries should normally follow the boundaries of the curtilage or properties except where buildings or structures are located in large grounds or open areas on the edge of settlements where the plot or area of extended garden may be excluded.*

9. *Settlement boundaries will be plotted on Ordnance Survey Mastermap at a scale of 1.2500 (Ordnance Survey state 1.1m RMSE Absolute Accuracy for data surveyed at 1:2500 scale).*

4.4   The context of a revised Settlement Strategy

4.4.1   Settlement Boundaries are currently drafted only for the Local Centres as defined in the adopted Local Plan. If an alternative settlement strategy is considered, in line with the discussion in Chapter 4, above, it would be necessary to review which tier would benefit from settlement boundaries to aid the application of policy

4.4.2   The recommended Option 3 above sets out the following outline approach for development in each settlement tier. This is described below alongside a consideration of the merit of Settlement Boundaries being included within that tier.

Potential Settlement Approach	Merit of Settlement Boundaries
Local Centres: The largest and more thriving communities. Intended to meet the majority of the anticipated housing provision in the National Park. Appropriate locations for allocated mixed use and housing sites, development of infill sites and conversions to residential use. Appropriate locations for employment development for new and expanding business.	Equivalent in policy terms to the Local Centres in the current Local Plan there is a compelling case to retain Settlement Boundaries in the largest settlements. Settlement Boundaries have proven to improve certainty and clarity, and reduce the need for lengthy discussion or appeal relating to the application of policy.
Rural Settlements: Villages which are better connected and have some capacity for growth or change. Appropriate locations for small scale development of infill sites, conversions within the built form of the settlement, and exception site development with an element of cross subsidy where this is necessary for viability. Appropriate locations for small scale development for new and expanding business.	The role of this tier is altered slightly from that of the current Rural Settlement in the Local Plan. In response to community consultation it aims to potentially allow for additional small scale development opportunities within these settlements. It may therefore be the case that these settlements would benefit from a more proactive approach, and have Settlement Boundaries identified. This would enable a clearer identification of suitable exception sites, more clearly defined infill opportunities, whilst also prevent these settlement from undesirable sprawl or encroachment into surrounding countryside, or inappropriate change outside the settlement.
Villages and Hamlets: Villages which may benefit from some development necessary to support the community, but with limited capacity for growth or change given their location or sensitivity. Acceptable locations in principle for small scale development essentially servicing identified needs arising from within a settlement and its parish, including affordable housing and the expansion of existing employment sites and premises.	These small settlements are likely to see a limited amount of development. These settlements are more constrained than others, thus where a local need is identified flexibility may be needed to find a suitable site which has a more limited impact. The nature of these settlements is also such that they can be diffuse and disperse in their form, meaning that Settlement Boundaries would be challenging to define in some cases. There is also the potential for unintended consequences, whereby extensive or inappropriate land might be deemed 'infill' within a settlement and presence of a settlement boundary give the impression of its suitability whilst strategic policy may not support development of that type.

Recommendations for policy

4.4.3   The experience of Settlement Boundaries for the Local Centre has been a positive one over the current Local Plan. It is recommended that Settlement Boundaries are retained for the Local Centres.

4.4.4   In respect of the Villages and Hamlets (if the three tier option is taken forward), it is not considered reasonable or necessary to draft Settlement Boundaries for these settlements. In particular it is considered it could lead to unintended consequences with pressure for inappropriate infill development within these settlements.

4.4.5   The case for the Rural Settlement is less clear, though it is considered that, given the role of this tier is to allow for a small number of additional opportunity for small scale development within the settlement, they would on balance benefit from Settlement Boundaries.

4.5   The role of site allocations

4.5.1   The NPPF sets out the following in relation to the allocation of land. It is clear that overall there is an expectation that a Local Planning Authority will allocate sites in its local plan in order to demonstrate the Plan will meet identified needs. National Parks may be considered exceptional to this, however, and in the context of an anticipated significantly lower level of housing provision compared with district areas, it is important to consider the merits of land allocation.

Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision." (Para 20)

Planning policies should "identify a supply of specific deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period; and specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15" (Para 67)

"Strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development." (Para 23)

In preparing plans the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. *(para 170) "Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework" (Para 171)*

"Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular review of both the land allocated for development, and of land availability. Where the local planning authority considers there to be reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan: they should, as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for amore deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (or, if appropriate, deallocate a site which is undeveloped); and in the interim, prior to updating the plan, application for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area." (Para 120)

4.5.2   The current Local Plan (Development Management DPD 2013) identifies 17 allocated sites across 8 settlements. This totals 24ha of land of which 8.6ha is previously developed land, and 15.7ha is greenfield. The Authority recognises concerns which are sometimes raised during consultation that the allocation of land amounts to the 'concreting over of the National Park', and an 'urbanisation of Dartmoor'. It is perhaps therefore worth placing this in context, noting that this land identified at the time accounted for 0.016% of the total National Park area, of which as a whole 0.3% (293ha) is currently identified as 'urban' in the 2017 Landscape Character Assessment.

