Adopted Version

SUMMARY

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Local Development Framework
Core Strategy Development Plan Document
2006 - 2026

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

June 2008

Purpose of the Summary

This booklet outlines the main policies of the recently adopted Core Strategy for the Dartmoor National Park, which was adopted by the National Park Authority in April 2008. It also explains the background to its production, places the strategy in its local, regional and national planning context and provides links to where more detailed information on the Core Strategy and other planning documents can be found.

Introduction

The planning system is a formal process that is used to make decisions on the nature and level of future development in both urban and rural areas. It seeks to protect all that is valued and best about a particular area, whilst making provision for society's future needs. In doing so, it has to balance views that are often conflicting and it has to make difficult decisions.

Policy plans provide the basis for making those decisions. The processes and procedures for producing those plans have changed on a number of occasions since the first *Town and Country Planning Act* in 1947, most recently through the 2004 *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act*.

Under the 2004 Act, *Regional Spatial Strategies* are required to be prepared for each English region to set out the main principles for guiding development decisions. The Regional Spatial Strategies are produced by Regional Planning Bodies.

At a more local level, and sitting below the Regional Spatial Strategy, a *Local Development Framework* is produced by each local planning authority. The Local Development Framework is a set of planning documents, with the principal document being the Core Strategy.

The 2004 Act states that the promotion of sustainable development is the main objective of the planning system. In simple terms it is development that helps protect the environmental qualities and the natural resources of an area, maintains social and community vitality and sustains economic opportunities so that these qualities, benefits and opportunities will be available to others in the future. The 2004 Act also introduces the wider context of spatial planning and promotes a more positive role for planning than just the control of development. Spatial planning is defined as a process of managing development that works by:

♦ understanding places, how they function, how they relate; and how good design can help make better places;

♦ putting the focus on managing change to secure the best achievable quality of life for all in the community without wasting scarce resources or damaging the environment;

♦ encouraging the local planning authority and other agencies to work together and coordinate their activities to achieve the best outcomes.

Dartmoor National Park Authority
Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2006 - 2026 Adopted Version Summary
June 2008

1

The Dartmoor National Park Authority is the local planning authority for the whole of the 368 sq miles (953 sq km) of the Dartmoor National Park. It therefore produces the Local Development Framework for the National Park area. Working within planning legislation, central government advice and the policies and proposals in the Regional Spatial Strategy, and Local Development Framework, the National Park Authority makes the decisions on planning applications (and also proposals involving listed buildings, Conservation Areas, advertisements, etc).

What is the Dartmoor National Park Core Strategy?

The Dartmoor National Park Authority adopted its Core Strategy in April 2008. It sets out the overall vision and long term planning strategy for development in the Dartmoor National Park. It covers the period from 2006 to 2026 and:

♦ provides a vision for development in Dartmoor National Park, in line with the purposes of national park designation as set out in national legislation and the need to foster local economic and social welfare;

♦ contains strategic policies to look after the environment, and sustain the economic and social well-being of Dartmoor's local communities;

♦ helps in providing for those local needs that emerge from the Sustainable Community Strategies that cover the National Park; (these are produced by each local strategic partnership);

♦ contains a Key Diagram to show how settlements relate to each other and to places outside the National Park.

Other planning documents in the Dartmoor National Park Authority's Local Development Framework

The Core Strategy provides the framework for the preparation of the other more detailed planning documents in the Local Development Framework. Work on them will begin in 2008 and they will comprise:

♦ *Generic Development Management and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document*

♦ *Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document*

♦ *Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document*

A further document called the *Statement of Community Involvement* has already been produced. It describes how the Authority will involve the public and other bodies in the preparation of the Local Development Framework and the determination of planning applications.

What are National Park purposes and how do they relate to sustainable development?

Central to the Dartmoor National Park Authority in exercising it planning powers are the two statutory purposes of National Park designation. They were originally set out in the *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949*. The purposes were amended by the *Environment Act 1995* to the following:

> *to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage (of the National Parks); and*

> *to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities (of the National Parks) by the public.*

The 1995 Act also states that, in pursuing National Park purposes, National Park Authorities have a duty:

> *to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities (within the National Park) by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters.*

Through integration of the two National Park purposes and the socio-economic duty, sustainability principles underpin the work of the National Park Authority in its planning and National Park management functions.

What does the Regional Spatial Strategy say about National Parks?

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West contains a policy (ENV3 - 'Protected Landscapes') that reflects the purposes and duty of National Park designation. The policy makes it clear that the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage will be given priority over other considerations in making decisions on development proposals. It goes on to say that development will only be provided for where it would conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage or promote the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of Dartmoor National Park or where it would foster the social or economic well-being of the communities within the National Park and is compatible with the pursuit of National Park purposes.

