

STAVERTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2016-2034

Consultation Draft Version

Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

January 2020

Prepared by Staverton Neighbourhood Plan Group

<https://www.staverton.org/neighbourhoodplan/>

for Staverton Parish Council

<https://www.staverton.org/staverton-parish-council/>

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Foreword

1. The Staverton Neighbourhood Plan aims to help deliver the local community's needs and aspirations, making the parish more and more the place we would like it to be. It has been produced by local volunteers, for and with the support of the Parish Council, based on the collective views of the people who live and work in the parish. If properly prepared it will become part of the statutory development plan for the area, which means that planning decisions should be made in line with its content and policies.
2. Through a series of events and consultations the Steering Group has listened to the community and local organisations on a wide range of issues. Every effort has been made to ensure that the plan fairly reflects local views. We hope that it will influence the well-being, sustainability and preservation of our community to 2034 and beyond.
3. As the plan moves forward it will depend upon local support. We hope that you will agree that it sets out the right vision for Staverton in the future. Electronic copies of the plan and accompanying documents can be found on the parish website at <https://www.staverton.org/neighbourhoodplan/>.
4. The Parish Council would like to thank the members of the Steering Group and pay tribute to their work. We are also grateful for the help and the engagement of many others in the parish without whom it would not have been possible to produce the plan.
5. *We hope that you will support the plan and we look forward to seeing it take effect for the good of Staverton parish and community.*

Signed by the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Group Chairs

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1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Welcome to the plan for the future of Staverton. Shaped by the local community – this is your plan. It covers the whole parish.

What is a neighbourhood plan?

- 1.2 A neighbourhood plan gives a local community a greater say over how its area will develop in the future. It is put together by the local community, tested by independent examination and referendum and ultimately becomes part of the local development plan, helping to guide decisions about development in the area.

How has this plan been prepared?

- 1.3 The plan making process began in September 2016 with approval of the principle by South Hams District Council and the formation of a neighbourhood plan steering group to guide the process locally. Surveys and consultations were carried out during 2017-18 as the plan began to take shape. In particular, a community questionnaire survey was undertaken in early autumn 2017, community consultation days took place in January 2017 and May 2018, and a housing needs survey was conducted early in 2019. Greater detail about the process is set out in the Statement of Consultation which accompanies the plan.

What stage has been reached?

- 1.4 This is the draft version of the plan issued for public consultation over a statutory six week period. When responses to the plan have been analysed and any necessary amendments made it will be submitted to the local planning authority (South Hams District Council) to arrange for its examination prior to a local referendum.

What is the statutory context?

- 1.5 The plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and under the guidance of Staverton Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined in the Act. It has been prepared in line with the regulations and meets the basic conditions, which require that it must:

1. be appropriate having regard to national policies and guidance;
2. pay special regard to listed buildings and conservation areas;
3. contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
4. be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan;
5. be compatible with EU obligations; and
6. meet prescribed conditions and matters.

- 1.6 This plan complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and adopted plans for the area. In particular, it complies with the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (the JLP) with which it shares the same time horizon (2034).
- 1.7 The JLP establishes a basis to create strong and sustainable communities through its policies. In particular Policy TTV25 gives support to the preparation of neighbourhood plans *in sustainable villages*.

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- 1.8 Greater detail of how this plan meets the tests and fits within the wider planning context is set out in the Statement of Basic Conditions which accompanies the plan.

How will the plan be used?

- 1.9 When the plan has been finally approved, it will be “made” and become part of the development plan for the area. This will mean that it will be used alongside other local and national planning policies to help make planning decisions and to guide and manage future development in the area. It will become a reference point for the local planning authority (South Hams District Council), planning inspectors and decision makers of all kinds – investors, developers, funding bodies, the Parish Council, community groups and existing and future residents. Its delivery will be the responsibility of us all.

How will the plan's effectiveness be monitored?

- 1.10 The plan and its policies will be monitored to judge their effectiveness over time. A simple Monitoring Framework accompanies the plan. There may be a need to review the plan (or a part of the plan) in future and regular monitoring will help to assess this.

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2 Local Context, Vision and Objectives

