

RESPONSE TO
DARTMOOR LOCAL PLAN 2018-2036
(THE LOCAL PLAN/THE PLAN)
EXAMINATION

MATTER 2
ISSUE 4

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Matter 2

Issue 4

Q6 *"Does the spatial strategy strike the right balance between conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park, whilst positively addressed the socio-economic issues it faces? Would the spatial strategy and related policies provide clear guidelines to direct development to the most suitable and sustainable locations?"*

Government policy in the Framework is that:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.' (paragraph 172)

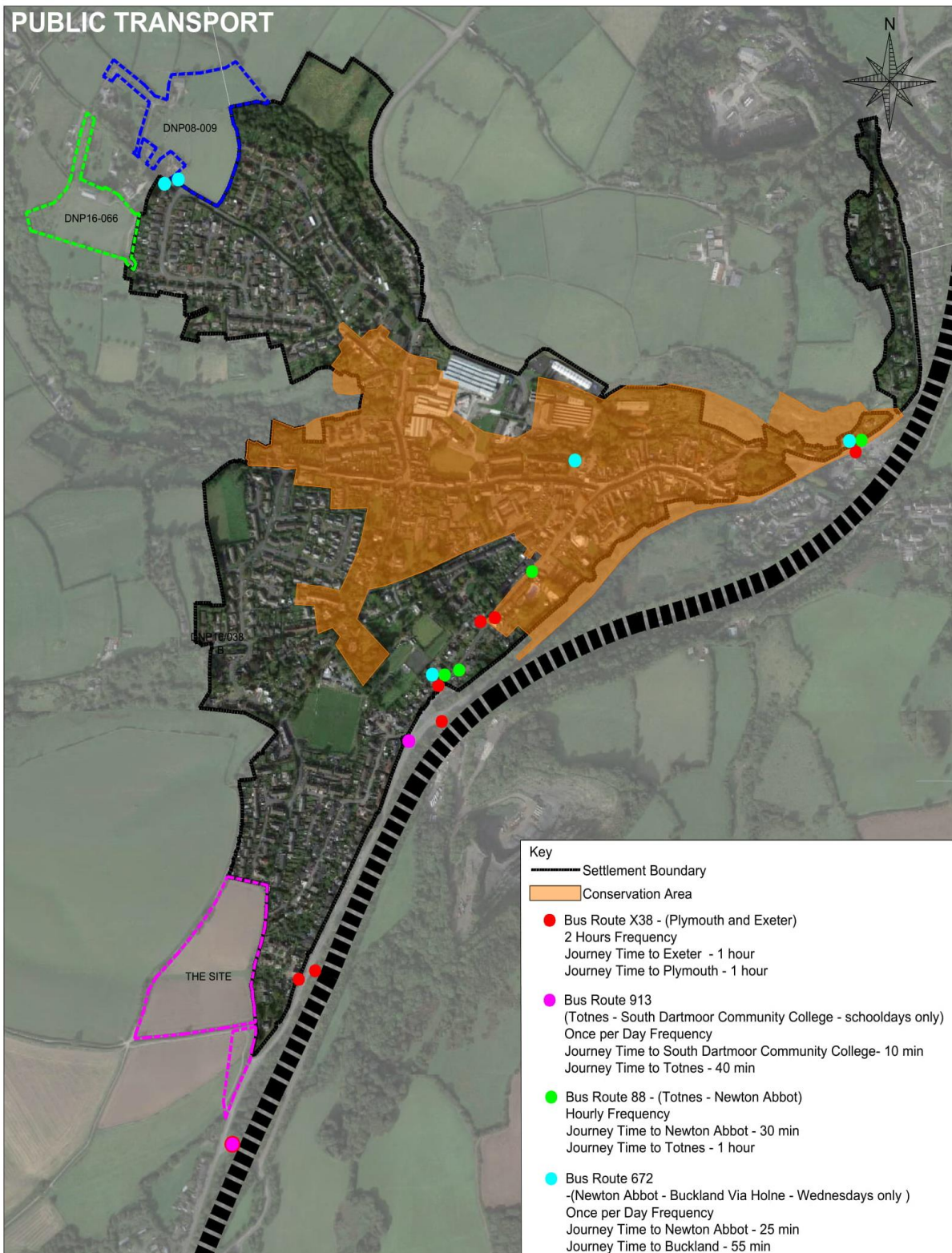
A key characteristic of Dartmoor National Park is that it is bounded to the north by the A30, and the A38 to the south – the two main arteries of economic growth and distribution in Devon and Cornwall. As a result most of the larger settlements within the DNP, particularly those that have a good and robust number of jobs, are located on the periphery of the DNP (Buckfastleigh being a good example of such a settlement).

Often the landscape qualities and scenic beauty of the DNP has already been diminished in such locations (by the relationship to these major arteries) particularly those parts of the settlement that are located close to these trunk roads. These arteries also have a detrimental impact upon tranquillity and the ability to appreciate the scenic beauty of the DNP.

Thus, in order to protect the scenic beauty of the DNP, the spatial strategy and related policies should be amended to place a greater emphasis upon settlements such as Buckfastleigh (as opposed to elsewhere within the DNP).

Such a strategy has wider acceptance within Government policy (paragraphs 102, 103 and 11 of the Framework in particular) since the A38 is a major public transport corridor and therefore a settlement such as Buckfastleigh benefits from accessibility to higher order settlements in a sustainable manner.

Buckfastleigh Public Transport Links



Extract from Development Brief for Timbers Road
(Submitted as part of Reg 19 Consultation dated 22/10/2019)

These attributes enable economic and housing growth needs to be met in a manner that minimises any adverse impacts upon the landscape and scenic beauty of the DNP (NPPF paragraph 172); and that protects and supports those sustainable transport modes that serve the DNP area (NPPF paragraphs 102 and 103), thereby carrying out plan-making in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11.

The spatial strategy should therefore be amended to place a greater and clearer emphasis upon accommodating growth on the A38 corridor (at settlements such as Buckfastleigh). The role of Chagford, Horrabridge, Mortonhampstead, Princetown and Yelverton should be downgraded since it's the proposed allocations at those locations (which are more centrally related to the DNP and offset from the A38 artery) have greater impact upon the landscape and scenic beauty of the DNP than, for example, a site closely related to the A38 at Buckfastleigh.

Q7 "Would a modification be required for soundness to restrict opportunities in Rural Settlements to new or improved small scale employment sites and to ensure consistency with paragraph 5.2.4 of the Plan?"

Yes

Q8 "Overall, is the Plan's general approach to new housing, employment and tourism development, as set out in SPs and other policies of the Plan consistent with paragraph NPPF 116?"

No – for the reasons set out at Q6 a greater and clearer/stricter emphasis should be placed on meeting housing and employment needs at locations in a manner that is well related to the A38, and on sites that have a limited visual relationship with the wider DNP area (such as at Buckfastleigh).