The policy has been uncontroversial and it is expected to be included in the final strategy. It provides the fundamental foundation for the policies of the Core Strategy.

What does the Core Strategy contain?

The Core Strategy begins with a vision statement for the Dartmoor National Park at the end of the plan period. It highlights the distinctive characteristics and special qualities of Dartmoor National Park and points to the role of planning in sustaining those qualities.

Dartmoor National Park Authority
Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2006 - 2026 Adopted Version Summary
June 2008

3

A spatial vision for the Dartmoor National Park

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.

Dartmoor National Park Authority
Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2006 - 2026 Adopted Version Summary
June 2008

4

Core Strategy policies

The Core Strategy contains 24 policies and the scope of each policy is set out below. Essentially, development opportunity will continue to be restricted in the interests of conserving Dartmoor's special qualities. However, development needed in pursuit of National Park purposes or the socio economic well-being of the National Park's communities will normally be supported. Compared with the policies in its forerunner, the *Dartmoor National Park Local Plan*, opportunities for open market housing under the Core Strategy will be far more restricted and there is a much more determined focus on providing affordable housing to meet identified local needs. The retention and enhancement of local services and facilities is supported in the strategy, which also seeks to support enhanced local employment opportunity.

While it is not the function of this booklet to provide a summary of each policy, some policies are worthy of particular mention. Policy COR1 sets out a range of criteria against which development proposals will be assessed to see how far they embody sustainable development principles.

The settlement strategy is set out in policy COR2. It has three tiers and appropriate levels and types of acceptable development are set out for each tier.

They are:

Local Centres
♦ Ashburton
♦ Buckfastleigh
♦ Chagford
♦ Horrabridge
♦ Moretonhampstead
♦ Princetown
♦ South Brent
♦ Yelverton

Rural Settlements
♦ Belstone
♦ Bittaford
♦ Bridford
♦ Buckfast
♦ Cheriton Bishop (Cheriton Cross)
♦ Christow
♦ Cornwood
♦ Dean/Dean Prior
♦ Dousland
♦ Drewsteignton
♦ Dunsford
♦ Hennock
♦ Holne
♦ Ilsington
♦ Liverton
♦ Lustleigh
♦ Lydford
♦ Manaton
♦ Mary Tavy
♦ Meavy
♦ North Bovey
♦ North Brentor
♦ Peter Tavy
♦ Postbridge
♦ Scorriton
♦ Shaugh Prior

- ♦ Sourton
- ♦ South Tawton
- ♦ South Zeal
- ♦ Sticklepath
- ♦ Throwleigh,
- ♦ Walkhampton
- ♦ Whiddon Down,
- ♦ Widecombe-in-the-Moor.

Elsewhere in the Dartmoor National Park.

The **Local Centres** are the larger towns and villages in Dartmoor and are expected to provide for the development needs of the Centres themselves and their rural hinterlands. The bulk of new housing development, which the draft Regional Spatial Strategy sets as a guide at 50 units per year for Dartmoor National Park, will be located in these settlements. The Centres will be the main locations for business development and commercial activity.

The **Rural Settlements** will host small scale development to serve needs arising from within the settlement itself and its parish. The emphasis will be on sustaining the vigour of local enterprises and maintaining services and facilities while providing for limited amounts of affordable housing to meet identified local needs.

Elsewhere in the Dartmoor National Park

, the focus will be to provide for development needed for agricultural, forestry and other rural enterprises that are required to be based in the countryside, essential utilities or services provision and development which will help to pursue National Park purposes.

Wherever development takes place, the potential offered by the re-use of land that that is already developed should always be considered.

There isn't the space here to give details of all twenty-four policies in the Core Strategy, but the list on page 7 gives a flavour of the subject matter dealt with in each of the policies.

The Strategy has to be monitored to see how effective it is in promoting sustainable development and how well the Strategy's aims are being implemented. A Key Diagram is also included, showing some of the main elements of the Strategy in a graphic way, on page 8.

The Core Strategy has two annexes - one is a list of the *Dartmoor National Park Local Plan: First Review 1995-2011* policies that have been superseded by the Core Strategy; the other is a glossary of planning terms.

