

Dartmoor Local Plan – Modifications Consultation

Buckfastleigh Sites – FAQs

This list of FAQs has been written by DNPA in anticipation of the potential questions the community may have around the Modifications consultation and the sites in Buckfastleigh. We hope this will help you understand the background to this modification as you consider any comments you may wish to make.

Why is the land at Holne Road being deleted from the Local Plan?

Land identified for housing in the Local Plan must be demonstrated to be deliverable. The Land at Holne Road is identified in the current Local Plan and was intended to be carried forward in the new Plan. A planning application was submitted on the site (0452/18 - residential development for up to 30 dwellings). It was considered by the Development Management Committee in September 2020 – the report recommending refusal is online.

The application was refused. Two fundamental issues with the proposal were:

- the application was not going to deliver affordable housing on site - the application was not supported by appropriate information regarding viability, though strongly indicated that a meaningful on-site affordable housing contribution was unachievable.
- the application was not supported by appropriate information in respect of the Habitat Regulations, in order for DNPA as competent authority to conclude no likely significant effect on the South Hams SAC (Special Area of Conservation).

In essence the nil on-site affordable housing contribution meant the proposal is failing to deliver basic policy requirements – the principle which justified the site being identified for development in a National Park. In the absence of affordable housing it is concluded that there are no overriding reasons to approve a development which may impact upon the SAC; the test of IROPI (Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest) is not met.

For this reason it is considered that, in the context of the Local Plan review, it cannot be demonstrated that the allocated site BCK2/Proposal 7.6(2) (Holne Road) is deliverable and should therefore be removed from the Plan.

Why is an alternative site needed?

The Local Plan must identify enough land to meet the local housing need for the National Park. We do not have to meet a housing number given to us by government, but work out locally how much housing is needed to meet local needs. We also negotiate with our neighbouring authorities so that general housing need for the area is met outside the National Park. The Inspector has been clear as part of the Examination process that, with the Holne Road site removed, there is no longer enough housing land to meet local needs, and an alternative site is needed.

What is proposed at Timbers Road?

The land identified has the potential to deliver around 70 homes. It should include not less than 45% affordable housing (which may be a mix of rented and shared ownership, depending on what the

local need is). It will need to provide an appropriate highway access from Plymouth Road and other pedestrian links from the site. It will need to be supported by evidence such as bat survey work and understand and address any issues with surface water drainage. It must be consistent with the policies in the new Plan, for example by delivering biodiversity net gain, energy efficient and accessible homes, and electric vehicle charging points.

What are the detailed plans?

The Local Plan identifies the land for a particular use and sets any specific requirements for the site. A [Site Development Brief](#) provides further guidance on issues, opportunities and requirements for the site. Detailed designs would be carried out as part of a future planning application, at which stage there is opportunity for the community to comment on the details of the development.

When will the development happen?

The Local Plan sets out that housing development can only come forward where the need is evidenced by a Housing Needs Assessment. This means we do not see speculative market housing development in the National Park, and that sites only come forward in response to an affordable need. For this reason there is no set point at which the development would happen. There is also the potential that the site could come forward in more than one phase.

How has the decision been made to propose Timbers Road?

A detailed paper has been prepared which sets out a discussion around the deletion of the Holne Road site, and an appraisal of the two alternative sites which have been considered; land at Oaklands Road and land at Timbers Road. The paper was considered by the Inspector, and Members discussed it in detail at meetings of the Local Plan Steering Group and Planning and Sustainable Development Working Panel. It was also discussed in outline at the Authority meeting on the 30th although a formal decision was not made at that point due to being in the pre-election period.

The paper addresses the range of issues relating to the two alternative sites; their comparative merits, issues and opportunities.

Why aren't we consulting on different site options?

A site options consultation was carried out in autumn 2017. The site options were public at this stage and a series of public meetings were held, hosted by Town/Parish Councils, which enabled the public to input to the site options. Included in this was a meeting with Buckfastleigh Town Council, well attended by the public, at which DNPA officers listened to the views of the public and councillors. This led to the list of sites which were then included in the first draft (Regulation 18) Local Plan. There were also public events held by the site promoters in relation to both the Oaklands Road and Timbers Road sites.

With the opportunity to comment on these sites previously, this has been taken into account in informing the choice of the alternative, and no additional options consultation is needed. The Local Plan is currently at examination and the focus is upon Modifications which achieve a sound Plan and moving towards adoption.

Could a site in another settlement be considered instead?

Buckfastleigh will continue to have an affordable housing need and is identified as a Local Centre in the Plan. Without another site in the settlement the future affordable need for the community may not be met. The Inspector has been clear in her direction that an alternative site is needed in Buckfastleigh.

Could a site outside the National Park be considered instead?

The Local Plan must identify enough land to meet the local housing need for the National Park. We do not have to meet a housing number given to us by government, but work out locally how much housing is needed to meet local needs. The Inspector has been clear as part of the Examination process that, with the Holne Road site removed, there is no longer enough housing land to meet local needs in the National Park, and an alternative site is needed in the Dartmoor Local Plan.

How do I comment or find out more about this consultation?

Visit our website to find out more – there is an online form to complete (which makes it easier for our small team to deal with responses), or you can email or write to us. We will also be holding an online drop-in for the Buckfastleigh sites 16.00-18.00 on the 23 June 2021.

What happens to my comments?

After the consultation the comments received by DNPA regarding the proposed Modifications are submitted for consideration by the Inspector (and will be published online). The Inspector will take these comments into account in preparing her final report into the Examination.

Contact Us

For further information on the consultation visit www.dartmoor.gov.uk/localplanreview

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