4.5.3   A level of development to meet identified needs within the National Park, is a given within the Local Plan. It is clear from national policy, local need, and consultation, that allowing nothing is not an option. Site allocations are thus a tool to support development coming forward in the best possible way, though can be one of the most contentious elements of preparing the Local Plan. They have value through –

- Providing a proactive approach to the consideration of sites, rather than a reaction to a planning application on a site which has not previously been considered
- Enable communities and planners to consider the relative merits of different site options
- Give a community confidence that they know which sites should be coming forwards next within their town or village
- Giving developers and landowners a clear indication of which are the suitable sites for development
- Demonstrate a positively prepared Local Plan (a test required of the Plan at examination) by seeking to deliver appropriate land to meet identified need
- Provide a defence to potential challenges relating to appropriate land supply, or the promotion of a development site which is not supported

4.5.4   There can also be a number of negative aspects to site allocations:

- Increased landowner expectations around site value, which leads to non-delivery
- Change in landowners' willingness to bring a site to the market
- Site values which may prevent lower value development, such as affordable self-build or community-led development, from coming forward, therefore requiring consideration of an additional exception site
- A perceived threat of rapid or unnecessary development, which is not based upon an identified need.

4.5.5   It is worth noting the experience of not having allocated land in the Rural Settlements in the current Local Plan. Overall the level of development has been low, with new development being largely a limited number of conversion or infill development for affordable housing, and a small number of rural exception site schemes in a small number of villages. This may be considered a success; the principal aim of the Core Strategy was at the time to reduce the overall level of housing development and focus upon housing needs. The high level of constraint within the Rural Settlements has suppressed land values such that exceptions sites and other affordable scheme have still proven viable.

4.5.6   Balanced with this is the concern expressed that the levels of development in the Rural Settlements has been too low. This is does not necessarily equate with a need to allocate sites, as it is also a product of the prevailing policy relating to these area and the level of opportunity for development which it allows.

4.5.7   Further detail on housing need will be available as the Housing Topic Paper is completed. However it is worth at this time exploring the merit not just of allocation, but of scale of allocation and the interaction with other policy opportunity. Currently most Local Centres have two sites identified, some have fewer, some have less, depending on need identified at the time, and on any specific brownfield redevelopment opportunities. Recognising the negative aspects of site allocations there may be an argument to review the scale of allocation required within the National Park (this may be the number of sites and/or their size). The Local Plan could allocate a reasonable amount of land to provide confidence and certainty around meeting need over, say the first 5 years, but beyond that period reasonable opportunity is given for smaller scale needs led growth. This approach could have the benefit of managing developer expectations in the National Park, providing greater opportunities for SME builders and enabling Community Land Trusts and Housing Associations to have a

more reasonable prospect of bringing viable schemes forward given more reasonable land values. Such an approach may require a more flexible or altered exception site policy, but could represent a more balanced approach moving forward, and may prove more desirable for communities which are concerned at how to ensure that development of allocated sites happens over a longer period of time.

4.6   Consultation Response

4.6.1   Issues Paper consultation two questions regarding the allocation of sites in the next Local Plan.

Questions	Summary of Response
7.2 should we allocate sites for development in the main settlements?"	• Yes (most comments) • Consider allocating in smaller settlements too • No, it leads developers to get land over Community Land Trusts (CLTs) • Involve communities in process • Ensure infrastructure is appropriate • Need to review allocated sites which have failed to come forward to ensure they are deliverable • Do not allocate beyond what is needed in the community
7.3 Should we allocate sites for employment uses, and other mixed uses or redevelopment?	• Yes, in the right places and where it is needed

4.6.2   The positive and negative points relating to the allocation of sites at 4.6.3 - 4.6.4 do therefore reflect some of the views of the community and others in their response. Perhaps in addition to those points are the issues relating to capacity of settlement for development (i.e. concerns regarding the necessary infrastructure) and the extent to which the likely yield allocated sites relate to the need in the community. Both of these points will need to be considered as part of other discussions during the Local Plan Review. The first will be considered in the context of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which should identify any infrastructure requirements relating to new sites. The second will be a consideration within the Housing Topic Paper in respect of the degree to which Dartmoor meets an overall housing needs, focussed on local needs, and the extent to which the level of that local need is understood for plan-making purposes (as opposed to informing applications).