Dartmoor National Park Authority
Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2006 - 2026 Adopted Version Summary
June 2008

6

Sustainable development and settlement strategy

Policy COR1
Sustainable development principles

Policy COR2
Settlement strategy

Environment and heritage

Policy COR3
Protection of Dartmoor's special environmental qualities

Policy COR4
Design and sustainable development principles

Policy COR5
Protecting the historic built environment

Policy COR6
Protecting Dartmoor's archaeology

Policy COR7
Providing for the conservation of Dartmoor's varied plant and animal life and geology

Policy COR8
Meeting the challenge of climate change

Policy COR9
Protection from and prevention of flooding

Policy COR10
Providing for renewable energy

Policy COR11
Retaining tranquillity

Social well-being

Policy COR12
Meeting the need for local infrastructure, community facilities and public services

Policy COR13
Providing for high standards of accessibility and design

Policy COR14
Meeting the infrastructure requirements of new development

Policy COR15
Providing for limited new housing to meet local needs

Policy COR16
Meeting the needs of vulnerable groups and those with special needs

Policy COR17
Promoting increased health and well-being

Economy and transport

Policy COR18
Providing for sustainable economic growth

Policy COR19
Dealing with proposals for tourism development

Policy COR20
Providing for agricultural diversification

Policy COR21
Dealing with development and transport issues in a sustainable way

Prudent use of resources
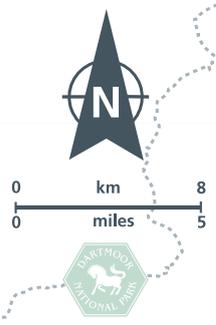
Policy COR22
Provision for minerals development

Policy COR23
Dealing with waste issues

Policy COR24
Protecting water resources from depletion and pollution

Key Diagram

Mid Devon

West Devon

Teignbridge

South Hams

Settlements and places:

Okehampton, Sticklepath, South Tawton, Cheriton Cross, A30, M5, Exeter, South Zeal, Belstone, Whiddon Down, Drewsteignton, Dunsford, A386, Sourton, Chagford, A382, Throwleigh, Bridford, Christow, Moretonhampstead, Lydford, North Brentor, North Bovey, Hennock, B3212, Manaton, Lustleigh, A380, Exmouth, Mary Tavy, Postbridge, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Bovey Tracey, A38, Newton Abbot, Peter Tavy, Liverton, Ilsington, B 3357, B 3387, Tavistock, Princetown, Torbay, Horrabridge, Walkhampton, Ashburton, Dousland, Buckfast, Yelverton, Meavy, Buckfastleigh, Holne, Shaugh Prior, Scorriton, Dean/Dean Prior, Torquay, A 386, South Brent, Totnes, Cornwood, Ivybridge, Bittaford, A38, Plymouth, Dartmouth, Kingsbridge

Legend

- ✳ Local Centres
- ▲ Rural Settlements
- ⬤ Key Service Centres outside the National Park
- ⬌ Major travel movements
- Dartmoor National Park Boundary
- Section 3 Moor and Heath
- District Boundary
- ⬤ Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs) – Purple Moor Grass & Rhôs Pasture, Neutral Grassland.

Other SNAs in Dartmoor National Park, not shown on the Key Diagram, are:
- Principal river networks
- Woodland

Scale: 0 – 8 km / 0 – 5 miles

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Dartmoor National Park Authority
Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2006 - 2026 Adopted Version Summary
June 2008

8

The Dartmoor National Park Authority's web site contains a wide range
of information on planning, National Park management and other
National Park topics including the full text and policies of the Core Strategy.
The address of the web site is www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk
and the *Core Strategy* can be downloaded from the site.
Hard copies of the Core Strategy are obtainable from the
Dartmoor National Park Authority,
Parke, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot,
Devon TQ13 9JQ
at a cost of £7.50 plus postage and packaging.

Links to other useful web sites
Details of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West
can be found on the Regional Assembly's web site at: www.southwest-ra.gov.uk
The National Park boundary covers parts of the areas
of three District Councils and one Borough Council.
Those Authorities are the local planning authorities in their areas outside
Dartmoor National Park and they produce their own Local Development Frameworks.
Here are the relevant web sites to find information about their LDFs:
Mid Devon District: www.middevon.gov.uk
South Hams District: www.southhams.gov.uk
Teignbridge District: www.teignbridge.gov.uk
West Devon Borough: www.westdevon.gov.uk
The Department of Communities and Local Government is the
principal Government body overseeing planning in England.
You can access national planning policies and other advice on its web site:
www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding
There is a Government Office for the South West
which has offices located in Bristol and Plymouth:
www.gosw.gov.uk/gosw/planninghome

The Planning Portal has links to a wide range of planning information
and you can submit a planning application on-line: www.planningportal.gov.uk

Planning Aid is a service provided for people and communities that need
professional advice on planning matters: www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

The Planning Inspectorate determines planning appeals and undertakes
the independent examinations of regional spatial strategies and
development plan documents: www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/pins/index.htm