Staverton past, present and future

- 2.1 Staverton parish lies on the north bank of the River Dart in south Devon, about 3 miles upstream from Totnes. Although the busy A38 trunk road and A384 pass along its western and southern boundaries, with Ashburton, Buckfastleigh and Totnes nearby, it is a deeply rural parish. Spread over some 2,100 hectares largely on the fertile south facing slopes of the Dart valley, the parish is home to 717 people (2011 Census).
- 2.2 The parish name derives from a reference to “a village by a stony ford”, that ford being replaced by a substantial bridge in the fifteenth century. The same medieval bridge survives today and is one of the finest in Devon. It still provides entrance to the parish from the south and to nearby Staverton village which lies just above the flood plain of the Dart. As well as Staverton village the parish also includes the village of Landscope on higher ground to the north-west.
- 2.3 In the past cider-making and slate quarrying have been mainstays of the local economy, and the pattern of settlement reflects this, with a wide distribution of small hamlets and farmsteads. The parish church of St Paul de Leon in Staverton village dates back to the fourteenth century, and in the mid-nineteenth century the church of St Matthew at Landscope was added to cater for the growing quarrying community.
- 2.4 Today farming and tourism are the most significant elements of the local economy, with a significant number of people also working from home. In addition to the two churches the parish supports three pubs, two village halls, a primary school, a private prep school, playgrounds, open spaces, allotments, an organic farm shop and a garden centre, each including a cafe, and the Riverford Field Kitchen restaurant. The preserved South Devon Railway also runs through the parish between Totnes and Buckfastleigh, with two minor station stops. Totnes is the nearest area centre to Staverton village, and Ashburton the nearest to Landscope.
- 2.5 To the north west the parish abuts the southern boundary of Dartmoor National Park and the north western part of the parish is generally hilly and more elevated. The parish landscape is incised by a number of small streams and brooks which drain towards the Dart valley in the south. Although (apart from the small piece of Dartmoor) the local landscape is not statutorily protected it is attractive and provides a fine and varied setting for the villages and farms.
- 2.6 There is no single focal point for the parish. Staverton and Landscope each provide some local facilities, with the local primary school based at Landscope. Of particular significance, however, is the area around Staverton Bridge, itself probably the most notable historic feature in the parish, with the former mill buildings and the railway station nearby. The bridge (dating from 1413) is a grade I listed structure and there are also 29 other listed buildings scattered across the parish.
- 2.7 The whole parish lies within the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Landscape Connectivity Zone for the Greater Horseshoe Bat. The western parts of the parish are also with the SAC Sustenance Zone and a hillside near Caddaford is noted as a

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Mitigation Area close to one of the radiotracking flightpaths.

- 2.8 A rich network of footpaths and bridleways criss crosses the parish, linking many of the farms and villages, often more directly than the public highways. These are valuable not only as public routeways but also as features in the landscape and sometimes as wildlife corridors.
- 2.9 The current average house price in Staverton is estimated to exceed £500,000. In 2019 a housing needs survey showed an estimated need for 19 affordable homes to meet local needs.
- 2.10 Riverford Organics and Idverde are the largest employers in the parish but employment opportunities are relatively few and wage levels are below average. This, coupled with the very high house prices, makes it hard for local people, especially the young, to afford to stay. Staverton Parish Council is committed to supporting provision to meet any proven need for affordable housing for local people who would otherwise be unable to live in the parish. The Council will also support the creation of suitable new employment opportunities.
- 2.11 The plan aims to address issues such as these and to continue to involve the local community in making sure that future change and development are for the good of the parish. It seeks to protect and enhance local assets and to foster a vibrant, healthy and prosperous future for Staverton.

Objectives for the plan

- 2.12 The plan recognises that addressing **Climate Change** is of paramount importance and all policies have been written with this in mind. There will be a need to adapt and take on board more stringent guidelines as they are brought forward by government.
- 2.13 Based on the questionnaire survey and local events the following objectives have been established for the plan:
- **Healthy Communities** - to provide facilities that promote a peaceful harmonious community spirit with healthy opportunities for all whilst maintaining the essence of a quiet rural environment.
 - **Housing** – to deliver a varied and balanced mix of high quality homes that meet the needs of current and future residents in a manner that complements the character and identity of this rural parish.
 - **Business and enterprise** – to deliver new and improved employment opportunities to help sustain a vibrant parish community with a balanced demographic profile that attracts and retains young people and working age families.
 - **Design and heritage** – to deliver high quality development and encourage innovative design that is locally sympathetic with due consideration of the heritage of the parish as a whole.
 - **Natural Environment** – to conserve and enhance the natural landscape and biodiversity of the parish, whilst improving green links and access to our green spaces for the enjoyment of current and future residents.

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- **Transport** – to provide an infrastructure that supports both homes and business to thrive and to encourage the development of free flowing, safe and appropriate transport networks.
- **Energy efficiency and flooding** – to deliver new development with high energy efficiency and to encourage the production of energy from a range of appropriate renewable energy sources.

2.14 The plan's vision for Staverton is thus:

Vision for Staverton
***Staverton will be a strong and healthy rural community
meeting its own local needs for homes and jobs
without harming local character or the global environment.***

2.15 In the following chapters the plan deals with each of the above objectives in turn, giving a fuller list of aspirations, describing the local context and setting out relevant policies to address each objective.

2.16 Many of the community's aspirations are beyond the remit of a development plan such as this. A Community Action Plan therefore stands alongside the neighbourhood plan to support and encourage local groups and partner bodies to take relevant activities forward.

2.17 x

3 Healthy Communities

Objective: To provide facilities that promote a peaceful harmonious community spirit with healthy opportunities for all whilst maintaining the essence of a quiet rural environment.

