

# Planning Statement

## Wonford Community Wellbeing Hub

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#### **1. INTRODUCTION & BRIEF**

- 1.1 Space & Place Architects, have been instructed by Exeter City Council to write the Planning Statement for the proposed development and improvement of the Community and Wellbeing Hub at Wonford.
- 1.2 The site is located within the jurisdiction of Exeter City Council of who in this case is the developer and Local Authority. For ease of reference the Local Authority is referred to as the 'Council' or 'Applicant' in reference to its role as landowner/developer and as the 'LPA' in respect of its planning function.
- 1.3 The current proposals comprise retention and refurbishment of the Sports hall and Community Hall, the demolition of the central block (comprising gym, Phoenix Centre and outdoor change facilities) and the construction of a café/hub, gym, studio and ancillary facilities.
- 1.4 Pre-application consultation is encouraged by Government and there has been considerable engagement with the public/stakeholders since 2019. A pre-application was submitted in January 2024. The consultation with the LPA has been constructive and broadly supportive of the proposal.
- 1.5 There has also been liaison between the Applicant and Sport England. The proposals have been considered against Sport England Guidance. There is an ongoing technical review with Sport England technical team and the proposal has been submitted to Sport England for a Pre-Application Advise (See Appendix B - GP PRE APP Wonford Sports Centre).

#### **2. SITE & SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The site and surroundings are described in more detail in the Design & Access Statement but in summary the existing site comprises:
  - Sports hall and ancillary facilities
  - Community Hall and Phoenix Centre (Youth Club)
  - Outdoor changing facilities to serve the Playing Fields (not in use)
  - Car-park

The existing sports centre It is surrounded on North and West side by residential development, on the East side by the Lidl supermarket and the Well pharmacy. To the south the site overlooks the Playing Fields of Lidwell Valley Park.

- 2.2 There are no Heritage Assets on the application site, but close by are Wonford Hospital, gatehouse and boundary walls which are all listed Grade 11. Whilst not a formal heritage asset Ludwell Valley Park, which borders the application site, is a wildlife-focused public park comprising grazing and arable fields, in addition to wildflower meadows, woodland together with an historic orchard. The park is owned by Exeter City Council and managed by Devon Wildlife Trust.
- 2.3 The application site does not fall within a conservation area. The nearest conservation area being some distance away west of the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital site and to the north at Heavitree Park.
- 2.4 **Planning History** (Available records)
  - **Wonford Sports Centre** – Application reference 87/0033/RES allowed for the extension of Wonford Sports Centre for a 4No. courts sports hall. The case officer found that the development would sustain the use of the additional facilities for playing sport and that the broad position of the proposed extension was not considered to cause harm to openness.
  - **Lidl Supermarket** – Demolition of the existing Lidl supermarket and attendant pharmacy concession to provide a new replacement Lidl supermarket and stand-alone pharmacy together with associated car park (14/4855/FUL).
  - **Wonford Green Surgery** – planning permission for a new detached surgery was granted under reference 91/0210/OUT whilst a two-storey extension was approved under reference 03/2037/FUL in 2004.
- 2.5 **Planning use** – the existing planning use of the various sports facilities would be Class E(d) (indoor sport, recreation or fitness) previously Class D2\_Assembly & Leisure and Class F.2 (local community hall or meeting place).
- 2.6 The current proposals under consideration do not involve the introduction of new Use Classes into the area.

### 3. THE CURRENT SITUATION WITH LOCAL SPORTS PARTICIPATION

- 3.1 Sport and leisure are seen as essential to strengthening communities and improving health outcomes through more active lifestyles, whereas a lack of participation in sport and high levels of deprivation result in poor health outcomes. The initial analysis produced by the Sport England Delivery Pilot for Exeter City Council has highlighted areas which are poorly served by appropriate, accessible and sustainable sports facilities, which in several cases can be aligned with areas of higher deprivation within the council's jurisdiction and Physical Activity Target Areas including Wonford.  
Although Exeter is one of the most active towns in England (79,2% of people participate in 150+ minutes of sport and physical activity per week), the socio-demographic profile heavily represents those groups who tend to be the most active namely the younger demographic and those with higher social mobility etc. However, some areas in the city, like Wonford, are amongst the most deprived in the county and in these areas physical activity levels will be significantly lower.
- 3.2 The Physical Activity Target Areas Map, part of the Physical Activity Strategy, considers Wonford as one of the top priority areas of Exeter with most risk of inactivity and poor health.