4.7   Policy interactions – the implications of allocations

4.7.1   There are a number of areas in which policy will relate to allocations:

4.7.2   **Development Briefs and Masterplans**: The current Local Plan requires that all allocated sites are supported by a Development Brief or Masterplan, prepared with DNPA and the community, prior to an application coming forward. This has taken place on a number of sites, and with mixed success. In Chagford a developer-led Masterplan was informed by an Enquiry by Design the level of engagement helped shape the final form of this extensive allocation. In South Brent a more proportionate approach meant a Development Brief was prepared which raised the profile of the scheme, sought community input to priorities, layout and design principles. Other examples have had less success or benefit. In Ashburton DNPA has not succeeded in bringing a Masterplan forward for a redevelopment site, largely due to the complexity of the land uses, issues and competing demands upon the area. On smaller scheme Development Briefs have arguably been tokenistic or of limited value in respect of genuine community engagement.

4.7.3   **Requirements, criteria and land use**: Allocations may include specific reference to

requirements upon the site. Examples including specific constraints such as landscape, flood risk, or historic assets which may need to be considered as the site is brought forward. Allocations will normally also make clear what types of land use would be appropriate on the site. Finally they may also set out specific infrastructure, features or benefits which should be provided as part of the development, such as footpath links, public parking or children's play space.

4.7.4   **Rural Exception sites**: The NPPF defines exception sites as:

"Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding."

4.7.5   It is important to recognise the role which exception sites play in delivering affordable housing, in the context of allocated sites. It was described above the impact which the allocation of land can have on expectations, and therefore land value – the consequence of this being an impact upon the viability of affordable housing. In this context exception sites are a valuable tool in smaller settlement to bring forward affordable housing scheme with little or no cross subsidy.

4.7.6   It is anticipated that exception sites will continue to play an important role in the delivery of affordable housing in the National Park through the life of the next local plan. As discussed above though, if a slightly more constrained approach is taken to the proactive identification of land through allocation, it may be that either a more flexible exception sites policy, or an alternative community needs led approach could complement this by still provide reasonable opportunities through the plan to meet identified local need for housing, employment or infrastructure.

4.7.7   **Settlement boundaries**: There is clearly an important relationship between settlement boundaries and site allocations. Settlement boundaries may be drafted as 'loose', and therefore present within them opportunities for development now deemed to be within the settlement. Arguably this is tantamount to allocation, but it could be an approach which leads to smaller sites being realised. This leads to questions around a) the viability and deliverability of those sites, and b) the scale of land available, and whether this is sufficient to meet needs.

4.7.8   Importantly, if minded to take forward allocations in principle in the next Local Plan, The Authority should undertake as part of that process a review of allocated sites which have not come forward, and seek to understand the reasons for non-delivery.

Potential Settlement Approach	Merit of Site Allocations
Local Centres: The largest and more thriving communities. Intended to meet the majority of the anticipated housing provision in the National Park. Appropriate locations for allocated mixed use and housing sites, development of infill sites and conversions to residential use. Appropriate locations for employment development for new and expanding business.	In Local Centres, where the most development is anticipated site allocation can provide confidence and certainty to communities, landowners and developers. Where a DNPA wishes to demonstrate that there is sufficient land availability to meet an appropriate level of need (such as may be identified) allocated sites can be critical to a positively prepared plan with an appropriate land supply.
Rural Settlements: Villages which are better	With a potential increase in opportunity in some

connected and have some capacity for growth or change. Appropriate locations for small scale development of infill sites, conversions within the built form of the settlement, and exception site development with an element of cross subsidy where this is necessary for viability. Appropriate locations for small scale development for new and expanding business.	smaller settlements in the National Park site small scale allocations could provide a degree of certainty to landowners and developers. However it is not anticipated that Rural Settlements will contribute significantly to the overall level of housing coming forward within the National Park, and therefore that communities will benefit most from windfall (e.g. infill sites and conversions) and from more viable exception sites or an alternative exception sites policy.
Villages and Hamlets: Villages which may benefit from some development necessary to support the community, but with limited capacity for growth or change given their location or sensitivity. Acceptable locations in principle for small scale development essentially servicing identified needs arising from within a settlement and its parish, including affordable housing and the expansion of existing employment sites and premises.	These smallest and most sensitive settlements are likely to be appropriate only for development meeting local needs. As such schemes are likely to be of a small scale, and exception sites would be the most appropriate approach for keeping land values at a more viable level for affordable housing.