Aspirations:

- a)** We want to encourage a vibrant, cohesive community which enables all parishioners to have a good and harmonious quality of life.
- b)** Our nearness to good local towns and cities is one reason why parishioners enjoy living in Staverton Parish. We would like to preserve and encourage links with these.
- c)** We appreciate the things which people value about Staverton Parish such as supportive community, peace and quiet, community and educational establishments and would like to support and enhance these facilities.
- d)** To support the provision of appropriate levels of new housing in order to help sustain the community and important local facilities such as schools, pubs etc.
- e)** We want to see small-scale organic growth of the existing named settlements and protection of the wider countryside.
- f)** We want policies that ensure development is predominantly in or around the existing villages, hamlets and settlements.
- g)** Local green spaces are a precious asset to be protected. They should also be maintained and improved where necessary or whenever the opportunity arises.

Sustainable communities

- 3.1. Staverton parish, in spite of its scattered settlement pattern, is a cohesive and inclusive community. This plan aims to help maintain and develop that strength through policies designed to enable all local communities to grow strong and healthy. The plan aims to sustain villages and hamlets, maintain and improve local facilities, promote inclusion and enhance connectivity within and beyond the parish.
- 3.2. The sense of place and range of shopping and facilities available in the villages of Staverton and Landscope, together with nearby Dartington village and towns such as Totnes and Ashburton, do much to support the local community. The plan aims to maintain and reinforce these qualities, by focussing the majority of new development in existing settlements, aiming to protect and promote the expansion of existing facilities and encouraging the establishment of new local enterprises.
- 3.3. The villages of Staverton and Landscope are the focus for most activity in the parish. The churches, halls, pubs and primary school are meeting points for the community and help to create local identity and purpose. The plan aims to safeguard local facilities for present and future generations. Their retention and prosperity are important to local well-being.
- 3.4. Any new local facilities and services will be welcomed and the plan promotes

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improvements to meet local needs, particularly including improvements to local green and play spaces, 20mph zones in the villages, support for green energy and sustainable travel, including cycle routes, and improved mobile and broadband connectivity.

POLICY SNP1: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

1. Development which will support the strength and vitality of local communities will be welcomed. In particular, development which will meet local needs which otherwise might not be met will be supported.
2. Proposals for additional community facilities and infrastructure will be supported, providing they are well designed, include safe and adequate access and parking and will cause no detriment to the local environment and amenities.
3. The following priorities for the provision or enhancement of local facilities have been identified:
 - a) improvements to local green spaces and new play equipment,
 - b) 20 mph zones in Staverton and Landscope,
 - c) measures to support green energy and sustainable travel, including cycle routes, and
 - c) improved mobile and broadband connectivity.

New development will be required, where appropriate and where the requirement arises directly from the proposed development, to contribute to these priorities through a S106 obligation or Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL), in accordance with adopted standards.
4. In order to help safeguard the sustainability of the local community, development that would result in the loss of or significant harm to a local community facility or asset of community value, particularly the parish churches, halls and pubs, will not be permitted unless there is adequate alternative provision in the parish.

Sustainable villages

- 3.5. The JLP identifies by name those “sustainable villages” where development is expected to take place, with indicative levels of housing to inform the preparation of neighbourhood plans. Both Staverton and Woolston Green are listed as villages which are expected to accommodate around 20 dwellings each over the plan period.
- 3.6. The majority of new development should be focussed on the villages, both to help sustain them and to protect the wider countryside. Earlier plans established settlement boundaries for each village, which served to contain growth to within reasonable limits. This plan reaffirms the same approach, drawing a settlement boundary tightly around each village in order to limit development to that which will be in scale and character with the village and its setting.
- 3.7. The policy aims to assist the development process by showing the boundaries inside of which development will be acceptable providing detailed considerations are satisfied. Each boundary generally follows the ancient outlines of the village together with more recent development and that proposed in this plan. Within each boundary suitable new development will generally be acceptable. Outside the boundaries development will be tightly controlled and only permissible where it is essential in order to meet agricultural, forestry or other small-scale needs which cannot be met

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within the village. This aligns with JLP Policy TTV26.

POLICY SNP2: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

1. Development will be permitted inside the village settlement boundaries shown in the plan, provided it is in scale and character with the site and surroundings, is of an appropriate density, and will cause no significant adverse impacts on natural or historic assets, local amenity, traffic, parking or safety.
2. Elsewhere in the parish development will be strictly controlled and only permitted where it can be delivered sustainably and requires a countryside location or will meet a proven local need which cannot be met inside the settlement boundaries.

Local green spaces

- 3.8. Local green spaces provide valuable opportunities for access and recreation and are highly valued by the local community. The plan protects the most important of the existing open spaces in the parish. Only development necessary to improve their enjoyment by the general public will be permitted.
- 3.9. All the designated spaces are highly valued by the local community and conform to the following criteria:
 - They are in close proximity to a main village;
 - They are special and/or hold a particular significance to the local community because of their historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife, and
 - They are locally situated and not an extensive tract of land.
- 3.10. All are capable of being managed and protected beyond the plan period.