3.3 The ward is the most deprived and least active in the city. With c. 7000 living nearby and inactivity levels around 50% (Local Active Lives 2024) the case for the investment & redevelopment is clear, and the impact for local people will be significant.

The Facilities Planning Modelling work clearly highlights the need for this sports hall and the benefit to the overall supply with an improved facility.

In addition, the centre plays an important part to the citywide offering as it provides a hub for a number of key sports and clubs in the city:

- Inclusive Exeter – the hub plays home to a range of sports and activities delivered by local cultural and faith groups including Zumba, badminton, volleyball. This has been a flagship project within the Live and Move place partnership
- Wheelchair Sports – the improved facility will enable the Exeter Otters (wheelchair basketball) to continue to use Wonford as their home and extend their offer to fixtures and competition
- Pickleball – there is a thriving pickleball programme offering training and matchplay, a fast-growing sport

The new community hub will offer a much more inclusive, welcoming and higher quality gym provision. With the RDUHC hospital within 500 yards of the site, there is opportunity to grow and scale the gym offering to large number of staff (c.11,000). This has been tested through various workplace support and This Girl Can packages to help support those identifying as inactive.

The hub will attract a large number of people using the Green Circle to walk and cycle across the city, for both leisure and commuting. The new hub will offer a place to stop, use the café and connect with others. This provides an excellent opportunity to promote the activity offering within the sports and community spaces to residents walking or cycling past.

We see this as a true project to realise the Uniting the Movement strategy as its priority is absolutely on local need and the people of Wonford, whilst also playing a part in the wider city sporting offering.

There is potential to bring other clubs to the site, working alongside local NGBs, to use Wonford as their home and connect to the local residents.

#### **4. THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

4.1 There are a great many detailed policies in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), as well as in the adopted and emerging local development plans to which regard must be had in the application determination process and these are summarised at Appendix 1.

4.2 These policies include: improvement to existing sports and recreation provision; development and open space; sustainability; built development upon open space; new car parking provision, as well as; access and road safety; flood control; archaeology; landscape conservation; protection of trees/hedgerows/biodiversity or ecology; contamination; and payment of planning obligations/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

#### **5. THE PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Regular interactions with the planning authority, statutory and other non-statutory bodies, ensured compliance with all relevant regulations and design guidance.

Below is the list of meetings held during RIBA Stage 3:

31<sup>th</sup> January 2024 - Submission of Pre-application

09<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Call with Case officer to discuss scheme

11<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Meeting with Case officer to discuss scheme  
16<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Meeting with Case officer to discuss Flood risk  
27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Meeting with Case officer to discuss validation list  
21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 - Consultation with ECC Waste Department  
22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 - Formal request from Case officer to consult the DPR Design West  
26<sup>th</sup> March 2024 - Consultation with ECC Public and Green Spaces Department  
24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 - Consultation with design out of Crime officer  
20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 - Consultation with ECC Net Zero Team  
26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 - Consultation with Design West  
10<sup>th</sup> May 2024 - Submission of Sport England Pre-application (Advise included in the Appendixes).  
06<sup>th</sup> June 2024 - Meeting with LPA to discuss outcome of DRP.  
24<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – meeting with Sport England to discuss Planning submission matters

The Consultation with the LPA helped to address in the design technical issues such as the surface water risk for the site.

As the design includes the refurbishment of existing facilities, advice from the LPA was that the scheme doesn't need to be BREEAM certified but the design needs to address the BREEAM standards as an alternative way of comply to **Policy CP15**.

**Policy CC6** introduces the requirement to measure and to reduce embodied carbon emissions associated with the development. To demonstrate how sustainable is the design, the proposal should include an analysis of the energy usage reduction, analysis of the embodied carbon for the materials, BRUKL calculation, compliance with Building Regulations Part L, installation of PV panels, connection to District Heating Network.