Recommendations for policy

4.7.9   On the basis of the above discussion it is recommended that sites should be allocated in Local Centres, that on balance it would not be appropriate to allocate sites in Rural Settlements, and it would not be recommended to allocated sites in the Villages and Hamlets. It may be considered that site allocations happen at a more limited scale, with longer term and alternative opportunities provided through a more flexible community needs led policy to allow for some smaller scale development to come forward. It is important to note that this recommendation is subject to the Spatial Strategy recommended in section 3.

APPENDIX 1

1   Settlement Hierarchy Methodology

1.1   Introduction

1.1.1   Following on from Section 2.3, where it was concluded that option 3 represents the most
         suitable settlement strategy option for the new Local Plan, this section discusses the
         methodology for establishing a new settlement hierarchy.

1.1.2   Option 3 established the following criteria to be used in establishing a new settlement
         hierarchy. As discussed previously, this represents a step change from current practice where
         only population, services and accessibility were used to establish a hierarchy.

- **Provision of services and facilities**: The availability of services and facilities in or
  nearby to the settlement
    - **Primary Services**: Community Hall, Primary School, General Store, ,
      Children's Play Area
    - **Secondary Services**: GP Surgery, ATM, Bank (including mobile), Post Office,
      Public House, Place of Worship, Library, Pharmacy, Dental Surgery, Garage
      (fuel), Sports Pitch
- **Settlement size**: The number of 'address points' in the settlement (the number of
  homes and businesses) as a measure of relative size
- **Connectivity**: The relative accessibility of the settlement in relation to highways
- **Extent of conservation area**: The size of the conservation area relative to the size of
  the settlement as a whole. In particular highlighting where there is contemporary
  development between the conservation area and the surrounding open countryside.
- **Relative landscape sensitivity**: Drawing, where possible, from the Landscape
  Sensitivity Study and the Landscape Character Assessment
- **Listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments**: Sensitivities around the number and
  location of listed buildings and scheduled monuments
- **Designations on surrounding land**: The extent of land near or around the
  settlement which has designations, such as Section 3, SSSI, Common Land etc.

1.1.3   The above criteria have been chosen because they can be assessed quantitatively; however,
         it is important to remember that the real-world character of the National Park's settlements is
         more complicated than is reflected in these easy-to-measure criteria. There are inevitable
         limits to this type of analysis and it would not be appropriate to establish a hierarchy using
         solely this methodology. It is therefore our intention to use this analysis as a baseline
         assessment from which we can use qualitative assessment, professional opinion and views of
         the community to finalise the hierarchy.

1.1.4   Quantitative assessment has been completed with each of the settlements receiving more
         points where they are considered to be more appropriate for development. For example a
         larger settlement will receive more points against the size criterion than a smaller settlement,
         and once all settlements have been assessed against all criteria the settlements with the most
         points will theoretically be more suitable for development, with the lowest scoring settlements
         considered the least suitable. Paragraphs 1.2 - 1.8 describe how the criteria have been
         assessed and scored. The result of the quantitative analysis and short discussion is provided
         at Table 2.

1.1.5   The pool of settlements assessed was taken from the existing Local Plan. During consultation
         with communities throughout the Local Plan process communities and individuals have
         identified other settlements which they feel have capacity for managed growth and have

asked us to consider these for inclusion in the settlement hierarchy. The settlements include Teign Village, Wrangaton, Murchington, Haytor Vale, Gidleigh, Sigford, Buckland-in-the-Moor, Sampford Spiney, Higher Brimley, Poundsgate, Leusdon, Hexworthy, Doccombe, and Harford. These settlements are all very small and are generally very poorly serviced. Table 3 assesses the services and facilities available in these settlements and demonstrates a lack of service provision when compared to the existing settlement hierarchy. The majority have no primary services within the settlement itself and no significant secondary services which would contribute to their sustainability and reduce people's need to travel.

1.1.6   The most sustainable new settlement identified was Teign Village, a small mining village built in the late 1800s located on the fringe of the National Park in the Teign Valley and mostly comprising brick terraces either side of the main street. Requests to include Teign Village in the settlement hierarchy were received from the community and Hennock Parish Council and centred around the strong community present there. The village possesses a sports club, children's play space, sports pitch and a large area of allotments immediately to the north. Both the settlement's sustainability and capacity for growth were assessed when considering it for inclusion. The village is small and has services comparable to Dartmoor's smallest settlements and few employment opportunities, but its facilities are certainly far better than average. With regards landscape, the village already represents a disturbance to the surrounding area's pastoral landscape character and there are no biodiversity designations in the immediate vicinity of or listed buildings within the village. On balance it was recommended to identify Teign Village as a Village and Hamlet in the settlement hierarchy in recognition of the strong community that has grown there.