POLICY SNP3: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

1. The following areas are designated as green spaces in the plan: a, b, c, etc
2. These local green spaces will be safeguarded from development. Any development that would result in the loss of any part of these green spaces or that results in any harm to their character, setting, accessibility, appearance, general quality or amenity value will not be permitted. Only minor development directly associated with and necessary for the public enjoyment of the green space will be permitted.

3.11. xx

4 Housing

Objective: To deliver a varied and balanced mix of high quality homes that meet the needs of current and future residents in a manner that complements the character and identity of this rural parish.

Aspirations:

- a) We want to support the provision of new housing in order to help sustain the community and important local facilities such as schools, pubs etc.
- b) We want to deliver new affordable housing to keep local people in the parish.
- c) We want affordable housing that prioritises local residents.
- d) We want new homes to be suitable for young people and young families.
- e) We want to create opportunities for people to downsize and remain in the area by encouraging smaller dwellings to be created.
- f) We want new development that creates a mix of house types, sizes and tenures (such as affordable).
- g) We support small-scale development that fits with the historic settlement pattern of the parish.
- h) We consider that the JLP target of 40 new dwellings to built before 2034 is an appropriate number for the parish.
- i) We want well-designed homes that add to the architectural character of the parish.
- j) We want high quality housing that is fit for the future (energy efficient and sustainable)
- k) We want high quality homes that provide a decent standard of internal space, garden space and parking.
- l) We support and encourage self-build and custom build.
- m) We support and encourage community led development (such as Community Land Trusts etc.)
- n) We want policies that enable local people in need of affordable housing to self-build a home for themselves in appropriate locations.
- o) We want to enable Gypsy and Traveller communities to live in appropriate places.

Existing housing stock

4.1. A wide variety of types, tenures and ages of housing is available across Staverton parish, ranging from substantial individual estate houses and farmhouses, through medium sized homes including conversions, to a number of smaller dwellings. The high cost of housing, however, means that even the smaller properties are generally beyond the range of local first-time buyers and there is a particular need for affordable homes for young people and families.

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- 4.2. There are about 300 dwellings across the parish, the majority of which are larger homes, so there is also a need for most new housing development to be of smaller units, both to meet local needs for the young and to encourage and enable down-sizing.
- 4.3. In 2019 the average price of a house in Devon was about £300,000, and in South Hams about £340,000. The average house price in Staverton is currently estimated to exceed £500,000.

Local housing needs

- 4.4. Such high house prices create a local need for affordable homes, and the plan makes this a priority. The provision of affordable housing will be welcomed, providing it has been brought forward by a local community group or Community Land Trust and has the clear support of the local community. There may also be scope for suitable exception sites to be brought forward to provide up to 100% affordable housing, including sites for single dwellings by persons in housing need who also have a strong local connection.
- 4.5. In 2019 a housing needs survey elicited 52 local responses. Of these, 23 were looking to move, with high proportions of first time buyers, couples setting up home or households wanting to move on from renting to purchase. However, just over two thirds (17 households) felt unable to afford the type of home they needed and of these just over half (9 households) will therefore look for affordable rents. 16 respondents expressed interest in self-build or custom build, with 5 of these ready to work in a group.
- 4.6. It seems reasonable to assume that the JLP's indicative figures (of about 20 new dwellings in Staverton and 20 in Woolston Green) could enable sufficient affordable housing during the plan period to 2034 to address local need. The plan aims to ensure that much of this will comprise affordable homes.

New housing sites

- 4.7. Some new housing will help to maintain the sustainability of the community, address age imbalance and maintain the viability of services and facilities. The plan proposes some new homes on allocated sites, with the majority of development focussed in Staverton and Landscope/Woolston Green. There is also some scope for small infill developments in the smaller hamlets of the parish. The emphasis is especially on affordable property, both low cost and for rent, for local people who are currently priced out of the open market. In order to help preserve the rural character of the parish, most new build is proposed to be small developments in villages and single developments in named hamlets.
- 4.8. The plan requires that new homes are built to good internal and external space standards, and that their design will incorporate innovative low carbon construction techniques, sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency.
- 4.9. There may also be scope for gypsy and traveller communities to live in the parish in appropriate locations. Any such applications should be tested against relevant national and JLP policies.

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Site assessments

- 4.10. In order to help assure that the most sustainable sites were allocated in the plan, in 2017 a call for suitable development sites was made through the Parish News, Parish email group, Facebook page, Parish Website and local and regional newspapers and by contacting landowners/known developers directly. Sites included were those promoted by local landowners, those already advanced through the planning system, those identified by the steering group and those which had come forward through the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), linked to the JLP. 29 sites have been identified.
- 4.11. All the sites were made known to the local community with maps available on the website. Views and opinions were sought through the community questionnaire and 2 open meetings which also included clear location maps.
- 4.12. A sites assessment, produced by an independent consultant, rated the appropriateness of each site for development, considering their suitability, availability and viability. The steering group mirrored this process, taking into account local preferences as stated in the questionnaire and from parishioner feedback.
- 4.13. XX sites were considered acceptable. These are at XXXXXXXXXXXXX and the plan proposes their development as set out below.