## 6. CONSIDERATION OF THE POLICY CONTEXT & DISCUSSION OF THE PLANNING ISSUES

6.1 Below we discuss the planning policy background under the generic topic headings of 'Core Principles, 'Community and Sport facilities', 'Sustainable Development', 'Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity'.

### **Core Principles**

The development adheres to **Policy AP1** by being designed and located to raise the quality of the urban and natural environment and reduce the need for car travel. The site offers safe and convenient access by public transport, walking, and cycling.

**Policy AP2** emphasizes prioritizing development on previously-developed land and within existing centres. This proposal fits within this framework, as it retains the existing Sports Hall and Community Hall and builds the new extension within the existing footprint. By leveraging the existing location, the development efficiently meets community needs while aligning with sustainable planning principles.

The development addresses all relevant factors outlined in **Policy DD25**. The proposal incorporates and enhances the existing halls, creating a cohesive design that supports the various uses within a modern and attractive building. The addition of the café/hub and the multi-purpose studio provides further flexibility, addressing the various needs of the community. The design ensures that the scale, massing, and height of buildings, extensions, and other structures relate well to the site, surroundings, and human scale.

Additionally, the design follows the principles of the ‘Secured by Design’ initiative, ensuring a safe and secure environment by creating environmental quality and a sense of ownership, providing natural surveillance, and offering suitable and managed open space that minimizes crime and antisocial behaviour.

The existing Wonford Sport and Community Centre is well served by public transport (several bus stops are located on Burnhouse Lane) and by a good cycling and pedestrian network. The proposal safeguards the existing pedestrian and cycle routes, giving priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and users of public transport over private motorized vehicles, creating a more accessible site. Cycle parking is provided next to the entrance and the green circle route. The existing access road and car park will be retained.

### **Community and Sport Facilities**

**Policy CP10** and **Policy DD23** protect existing community facilities and support improvements that “make a positive contribution towards safeguarding and creating sustainable communities, promote social inclusion, and reduce deprivation.” The proposed development is therefore compliant, as the community will benefit from the refurbishment of the existing sports provision, while the new hub will contribute to creating a healthy community.

The development will retain and refurbish the existing Sports Hall, creating a more accessible and flexible facility that will benefit the local community and, at the same time, the wider catchment area. In particular, the hall will be used by the wheelchair basketball team.

### **Sustainable development**

There is now a “presumption in favour of sustainable development” and such development” should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking” (NPPF, paragraphs 14 & 187). According to the NPPF “sustainable development is about positive growth”, emphasising that “planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to improve the places in which we live our lives” (Ministerial ‘Foreword’ to the NPPF). There are ‘three dimensions’ to sustainable development: ‘economic’, ‘social’ and ‘environmental’ and these ‘mutually dependent’ roles (which ought not to be pursued in isolation) include: making provision for growth; promoting new investment; supporting communities by providing the infrastructure they need; improving quality of life; supporting local strategies to improve health outcomes of residents; whilst making best use of previously developed land; and protecting the environment (NPPF, paragraphs 7, 8, 17 & 111). Sport and recreation are specifically identified in the NPPF (see paragraphs 69 to 73) as making an important contribution to the “health and well-being of communities” and that the Planning System plays an important role in facilitating social interaction by helping the services that the community needs to modernise and develop. An ‘integrated approach’ to delivering the facilities and services which are needed and better sport provision is supported, particularly where it leads to renewal of previously developed land.

‘Good design’, which according to the NPPF goes beyond mere aesthetic considerations, is very strongly encouraged. New development should be carefully integrated into its surroundings, avoid any adverse impact upon the historic environment, as well as upon residential amenity. The NPPF also encourages innovation in design and a mix of uses, in order to create a strong sense of place where the fear of crime does not undermine quality of life. The proposal takes into account the impact of climate change in the new construction and aims to reduce the building's carbon emissions.

The design uses a “fabric first” approach, incorporating improved thermal u-values for the new building. The chosen materials have low carbon emissions. The services are designed to future-proof the switch from gas boilers to heat pumps.

There is already an existing solar panel array located on the Community Hall. The proposal includes an additional PV (photovoltaic) array, based on the feasibility study produced by Exeter City Council.