1.1.7   Officers also discussed with Ugborough Parish Council the inclusion of Wrangaton as a Village and Hamlet. Whilst it is acknowledged that Wrangaton is strategically well located, it is itself poorly served and there are currently not considered to be services and facilities within the settlement which would reasonably justify its elevation to a classified settlement. It is acknowledged that there is a permission (to the south of the road, outside the National Park) for a small residential development including a community shop. Were this to be implemented, including the shop, DNPA could review the status of Wrangaton in the future,

1.2   Services and Facilities

1.2.1   Ensuring new development is located within easy reach of services and facilities residents use on a daily basis effectively reduces residents' need to travel and is a strategic objective of the NPPF. The current settlement hierarchy uses services as the predominant factor. In view of the above settlement services should remain the most important factor in ensuring development is as sustainable as possible and their score should reflect this.

1.2.2   Consistent with the current hierarchy services will be grouped into primary and secondary services, primary services being those which are more significant considerations when determining whether a settlement is a suitable location for development.

1.2.3   A change in consumer behaviours, such as internet shopping and the rise in car ownership, over the last 10 years demands the services used in this assessment are reviewed. After review it was decided the following changes be made to services included in this assessment:

- Analysis of travel to work patterns in the settlement profiles has revealed very poor take-up of public transport in the National Park regardless of its availability. In the current economic climate there is also little scope for further investment. Whilst public transport availability is not likely to make a significant contribution to the sustainability of future development it can be a valued service for a community, particular for the older population, thus it is included as a secondary service.
- The rise of internet shopping, communication and on-demand couriers means that

post offices are not such an important service as they once were. The number of post offices in the National Park has declined over the current plan period, this reflects a drop in demand for their services rather than these settlements necessarily being less sustainable locations for development. Post offices are therefore included as a secondary service, rather than primary.

- Children's play areas are an important facility which are not provided by the National Park's general recreational opportunities. In recognition that the facilities in a play area are an important service not available in open access woodland or moorland these have been considered a primary service, rather than secondary.
- Many of the National Park's banks have closed in recent years with some being replaced by a mobile service. Despite the shift to online banking services the National Park's ageing population continue to value and are more reliant on traditional retail services. Banks (including mobile branches) have therefore been added as a secondary service.
- ATMs allowing free cash withdrawals have been added as a secondary service given that they remain important in the National Park's traditional retail setting where paying by card is not always possible or subject to a minimum spend.
- Dental Surgeries have been added as a secondary service as they are used by the vast majority of residents on a regular basis.
- Sports pitches have been differentiated from recreation grounds and added as a separate secondary service. This reflects their importance to supporting healthy lifestyles in Dartmoor's communities.
- Libraries have also been added as a secondary service recognising their importance as a local information hub and opportunities for public web access

1.2.4   Other than the changes discussed above the services included in the analysis remain unchanged from the current settlement hierarchy. The final group of services included in this analysis are as follows:

Primary Services:	Community Hall
	Primary School
	General Store
	Children's Play Area
Secondary Services:	Health Centre
	ATM
	Bank (including mobile branches)
	Post Office
	Public House
	Place of Worship
	Library
	Pharmacy
	Dental Surgery
	Garage (fuel)
	Sports Pitch
	Bus service

1.2.5   Settlement services should have a weighting which reflects that they are the dominant consideration in this analysis, therefore scoring is proposed as follows:

Services	Score / service	Total available
Primary Service (4)	0.5	2
If no, within 2.5km?	0.2	0.8
Secondary Service (11)	0.2	2.4
Total		**4.4**

1.3   Settlement Size

1.3.1   As demonstrated by responses to our Parish Council consultation on the Settlement Profiles, population data is often inaccurate or unavailable at the resolution needed for assessing individual settlements. Furthermore, as settlement boundaries have not been drawn for all settlements detailed settlement areas are not available. We have therefore used address points as an indicator of settlement size as this data is readily available for each settlement.

1.3.2   Assessment of address points shows that there is a large variation in settlement size in the National Park with Ashburton being the largest, 1,881 address points, and Postbridge the smallest, 29 address points. There is also a natural division in settlement sizes around 500 address points with Princetown and the Rural Settlements scoring below 500, and the other Local Centres above 500, see Table 1.