POLICY SNP4: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

1. New housing developments are proposed at: a, b, c, etc
2. New homes shall be designed to meet at least the latest standards and to incorporate innovative low carbon construction techniques, sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency.
3. To help address local need, proposals to provide affordable housing for local people will be particularly welcomed and supported. In addition to established rural exception site policy proposals to build single affordable dwellings on suitable sites will also be supported.
4. The provision of affordable homes on a suitable exception site or sites in the parish will be welcomed where the site has been brought forward by a local community group or Community Land Trust and has the clear support of the local community.

4.14. x

5 Business and enterprise

Objective - To deliver new and improved employment opportunities to help sustain a vibrant parish community with a balanced demographic profile that attracts and retains young people and working age families.

Aspirations

- a) We want to encourage business diversification in the parish
- b) We want to improve access and infrastructure for business in the area (roads, internet etc.)
- c) We want to improve the access to superfast broadband across the parish
- d) We want to improve mobile phone coverage within the Parish, siting transmitting masts away from residential areas (community action)
- e) We want to support small scale, appropriate commercial development
- f) We want to support people to work from home or work in the parish
- g) We want to encourage appropriate tourism business in the parish
- h) We want to encourage renewable energy development that does not detract from the character of the area

- 5.1 Staverton supports a small but significant range of employment, more than might be found in many similar parishes. In particular there is a cluster of small businesses in proximity to Staverton bridge, originating historically from Staverton Mill (now converted to housing) and the railway station. Riverford Organics is the largest single employer in the parish, with a nationally recognised organic farm brand. Several other small businesses are scattered across the parish, including the village pubs. Farming is still important to the local economy, there are a number of small tourist based establishments offering accommodation and a significant number of people work from home.
- 5.2 All these businesses are important to the local economy and the plan aims to help ensure that they flourish and that sites and premises involved remain available for such uses.
- 5.3 The 2011 census shows XX% of the population to be economically active with XX% self-employed. The Parish Survey returned lower figures, at XX% and xx% respectively. This may be a reflection of those who responded.
- 5.4 The Parish Survey identified XX businesses run in or from the parish, 9 of which employed others. Many workers commute out of Staverton to their workplaces, as is common in rural areas, but the census shows that XX% work from home or in the parish (XX% in the Parish Survey).
- 5.5 The plan aims to foster conditions for local economic prosperity and business growth in scale and keeping with the area, geared to meeting local business needs for services

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and employment and with particular emphasis on improved electronic communications infrastructure.

- 5.6 There are a number of farm buildings in the parish that are no longer used and falling into disrepair as they are no longer suitable for modern farming practice. New business development which uses these buildings will be encouraged where it is in keeping with the surroundings and the existing structure is maintained. There should be minimal alteration to the building or its footprint.

POLICY SNP5: NEW BUSINESS, EMPLOYMENT AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

1. New business, employment and tourism development will be welcomed providing it will be in keeping with the locality, well designed, include safe and adequate access and parking and cause no detriment to the local environment and amenities. Development of adaptable spaces for business start ups, live/work accommodation and adaptations to enable dwellings to support home-working will be supported providing they meet these criteria.
2. Existing business and employment sites and premises shall be retained for such use unless it can be demonstrated that the site or building is unsuitable or that there is no demand for any such use.
3. Change of use of redundant farm buildings to provide additional business, employment or tourism opportunities will be supported where they will involve no more than minimal alteration to the existing structure or building footprint, not compromise the rural setting of the building, not include residential or holiday housing and meet the requirements of clause 1 above.

- 5.7 Much of Staverton parish has superfast broadband connectivity with speeds of up to 72Mbps. Mobile phone network coverage is variable. The plan aims to *improve and* build on this, helping to redress business disadvantages faced in a rural area by securing very good broadband and telecommunications infrastructure in association with new development and by encouraging improvements to connections in those parts of the parish that are less well served.

POLICY SNP6: BROADBAND AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Proposals to expand mobile phone coverage, electronic communications and broadband networks are encouraged and will be supported providing apparatus is kept to the minimum necessary for efficient operation.
2. Proposals for housing must include a Connectivity Statement and provide for suitable ducting to enable service providers to install appropriate connections.

5.8 x

6 Design and Heritage

Objective - To deliver high quality development and encourage innovative design that is locally sympathetic with due consideration of the heritage of the parish as a whole.

Aspirations

- a) We want to encourage good quality design which is both locally sympathetic but also allows for innovative ideas
- b) We want to encourage new developments to be within or close to existing settled parts of the Parish and discourage isolated developments.
- c) We would like the historic heritage of sites and their surrounding areas to be considered in any development.

6.1 New development will be expected to display good, sensitive design, in harmony with the locality. Designers must pay careful attention to the local vernacular, landscape character and local setting. This ought not, however, to exclude good modern innovative design.

6.2 Suitable building techniques and technology must be adopted to deliver sustainable energy efficient buildings and to ensure that development, in both its public and private areas, is safe, inclusive and accessible for all.