### **Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity**

The development itself is not located within a Landscape Setting Area but is closely connected to it, as the Playing Fields and Ludwell Valley Park to the south are part of this area. The development presents an opportunity to create a “gateway” into the park by opening the building to views of the park and remodelling the landscape to connect the north of the site to the Green Circle. This design approach enhances the park, achieving a balance between conservation, recreation, and public access.

The landscape strategy considers the site's biodiversity. The BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain) appraisal demonstrates how the development improves biodiversity net gain. The proposal is therefore compliant with the relevant policies because it brings substantial community benefits, has no adverse impact on the natural environment, character, and visual amenity of the area, and does not conflict with the Green Infrastructure framework.

## **7. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 In the light of the above we can summarise the findings and conclude as follows:

- The Applicant has a number of overall strategic objectives to improve the quality of local community facilities and in particular promote healthier lifestyles. Surveys of local sport and leisure facilities provision have revealed significant deficiencies in both the quantity and quality provision and this is given as an important reason for discouraging greater participation. Much of the better-quality existing provision is already at capacity and future planning must take account of significant recent and programmed growth in population. The Applicant acknowledges that making such improvements will require a corporate response with the various arms of local government working together, along with relevant stakeholders, such as sports governing bodies.
- There have been sports and community facilities at Wonford for many decades and making better use of the City’s parks and open spaces are seen as a vital part of the solution to improving provision.
- Meeting the latest requirements of Sport England and relevant sport’s governing bodies is an essential prerequisite for securing their funding and support, so the various elements of the scheme have been designed to accord with their requirements.
- It is anticipated that the energy strategy for the new extension to the Wonford Community Wellbeing Hub building will follow the philosophies set out in the Local Plan and other ‘Development Plan’ policies with for example by using ‘Low or Zero Carbon’ technologies. The proposals will incorporate Photovoltaic panels.
- Creating ancillary facilities to enable the better provision of existing outdoor sports and recreation is also acceptable and this has also been confirmed during consultation with the LPA as the proposal would not result in loss of playing fields and would not harm existing recreational opportunities.
- The proposed extension will sit within the context of a structured landscaping scheme; the pedestrian environment is to be improved; and thought has also been given to providing improved facilities for cyclists.

- Existing car parking is being improved through better layout, surfacing and additional landscaping, so there will be no impact upon openness.
- There are no residents that will be affected by the new leisure facilities, as the closest residential properties are some distance away and wholly or partially screened by the existing building.
- The NPPF explains that there are 3 dimensions ('economic', 'social' and 'environmental') to achieving sustainable development – and all three should figure within the application determination process. Any development that:
  - creates jobs ('economic');
  - helps build communities by providing much needed facilities that contribute to improving health outcomes ('social'); and
  - which generates new investment into the historic environment, whilst reusing previously developed land ('environmental');

should be viewed positively.

- The NPPF also encourages pre-application consultation and engagement as a means of securing better outcomes. In this case there has been considerable consultation with stakeholders including: local people; the operator, the user groups and the relevant sport governing bodies; as well as officers from the LPA. Other key stakeholders (such as Sport England), have responded very positively to the plans.
- After examining the various elements of the scheme against the Government's policy in the NPPF it can be concluded that much of the application content does not constitute 'inappropriate' development. However, in the event that 'very special circumstances' must be demonstrated for any element of the proposal, the Applicant puts forward the need to help meet a shortfall in local provision of sports facilities and deliver stated overall corporate strategic objectives to improve the quality and quantity of community infrastructure.

7.2 In final submission the application promotes a balanced and sustainable new leisure and community development that will:

- Meet the identified leisure and community needs of the area;
- Continue to serve a wide variety of user groups at an established sports, leisure and community destination;
- Provide an enjoyable destination for residents and visitors alike; and
- Help fulfil a number of the Applicant's long-term Strategic Objectives.