Table 1 – Top 12 Settlements by total address points

Settlement	Address points
Ashburton	1881
Buckfastleigh	1529
South Brent	1238
Horrabridge	952
Moretonhampstead	803
Yelverton	709
Chagford	637
Princetown	448
Bittaford	404
Dousland	351
Christow	321
South Zeal	299

1.3.3   Settlement size is an important indicator of a settlement's ability to accommodate additional development, with larger settlements likely having more infrastructure, services and facilities, areas of lower development sensitivity and therefore available development opportunities. In view of this the following scoring is proposed for settlement size which gives it a similar weighting to the combined score for sensitivity, but less than settlement services:

Address Points	Score
0-100	0
101 - 300	1
301 - 500	2
500+	3

1.4   Connectivity

1.4.1   A settlement's location relative to the road network is a fundamental consideration when determining its ability to accommodate increased traffic movements associated with development. Dartmoor's road network is heavily constrained in many places with many settlements only accessible via narrow unclassified country lanes. In most circumstances there is little scope for significant road network improvements, as they are often prohibitively expensive and highly likely to have an unacceptable impact on the character and special qualities of the National Park. That said larger developments can sometimes make viable strategic improvements which also benefit the wider area, e.g. Chagford Masterplan site.

1.4.2   Previous local plan settlement hierarchies have included assessment of the road network, with scorings given when a settlement is connected to an A, B or unclassified road. The weighting of this criteria should recognise that although some degree of connectivity is necessary, poor access can sometimes be overcome. The score is proposed as follows:

Road type	Score
A	2
B	1
Unclassified	0

1.4.3   Communities have also asked us to take into consideration broadband connectivity in determining sustainable development locations. However, 'Connecting Devon & Somerset' Local Broadband Plan aims to provide superfast broadband (>24 Mbps) to 100% of the National Park by 2020. 96% of premises are expected to have access to superfast broadband (24mbs +) by March 2018 across Dartmoor and Exmoor. This being the case all settlements in the National Park should already have access to super-fast broadband or will have access in the next plan period and it is therefore not possible to differentiate between settlements on this basis.

1.5   Extent of Conservation Area

1.5.1   This criterion measures the proportion of each settlement which is designated as a Conservation Area. Settlements with a larger proportion of their area as Conservation Area are considered likely to be more sensitive and therefore have less development opportunities.

1.5.2   As population and settlement data is not available the size of each settlement has been measured using address points. The final figure used to rank settlements will therefore be a percentage ratio found by dividing the size of the conservation area (Ha) with the total address points and multiplying by 100. The thresholds for each score have been determined by taking the median from the results of settlements with Conservation Areas.

1.5.3   As this criterion represents only one element amongst a variety of factors which contribute to a settlement's character its weighting should be low. However, to ensure that criteria seeking to measure character are appropriately weighted their combined score should be significant and equal to approximately 25% of the total score. This criterion's score is therefore as follows:

CA area relative to address points	Score
0% (no conservation area)	1
0.1 - 9%	0.5
9.1%+	0

1.6   Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments

1.6.1   A settlement's character can also be attributed to its historic buildings and features. This criterion measures the number of protected historic buildings and features, namely Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments, relative to settlement size. Once again address points have been used as an indicator of settlement size, in the absence of accurate settlement population or area information. Many of Dartmoor's churches can have a significant number of separate listings for features in their curtilage. To avoid these additional listings creating a bias they have been removed from the data.

1.6.2   Once again this criterion represents only one element amongst a variety of factors which contribute to a settlement's sensitivity and its weighting should therefore be low. Scoring for this criterion is as follows:

No. of LBs and SMs relative to address points	Score
0 - 5%	1
5.1 - 10%	0.5
10.1%+	0

1.7   Relative Landscape Sensitivity

1.7.1   As part of the local plan review the Authority has commissioned a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment which analyses the landscape surrounding 10 of the National Park's largest settlements and its sensitivity to built development. Analysis of all settlements within the National Park would have required a disproportionate amount of work and would be of limited use given the limited development the smaller settlements will likely see during the next plan period. As a result analysis of landscape sensitivity is not available to directly inform this criterion.

1.7.2   Given that the National Park is a nationally protected landscape and the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment predominantly found landscape areas to be of moderate-high or high sensitivity it can also be argued that it would be difficult to meaningfully differentiate between settlements. In view of this we have decided not to include this criterion in the analysis.

1.8   Designations on surrounding land

1.8.1   Where settlements are surrounded by conservation designations, such as Section 3 Moorland, Heathland and Woodland, SSSIs and SACs, they are likely to be more sensitive and there are likely to be less development opportunities. To measure this a 500m buffer has been drawn around each settlement, where settlement boundaries do not exist the boundary has been approximated. The area of Section 3 Moorland, Heathland and Woodland, SSSIs and SACs occurring within this buffer have been added together to provide an idea of the designations on surrounding land.