6.3 National standards for sustainable construction change over time. Development must at least meet current national standards. Designs will be particularly welcomed which strive to surpass the basic standards and deliver greater energy efficiency, achieve greater carbon reductions, further reduce use of non-renewable resources, or employ other innovative eco-friendly building techniques.

POLICY SNP7: DESIGN

Innovative modern design which is locally sympathetic and attains high environmental standards will be welcomed. All new development, including extensions and conversions, should:

- a) be of high design quality and in scale and keeping with its setting, respect and enhance local character, safeguard local distinctiveness, protect and conserve and enhance local landscape and biodiversity;
- b) use only sustainable building materials, any stone should be in keeping with local stone and laid on its natural bed, and planting should use only mixed native species for hedges and traditional laid Devon hedgebanks wherever boundaries abut open countryside;
- c) target zero-carbon, minimising use of non-renewable resources, maximising solar gain, incorporating technologies to maximise sustainability and energy efficiency;
- d) cause no unnecessary noise, light or other pollution, safeguarding against risks of erosion or contamination;
- e) incorporate appropriate landscaping, in keeping with the locality and using native species;

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- f) be safe, inclusive and accessible, reducing opportunities for crime and the fear of crime,
- g) incorporate meters, bin storage and other features appropriately, conveniently and so as not to clutter the street scene; and
- h) provide for its own car parking requirements, with at least two car parking spaces per dwelling.

- 6.4 Staverton has a rich local heritage, giving the parish a distinct identity. The village of Staverton clusters around The Sea Trout Inn, north of the grade I listed church of St Paul de Leon, and extends westwards along the road to Staverton Bridge, also listed grade I. The village grew up in proximity to the medieval crossing of the River Dart, originally a “stony ford” (from which the parish name derives) and replaced by the bridge in 1413.
- 6.5 Settlement in the north west of the parish grew as slate mining and quarrying expanded in the local area. St Matthew's Church and the primary school were built there in the mid years of the nineteenth century and the hamlets of Landscore, Woolston Green and Beara began to be collectively referred to as Landscore when the church was so dedicated in 1850.
- 6.6 There are in total 30 listed buildings in the parish, including 2 grade I listed buildings – Staverton Bridge and the church of St Paul, and 6 grade II* listed buildings – the church of St Matthew, Riverford Bridge (on the A384), Kingston House, Pridhamsleigh Manor Farmhouse and Dovecot, Woolston Green Farmhouse and Woodend Farmhouse. A range of archaeological finds and other historic features around the parish have also been identified but lack clear legal protection.
- 6.7 A variety of other heritage assets, that make a positive contribution to the special character of the parish, have no official designation. These include the two mills, the railway station, the Court Room, Butterwell, the Church Commission cottages and many farmhouses.
- 6.8 The parish's historic settlement pattern, the River Dart, the nearby slopes of Dartmoor National Park, the South Devon Railway (formerly GWR Totnes to Ashburton branch), local pubs, fields and farmsteads all contribute towards local heritage and help to give Staverton its distinctive local character, which the plan aims to protect and enhance.

SNP8: HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

Development shall not harm but conserve and enhance designated and non-designated historic and heritage assets and their settings, including archaeological features and historic field boundaries and structures. Where historic buildings and features form a group any development should maintain the spaces between buildings and preserve any elements of the landscape and/or street scene which contribute to the value of the group and its setting.

6.9 x

7 Natural Environment

Objective - To conserve and enhance the natural landscape and biodiversity of the parish; whilst improving green links and access to our green spaces for the enjoyment of current and future residents.

Aspirations

- a) We support the strategic natural environment policies in the JLP
- b) We want a policy to protect traditional orchards in the area.
- c) We want to manage street lighting to protect 'dark skies' and the rural character of the area
- d) We want a policy to ensure appropriate landscaping of new development (maybe in design policy)
- e) We want to identify important local environmental sites such as the wildlife areas etc.
- f) We want to identify a range of aspirational projects such as potential cycle routes, play area improvements, biodiversity projects etc. (this will help to guide any planning contributions.)

- 7.1 The landscape of Staverton parish is richly varied, presenting a pleasant and unspoilt rural scene. The Dart valley at the parish's southern edge is a strong landscape feature, enhanced for many by the presence of the preserved South Devon Railway, and its smaller tributary, the River Hems, borders the parish in the north. The uplands of the parish are a broad canvas of rolling hills and fields interspersed by villages, hamlets and farmsteads. The only major intrusions in the scene are the Abham substation tucked into the valley folds at Bumpston Cross, its radiating powerlines and the solar array at Parke Farm.
- 7.2 Development must be designed to respect and conserve the landscape and local landscape assets and features must be protected and conserved as an intrinsic part of development. The best and most versatile agricultural land, especially that classified as grade 1,2 and 3a, should also be protected.
- 7.3 The parish also provides varied habitats for flora and fauna. In particular, in the north-west extremity of the parish within Dartmoor National Park, the Pridhamsleigh Caves Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is protected for its fossil remains, mineral deposits and crustacean species. Wide parts of the parish provide potential habitat for protected species. Large expanses of the parish in the west, are important for the Great Horseshoe Bat and lie within the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Some eastern parts of the parish also provide potential habitat for the Cirl Bunting. Just downstream from Staverton Bridge a small nature reserve is held in perpetuity by the Staverton Wildlife Conservation Society.
- 7.4 The plan aims to protect the landscape and biodiversity value of the parish, augmenting national and strategic policies to protect the appearance of the area and its role in

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helping species to flourish.