7.3 Government policy is predicated upon delivering development that is sustainable and the default answer to applications should be 'yes'. The proposed investment in the facilities at Wonford are a considerable enhancement to the delivery of community infrastructure, encouraging and increasing participation in sport, without impacting upon landscape, heritage assets or residential amenity. The proposals form a coherent whole in planned regeneration of the City Council's jurisdiction and are fully supported by national and 'Development Plan' policy. Accordingly, we trust that the Local Planning Authority will grant the necessary permissions and allow the project to move forward to the benefit of the local community.

## Appendix 1 - Relevant Local Planning Policies

### Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's commitment to a plan-led system of development control. It notes that where the Development Plan contains relevant policies, applications for planning permission should be determined in line with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (NPPF, paragraphs 2 & 11). One such consideration will be whether the plan policies are relevant and up to date. Paragraph 13 of the NPPF reconfirms that Government statements of planning policy are also material considerations which (if relevant) must be taken into account in decisions on planning applications. On occasions Government Policy can be a material consideration that may overtake or supplement Development Plan Policies. At the time of writing, the current Local Policies for this site are listed below:

### Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2012

- **Policy CP10** – Community facilities: Facilities that meet Exeter's community, social, health, welfare, education, spiritual, cultural, leisure and recreation needs will be protected. New and improved community facilities and utilities infrastructure must be provided in a timely manner to meet the needs of new development, make a positive contribution towards safeguarding and creating sustainable communities, promote social inclusion and reduce deprivation.
- **Policy CP12** – Flood risk: The spatial strategy reflects the precautionary approach to flooding and flood risk (...)The Exeter Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will be used to ensure that development avoids areas of higher risk. All development proposals must mitigate against flood risk utilising SUDS where feasible and practical.
- **Policy CP13** – Decentralised energy networks: Decentralised Energy Networks will be developed and brought forward. New development (either new build or conversion) with a floorspace of at least 1,000 square metres, or comprising ten or more dwellings, will be required to connect to any existing, or proposed, Decentralised Energy Network in the locality to bring forward low and zero carbon energy supply and distribution.
- **Policy CP15** – Sustainable Construction: Proposals for development are expected to demonstrate how sustainable design and construction methods will be incorporated. All development must be resilient to climate change (particularly summer overheating) and optimise energy and water efficiency through appropriate design, insulation, layout, orientation, landscaping and materials, and by using technologies that reduce carbon emissions.
- **Policy CP16** – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity: The strategic green infrastructure (GI) network is shown on the key diagram. The Exeter GI network has been identified to protect and enhance current environmental assets and local identity and to provide a framework for sustainable new development. (...) Opportunities to provide green corridors, open space and allotments, to enhance cycling and walking opportunities, to link existing habitats, to incorporate environmental assets and to integrate biodiversity, proposed by the Exeter Green Infrastructure Strategy, will be secured through partnership working, direct implementation and the application of Policy CP18 (see Section 11).

- **Policy CP17** – Design and local distinctiveness: All proposals for development will exhibit a high standard of sustainable design that is resilient to climate change and complements or enhances Exeter’s character, local identity and cultural diversity.

#### **Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 Saved Policies**

- **Policy AP1** – Design and location of development: development should be designed and located to raise the quality of the urban and natural environment and reduce the need for car travel. proposals should be located where safe and convenient access by public transport, walking and cycling is available or can be provided.
- **Policy AP2** – Sequential approach: Priority will be given to meeting development needs on previously-developed land and within existing centres. a sequential approach will be applied to the identification and assessment of new sites for office, housing (see policy h1), retail (see policy s1) and commercial leisure use.
- **Policy L1** – Valley Parks: Measures to enhance the valley parks will be implemented based upon achieving a balance between the aims of conservation, recreation, public access and environmental education. development which would harm existing or potential opportunities for informal recreation in the valley parks will not be permitted.
- **Policy L7** – Local sporting facilities: Development that would result in the loss of sporting facilities which serve a local area will not be permitted if it would harm sports opportunities in the area.
- **Policy L8** – Indoor sport facilities: Indoor sports centre development will be permitted provided that:
  - (i) it will not harm local amenity;
  - (ii) safe and convenient access by public transport, walking and cycling, and by people with disabilities, is available or can be provided and the development:
    - (a) is within or close to the existing shopping centres; or
    - (b) is associated with existing major leisure and recreation facilities; or
    - (c) is part of a large-scale comprehensive development scheme; or
    - (d) is associated with existing or proposed education sites.
- **Policy CS2** – Community Health Services: Community health services will be permitted:
  - (a) in the city, district or local centres; or
  - (b) within a neighbourhood, subject to policy h4, the need in that neighbourhood cannot be met within the city, district or local centres
- **Policy CS5** – Education and training facilities for adults: Education and training facilities for adults will be permitted provided that:
  - (a) safe and convenient access by public transport, walking and cycling is available or can be provided
  - (b) good pedestrian and cycle links are provided to related educational facilities and student accommodation;
  - (c) it will not harm local amenity.
- **Policy CS6** – Community halls: Development that would cause harm to the provision of community space in an area will not be permitted.
- **Policy T1** – Hierarchy of modes of transport: Development should facilitate the most sustainable and environmentally acceptable modes of transport, having regard to the following hierarchy:

1. pedestrians
  2. people with mobility problems
  3. cyclists
  4. public transport users
  5. servicing traffic
  6. taxi users
  7. coach borne visitors
  8. powered two wheelers
  9. car borne shoppers
  10. car borne commercial/ business users
  11. car borne visitors
  12. car borne commuters.
- **Policy T2** – Accessibility criteria: In accordance with the accessibility criteria set out in schedule 1: Non-residential development should be accessible within walking distance and/or by bus or rail to a majority of its potential users
  - **Policy T3** – Encouraging use of sustainable modes of transport: Development should be laid out and linked to existing or proposed developments and facilities in ways that will maximise the use of sustainable modes of transport. proposals should ensure that:
    - (a) all existing and proposed walking and cycle routes are safeguarded or that alternative reasonably convenient routes are provided;
    - (b) suitable cycle parking provision is provided in accordance with the standards set out in schedule 2;
    - (c) where more than 20 people are employed facilities for showering and changing are provided;
    - (d) full account is taken of the needs of bus operation through and alongside new development by the provision of lay-bys, roads and other associated facilities;
    - (e) where appropriate, pedestrian and cycling links are provided to existing or proposed rail stations;
    - (f) the particular needs of people with disabilities are taken into account.
  - **Policy T9** – Access to building by people with disabilities: Proposals for the development, change of use, alteration or extension of non-domestic buildings, particularly those open to the public, will only be permitted if provision is made for safe and convenient access by people with disabilities.
  - **Policy T10** – Car parking standards: Development will not be permitted with more parking than the standards set out in schedule 3 except as part of a phased development, guided by a travel plan and incorporated into a legal agreement. car parking provision should also be made for people with mobility problems in accordance with the standards set out in schedule 4, which will be applied throughout the city.
  - **Policy EN4** – Flood risk: Development will not be permitted if:
    - (a) it would increase the likelihood of flooding
      - (i) by reducing the capacity of, or increasing flows within, a flood plain, or
      - (ii) through the discharge of additional surface water, or
      - (iii) by harming flood defences;
    - (b) it would be at risk itself from flooding;
    - (c) it would require additional public finance for flood defence works;
    - (d) adequate provision is not made for access to watercourses for maintenance;