1.8.2   Once again it is important to ensure the results take into consideration the size of the settlements, as such the results have been divided by each settlement's address points. Relative percentages vary from 2% in Ilsington to 280% in Postbridge, however scores predominantly fall between 2% and 50%. Scoring thresholds have therefore been determined at 10%, 20% and 30%.

1.8.3   Once again this criterion represents only one element amongst a variety of factors which contribute to a settlement's sensitivity and its weighting should therefore be low. Scoring for this criterion is therefore as follows:

Designations within 500m relative to address points	Score
0 - 10%	1
10.1 - 20%	0.6
20.1 - 30%	0.3
30.1%+	0

1.9   Overall Weighting

1.9.1   The weighting given to each criterion can significantly affect the overall result of this analysis. The objective of the analysis should be to achieve a balanced weighting with each criteria given a weighting proportionate to its effect on developability and with no one criteria being too dominant over others.

1.9.2   The reasons for the criteria's weighting have been discussed above. The proposed scoring system results in the weighting shown below:

Topic	Max Score	% weighting
Services total	**4.2**	**33.87**
Services (primary)	*2*	*16.13*
Services (secondary)	*2.4*	*19.35*
Sensitivity	**3**	**24.19**
Size	**3**	**24.19**
Access	**2**	**16.13**
TOTAL	**12.4**	**100.00**

1.10   Results of Quantitative Assessment and Discussion

1.10.1   Using the above methodology the settlements have been scored and ranked, the results can be seen in Table 2.

1.10.2   As discussed above, it is important to remember that this methodology is not definitive and is only being used as a guide to inform further analysis and discussion. Different scoring weightings do result in variations to the final rankings, particularly in the centre of the table, however the overall trends reflected in Table 2 are resilient to small changes in the methodology. Bearing in mind that the hierarchy will only be used to establish groups of settlements it is felt the results are robust, subject to further qualitative analysis and discussion.

1.10.3   There are some trends and anomalies in the hierarchy which are worth highlighting:

- The current Local Centres, being the National Park's largest and best serviced settlements, form a well-established group at the top of the hierarchy
- Villages with a well-established historic character and few services, such as Meavy, North Bovey, Throwleigh, Belstone, North Brentor, Manaton, Widecombe and Drewsteignton, clearly group at the bottom (highest sensitivity) of the hierarchy
- The National Park's larger Rural Settlements which are better serviced and do not have as distinct historic character as some settlements, such as Bittaford, Mary Tavy, Christow, Cheriton Cross, Cornwood, and Buckfast clearly group below the Local Centres
- Dousland, Whiddon Down, Liverton and Walkhampton have benefitted from high scores for their low sensitivity, but seem slight anomalies given they are relatively poorly serviced

Table 2 – Settlement Hierarchy

Settlements	Community Hall	If no, within 2.5km?	Primary School	If no, within 2.5km?	General Store	If no, within 2.5km?	Children's Play Area	If no, within 2.5km?	Health Centre	Regular Bus Service	ATM	Bank (including mobile branches)	Post Office	Public House	Place of Worship	Library	Pharmacy	Dental Surgery	Garage (fuel)	Sports Pitch	Address Points (size)	Access	Extent of Conservation Area	Listed Buildings and SAMs	Designations on surrounding land	Total
	Primary Services								Secondary Services														Sensitivity			
North Bovey	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.5
Throwleigh	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0.3	1.5
Meavy	0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Belstone	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2.1
North Brentor	0.5		0	0	0	0	0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.5	0	2.1
Manaton	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	0	0.5	0	0	2.6
Widecombe in the Moor	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.8
Peter Tavy	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	1	0	0	3
Drewsteignton	0	0	0	0	0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0.5	0	0.6	3.1
Postbridge	0.5		0	0	0.5		0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3.6
Scorriton	0.5		0	0	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.3	3.6
South Tawton	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	0	0.6	3.6
Lustleigh	0.5		0	0	0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.5	0	0	4
Teign Village	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	1	1	1	4.1
Lydford	0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0.5	0	0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	0	0	0.5	0	4.2
Shaugh Prior	0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.5	0	4.3
Holne	0.5		0	0	0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	1	1	0	4.3
Hennock	0.5		0.5		0	0	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0.6	4.5
Sourton	0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	4.5
Dean Prior	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0.3	4.6