- 7.5 The parish has a long history of cider-making, and many ancient orchards survive alongside some more recently planted. Orchards are an important aspect of local landscape character and the plan aims to protect and conserve them both for their historic interest and for the positive contribution they make to local landscape character.

POLICY SNP9: LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY

1. Development shall not harm but should protect and enhance features that make a positive contribution to either local landscape or biodiversity.
2. In particular orchards, trees, woodlands, hedgebanks, green lanes and green spaces should be protected and enhanced wherever they make a positive contribution to the local landscape or are of potential value for biodiversity.
3. Development should, wherever possible, avoid building on good and moderate quality agricultural land (grades 1, 2, 3a and 3b) and, unless there is no practicable alternative and the benefits of the development to the community outweigh the need to protect it.

- 7.6 The parish lies close to three small market towns and the A38 trunk road runs along its western boundary. In spite of this Staverton is in general quiet and peaceful, and over much of its area night skies are dark. Artificial light affects species behaviour (such as foraging and roosting) and safety from predation, most importantly of the Greater Horseshoe Bat in Staverton. The plan aims to maintain the tranquillity of the parish, and the dark skies which are able to be enjoyed across much of its area.

POLICY SNP10: TRANQUILLITY AND DARK SKIES

Development shall cause no undue disturbance, noise or light pollution. No additional street lights shall be installed and any security or external lighting installed as part of development shall not be permanently switched on or unnecessarily bright, i.e. above 800 lumens, and should illuminate only in response to motion sensors.

7.7 x

8 Transport

Objective - To provide an infrastructure that supports both homes and business to thrive and to encourage the development of free flowing, safe and appropriate transport networks.

Aspirations

- a) We want to improve the roads to manage the rate and flow of traffic, in areas where development would increase the number of vehicles
- b) We want to consider the impact of growing businesses on the local road network
- c) We want to impose reduced speed limits in the villages of Staverton, Woolston Green and Landscope (community action)
- d) We want to encourage local landowners to release land for the improvement and extension of Public Rights of Way National Cycle Networks as appropriate (community action)
- e) We want to include for cycle/footpaths in new developments where appropriate
- f) We want to encourage the provision of both private and public, electric car charging points within new developments.
- g) We want to encourage improvements in the local rural transport network, serving the parish (community action).
- h) We want to secure provision of financial support from developments, for the improvement of the local rural transport network, serving the parish.

- 8.1 Travel and transport infrastructure in Staverton ranges from local footpaths and green lanes to A roads and a trunk road. The preserved South Devon Railway runs close to the parish's southern boundary and the nearest mainline railway station is at Totnes.
- 8.2 For the most part the parish is criss-crossed by minor roads and narrow country lanes, with major roads running close to the parish boundaries. There are significant pinch points, particularly at the ancient single-track Staverton Bridge. For the most part the network is able to accommodate the volumes of traffic using it, although some parts can suffer minor congestion, especially in the holiday season and at the beginning and end of the school day for Landscope School.
- 8.3 New development should be located so as not to exacerbate these difficulties and should take opportunities to improve safety, alleviate congestion and enhance connectivity wherever possible, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 8.4 Within the villages the introduction of 20mph zones would be supported as a means of improving safety for all road users, and the extension and improvement of footpaths and cycle-paths would also be welcomed. This is particularly the case in Staverton village where at rush hours the road has become a “rat-run” for traffic between the A38 and Torbay.

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8.5 Public transport services are sparse. The Country Bus runs through the parish daily (except Sundays), with six services per day and named stops at The Sea Trout Inn in Staverton and at Landscope Church. Other longer distance services operate along the A384 and the A38, connecting the parish with Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Newton Abbot, Totnes, Exeter and Plymouth. Any improvements in services or local initiatives for community transport or car sharing will be welcome.

8.6 New development should make reasonable provision for the private car, although priority should be given to pedestrian, cycle and public transport provision and electric car charging points should be provided.

POLICY SNP11: TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

1. Development should integrate and connect with social, community and green infrastructure, making appropriate provision for pedestrians and cyclists, contributing towards maintaining and enhancing local public and community transport services, resulting in no worsening of highway safety and conditions, incorporating electric car charging points and providing for its own car parking requirements, with at least two car parking spaces per dwelling.
2. Improvements to local footpaths, cycle-paths (including the National Cycle Network), green lanes, public and community transport services and highways will be welcomed. Development will be expected to contribute towards these improvements where they are directly related to the development. The loss of existing footpaths, cycle-paths, green lanes and public and community transport services will be resisted.
3. The introduction of reduced traffic speeds in the villages will be welcomed.
4. **Climate neutrality aspirations**

8.7 x

9 Energy Efficiency and flooding

Objective - To deliver new development with high energy efficiency and to encourage the production of energy from a range of appropriate renewable energy sources.