- (e) it would threaten features of landscape or wildlife importance by reducing the recharge of local water tables.
- **Policy EN5** – Noise: Noise-generating development will not be permitted if it would be liable to increase adversely the noise experienced by the users of existing or proposed noise-sensitive development nearby. Noise-sensitive development will not be permitted if its users would be affected by noise from existing or proposed noise-generating uses unless adequate mitigation works can be implemented to achieve an acceptable environment.
  - **Policy DG1** – Objectives of urban design: Development should:
    - (a) be compatible with the urban structure of the city, connecting effectively with existing routes and spaces and putting people before traffic;
    - (b) ensure that the pattern of street blocks, plots and their buildings (the grain of development) promotes the urban character of Exeter;
    - (c) fully integrate landscape design into the proposal and ensure that schemes are integrated into the existing landscape of the city including its three-dimensional shape, natural features and ecology;
    - (d) be at a density which promotes Exeter's urban character and which supports urban services;
    - (e) contribute to the provision of a compatible mix of uses which work together to create vital and viable places;
    - (f) be of a height which is appropriate to the surrounding townscape and ensure that the height of constituent part of buildings relate well to adjoining buildings, spaces and to human scale;
    - (g) ensure that the volume and shape (the massing) of structures relates well to the character and appearance of the adjoining buildings and the surrounding townscape;
    - (h) ensure that all designs promote local distinctiveness and contribute positively to the visual richness and amenity of the townscape;
    - (i) use materials which relate well to the palette of materials in the locality and which reinforce local distinctiveness.
  - **Policy DG7** – Crime prevention and safety: The design of development should aim to achieve a safe and secure environment. Proposals should:
    - (a) ensure pedestrian routes and public spaces are overlooked and subject to natural surveillance;
    - (b) provide enclosure of properties, so that private spaces are well defined and fulfil the role of defensible space;
    - (c) ensure that lighting is located and designed in such a way as to deter and reduce the fear of crime;
    - (d) ensure that schemes for landscape design, including new planting, do not create opportunities for crime and that, where appropriate, species of plants are used to deter criminal or anti-social behaviour;
    - (e) integrate crime prevention measures in an unobtrusive manner, such that the fear of crime is not raised, and that there is no detrimental effect upon townscape and amenity.

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- **Policy DD1** – Sustainable Development: Development will be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposal is consistent with the principles of sustainable

development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form. Proposals must have regard to:

- (a) the impacts of climate change and the need to achieve a transition to a low carbon economy;
  - (b) contribution to the city's economy;
  - (c) meeting community needs and delivering neighbourhood plans;
  - (d) suitability of location in terms of transport infrastructure and access to facilities;
  - (e) impact on the natural and built environment;
  - (f) contribution to meeting housing need and creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and,
  - (g) conservation and enhancement of the city's historic environment
- **Policy DD20 – Sustainable Movement:** Development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form, should:
    - (a) give priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport over private motorised vehicles;
    - (b) avoid prejudicing the delivery of, and where appropriate contribute to development or improvement of, the primary cycle routes and key local cycle/pedestrian links;
    - (c) provide safe, sufficient and convenient means of access to existing and proposed transport networks, without conflicting with the existing function or safety of those networks;
    - (d) be phased so that early development is as close as possible to existing public transport services, walking and cycle routes, then progress in such a way that bus, walking and cycle routes can be extended into the development as it becomes practical and viable to do so; and,
    - (e) be supported by a travel plan and appropriate travel planning incentives that encourage the use of sustainable forms of movement
  - **Policy DD23 – Other Community Facilities:** All land or buildings in community use, or allocated for community use, will be protected. Any loss of land or buildings in community use will only be permitted where:
    - (a) there is no reasonable prospect of the existing use continuing on a viable basis, nor securing a satisfactory viable alternative community use; or,
    - (b) there are adequate facilities in the area to meet demand; or,
    - (c) the community will benefit from the provision of replacement facilities of equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location provided to a timescale that avoids any significant break in use.
  - **Policy DD24 – Assets of Community Value:** Development involving the loss of an asset of community value listed under the Localism Act will not be permitted unless there is no reasonable prospect of the existing use continuing on a viable basis, nor of securing a satisfactory viable alternative community use, or the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the harm that would result from the loss of the asset.
  - **Policy DD25 – Design Principles:** Planning permission will be granted for development that addresses, where relevant, the following factors:
    - a) creates high quality distinctive places;
    - b) ensures the location, layout and built form complement the surroundings;
    - c) includes a robust and long lasting landscape framework which takes advantage of existing landscape features;