Ilsington	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0.5	0.5	1	4.8
Dunsford	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.5	0	0	5.5
Bridford	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0.5		0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0.6	5.6
South Zeal	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	1	0	0.5	0.3	5.8
Walkhampton	0	0	0.5		0	0.2	0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	1	0	1	1	6
Sticklepath	0.5		0	0.2	0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	1	1	0	0.3	6
Liverton	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	6.1
Whiddon Down	0.5		0	0	0.5		0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	2	1	1	0.3	6.1
Buckfast	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0.5	0	6.3
Dousland	0	0	0	0.2	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0.3	6.8
Cornwood	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	6.8
Christow	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	2	0	1	0.5	0.3	7
Cheriton Cross	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0.5	0.3	7.6
Mary Tavy	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	1	2	0	1	0.6	7.6
Bittaford	0.5		0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	7.7
Princetown	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.2	2	1	0	1	0.3	7.7
Horrabridge	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	3	2	0	0.5	0.6	9.3
Chagford	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	3	1	0.5	0.5	0.6	9.6
South Brent	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0.2	3	2	0.5	1	0.6	10.9
Ashburton	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	3	2	0.5	0.5	0.6	11
Buckfastleigh	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0.2	3	2	0.5	1	0.6	11.1
Moretonhampstead	0.5		0.5		0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	3	2	0.5	0.5	1	11.2
Yelverton	0.5		0	0.2	0.5		0.5		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	3	2	1	1	0.3	11.2

Table 3 – Additional settlements assessed for services and facilities

Settlements	Primary Services								Secondary Services												Address Points (size)	Access	Total
	Community Hall	If no, within 2.5km?	Primary School	If no, within 2.5km?	General Store	If no, within 2.5km?	Children's Play Area	If no, within 2.5km?	Health Centre	Regular Bus Service	ATM	Bank (including mobile branches)	Post Office	Public House	Place of Worship	Library	Pharmacy	Dental Surgery	Garage (fuel)	Sports Pitch			
Teign Village	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.5		0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.9
Buckland-in-the-Moor	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.9
Murchington	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8
Sigford	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8
Poundsgate	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8
Wrangaton	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8
Leusdon	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7
Gidleigh	0.5		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7
Haytor Vale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Sampford Spiney	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Higher Brimley	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Hexworthy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Doccombe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2

Detailed list of settlements for Settlement Strategy options

OPTIONS 1 and 2

Local Centres	**Rural Settlements**	
Moretonhampstead	Bittaford	Belstone
Yelverton	Cheriton Cross	North Brentor
Buckfastleigh	Mary Tavy	Meavy
Ashburton	Christow	Manaton
South Brent	Cornwood	Belstone
Chagford	Dousland	North Brentor
Horrabridge	Buckfast	Throwleigh
Princetown	Liverton	Teign Village
	Whiddon Down	
	Sticklepath	
	Walkhampton	
	South Zeal	
	Bridford	
	Dunsford	
	Ilsington	
	Hennock	
	Dean Prior	
	Sourton	
	Holne	
	Lydford	
	Shaugh Prior	
	Lustleigh	
	South Tawton	
	Scorriton	
	Postbridge	
	Peter Tavy	
	Drewsteignton	
	Widecombe in the Moor	
	Manaton	

OPTION 3

Local Centres	Rural Settlements	Villages and Hamlets
Moretonhampstead	Bittaford	Dean Prior
Yelverton	Cheriton Cross	Sourton
Buckfastleigh	Mary Tavy	Holne
Ashburton	Christow	Lydford
South Brent	Cornwood	Shaugh Prior
Chagford	Dousland	Lustleigh
Horrabridge	Buckfast	South Tawton
Princetown	Liverton	Scorriton
	Whiddon Down	Postbridge
	Sticklepath	Peter Tavy
	Walkhampton	Drewsteignton
	South Zeal	Widecombe in the Moor
	Bridford	Manaton
	Dunsford	Belstone
	Ilsington	North Brentor
	Hennock	Meavy
		Throwleigh
		North Bovey
		Teign Village

OPTION 4

East Dartmoor 1 – **Ashburton, Ilsington, Liverton, Widecombe, Holne,**
East Dartmoor 2 **- Buckfastleigh, Buckfast, Dean Prior**
South East Dartmoor – **South Brent, Bittaford, Wrangaton, Cornwood**
South West Dartmoor – **Yelverton, Horrabridge, Shaugh Prior, Dousland, Meavy**
Teign Valley – **Christow, Hennock, Dunsford, Teign Village**
Bovey Valley – **Moretonhampstead, Lustleigh, North Bovey, Manaton**
Upper Teign – **Chagford, Drewsteignton, Whiddon Down**
North East Dartmoor – **South Tawton, Belstone**
West Dartmoor – **Mary Tavy, Brentor, Lydford**
High Moor – **Princetown, Postbridge**