Aspirations

- a) We want to encourage any new developments to be designed with energy efficiency in mind and to facilitate recycling for the community at large.
- b) We want a plan that is receptive to new renewable energy technologies and projects and to facilitate a means to consider both their positive and negative impacts on our community.
- c) We want a plan that is aware of the impact of climate change to our parish – in particular to areas at risk of flooding.

Climate emergency

9.1 Staverton Parish Council have declared a Climate Emergency and has pledged to work towards carbon neutrality by 2030. It calls upon other bodies, particularly within government, to also take the necessary steps to enable this to happen, and will work in partnership with others towards the zero carbon goal.

Renewable energy

9.2 Renewable energy is a critical factor in helping to address the climate emergency. The government set a target to deliver 20% of our energy from renewable sources by 2020. That date has been reached and there is still a long way to go. The local community supports endeavours to increase renewable energy supplies whilst at the same time aiming to protect farmland and the natural beauty, heritage, biodiversity and tranquillity of the area.

9.3 Renewable energy development proposals will be considered in relation to the impact they would have upon matters of local, regional or national interest, particularly landscape, heritage and wildlife.

9.4 Small scale schemes and community led initiatives to deliver renewable-energy which could also contribute to the local economy and community, will be welcomed. Large scale renewable energy developments would cause wide impacts on the parish and beyond and should be considered against the strategic policies of the JLP and national guidance.

9.5 Solar panels on historic buildings will be acceptable if there will be no harm to the appearance, character or value of the building. This may be achieved by the use of appropriate low visual impact solar tiles or solar slates.

9.6 Ground-mounted solar panels or small scale wind turbine developments or hydroelectricity projects will be welcomed where the purpose is to generate power for use within the parish, there will be no unacceptable landscape, heritage, biodiversity, species or amenity impacts, they are of an acceptable scale and the land will be

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restored after the use ceases.

POLICY SNP12: RENEWABLE ENERGY

1. Proposals for small scale renewable energy developments will be welcomed where the purpose is to generate power for use within the parish and they can be shown to have no unacceptable impacts, particularly on landscape, biodiversity or local amenities.
2. Proposals for individual or community scale renewable energy schemes, such as solar voltaic panels, hydroelectric, biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products, will be supported providing they will (a) be appropriate in siting and scale to the local setting and the wider landscape, (b) create no unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents, and (c) have no unacceptable impact on any important natural or biodiversity feature. (d) no unacceptable increase in traffic.
3. The installation of solar panels on a listed building will be supported only if it can be shown that there will be no negative effect on the appearance, character or historic value of the building.

New development

9.7 The plan requires that buildings be designed to aim for zero carbon, minimise use of non-renewable resources, maximise solar gain, incorporate technologies to maximise sustainability and energy efficiency. To help secure these targets specified BRE ratings will be required for new development.

POLICY SNP13: ENERGY IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

All new non domestic development should achieve a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating, and all domestic development a '4 Star' BREHQM rating.

Sustainable drainage

9.8 All development will be required to deal safely and satisfactorily with foul and surface water drainage without giving rise to flooding either on or beyond the site.

POLICY SNP14: SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE

All development should provide for safe and satisfactory foul and surface water drainage, incorporating a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) that at least meets current standards, incorporating permeable surfaces, water harvesting and storage, green roofs and soakaways, so as to mitigate the risk of flooding which might cause harm to people, property or ecosystems on or beyond the site. No surface water should enter the foul sewage network.

9.9 x

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10. Delivery and Monitoring

- 10.1 Many of the plan's proposals will happen only with private sector investment, but this does not remove Devon County, South Hams District and Staverton Parish Councils or other public bodies from their responsibilities for infrastructure and services. The plan's policies aim to steer and shape development, but it is expected that developer contributions will be gathered through S106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL), or similar order to address any specific mitigation required and to offset the broader impacts of any new development.
- 10.2 The policies of this plan and the JLP will be complementary, together providing a firm platform for all parties to cooperate in promoting, enabling and delivering beneficial developments and improvements of all kinds. Conformity between plans will be key to unlocking funds to support this plan's delivery, and it is hoped that Devon County, South Hams District and Staverton Parish Councils will take a proactive role in this regard.
- 10.3 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is formally adopted by South Hams Council it will become part of the local development plan. This means that it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Council will therefore assess development proposals in Staverton against the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan alongside the JLP and any related implementation plan to ensure that the aspirations of the community are being met.
- 10.4 Monitoring may require the plan to be reviewed in due course to keep it up-to-date and relevant. A monitoring framework has been prepared to help judge the effectiveness of the plan's policies. Any formal amendments to the plan will have to follow a similar process as was used to prepare the original plan.