- d) contributes to the provision of a compatible mix of uses which work well together to create vital and viable places;
  - e) retains and refurbishes existing buildings of good townscape value;
  - f) integrates measures to address climate change in ways which contribute to the character and appearance of the scheme;
  - g) contributes to the delivery of the Exeter Green Infrastructure Strategy;
  - h) creates or maintains a high-quality public realm and makes provision, where appropriate, for public art as an integral part of the design;
  - i) ensures that the scale, massing and height of buildings, extensions, and other structures relate well to the site, the surroundings and to human scale;
  - j) adopts contemporary and innovative design solutions where appropriate;
  - k) is visually attractive as a result of good architectural detailing and landscaping;
  - l) uses high quality materials which relate well to materials in the locality;
  - m) retains and protects existing trees of good arboricultural and amenity value and supports the planting of native trees in appropriate locations; and,
  - n) integrates all service, utility, extraction systems and refuse facilities so that they complement the scheme.
- **Policy DD26** – Designing out Crime: Planning permission will be granted for development that creates a safe and secure environment by:
    - (a) taking an integrated approach to design that ensures potential conflicts between security and other objectives are resolved;
    - (b) creating environmental quality and a sense of ownership;
    - (c) providing natural surveillance;
    - (d) achieving safe vehicular and pedestrian access routes;
    - (e) providing suitable and managed open space that minimises crime and antisocial behaviour; and
    - (f) providing effective lighting that reduces crime and fear of crime.
  - **Policy DD29** – Landscape Setting Areas: Development within the Landscape Setting Areas will only be permitted where:
    - (a) there is no harm to the distinctive characteristics and special qualities of the landscape setting of the city and the wider area; and
    - (b) it does not contribute towards the urbanisation of these areas; and
    - (c) it does not contribute towards settlement coalescence between Exeter and Topsham; and
    - (d) it consists of a replacement dwelling or domestic extension or it is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, the rural economy, outdoor recreation, landscape, educational or biodiversity enhancement, or the provision of green infrastructure; or,
    - (e) it delivers strategically important infrastructure identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and it can be demonstrated that there is no suitable alternative site with less harmful impacts and it minimises harm to the Landscape Setting Area.
  - **Policy DD30** – Green Infrastructure: Development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form, must protect or enhance existing green infrastructure and must deliver new green infrastructure in accordance with the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
  - **Policy DD31** – Biodiversity: International Sites (Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar sites) benefit from statutory protection. Development that has an adverse impact on the integrity of International Sites will not be

permitted. Development that is likely to have either a direct or indirect adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) will not be permitted unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh both the impacts on the features of the site and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs. Development that is likely to have either a direct or indirect adverse impact on a County Wildlife Site, Ancient Woodland, a Biodiversity Enhancement Area, or a Regionally Important Geological Site will only be permitted if:

- (a) the need for and benefits of the development is sufficient to outweigh biodiversity and/or geological conservation considerations;
- (b) it can be demonstrated that there is no suitable alternative site with less harmful impacts; and,
- (c) damaging impacts are avoided or kept to a minimum and appropriate mitigation and compensatory measures are implemented.

All development will, where relevant, be required to:

- (a) avoid, mitigate or compensate for harm to biodiversity;
- (b) take steps to avoid affecting protected species and in all cases ensure that disturbance to wildlife is kept to a minimum;

- **Policy DD32 – Local Energy Networks:** Local energy networks are proposed at the following areas:

- a) Monkerton and Hill Barton;
- b) The City Centre, Heavitree Road and Wonford;
- c) Marsh Barton, Matford, and land South of Alphington; and,
- d) In other locations across the City where it is shown that it is feasible and viable to bring forward a local energy network.

Within these areas, all new development (either new build or conversion) with a floorspace of at least 1,000 square metres, or comprising ten or more dwellings, must be constructed to have heating (water and space) systems compatible with the proposed or existing local energy network and include provision for the necessary pipework from those in-building systems up to the appropriate site boundary to allow connection to the network when available.

- **Policy DD33 – Flood Risk:** In areas at risk of flooding, development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposal meets the sequential test and, where appropriate, the exception test.

#### **Exeter City Council Supplementary Planning Documents**

- Draft Planning Obligations SPD 2014
- Sustainable Transport SPD 2013
- Trees and Development SPD 2009

#### **Devon Waste Plan**

- Policy W4: Waste Prevention

#### **Devon County Council Supplementary Planning Document**

- Waste Management and Infrastructure

#### **Other Guidance & Policy (Sport England)**

- Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guide 2010

- Fitness & Exercise Spaces Design Guide 2008
- Sports Hall Design and Layouts Design Guide 2012
- Affordable Sport Centres
- Active Design