

A JOINT STATEMENT

North Devon Council and Torrington District Council are working together to prepare what is called a 'Core Strategy'. This document will set out the vision, objectives and key policies for delivering future development across northern Devon until 2026.

"Both councils have worked together to produce the draft Core Strategy, to address how northern Devon should look in the future. This joint vision sets out the direction for development over the next 16 years, and looks to ensure we retain and build on our world class environment, not only for our towns, but also our rural communities. Therefore, it's vitally important that everyone is encouraged to share their views on the proposals."

Des Brailey, Leader of North Devon Council
James Morrish, Leader of Torrington District Council

THE STORY SO FAR

Consultation began in 2006 to identify the key planning issues for the area. The results were reflected in the Issues and Options Report, which then went out to public consultation in November 2007. A wide range of engagement has since taken place with local communities, key organisations and service providers. The comments and outcomes from these events have all been taken into consideration to help shape the draft Core Strategy.

- Identification of key issues (consultation with various organisations) 2005 - 2007
- Issues and Options Report (public consultation) Nov 2007 - Feb 2008
- Feedback Report and Engagement Plan February 2009
- Pre-Publication Core Strategy
- (public consultation) Jan - February 2010 **We are here**
- Publication of Core Strategy (public consultation) May - June 2010
- Submission of Core Strategy to Secretary of State - September 2010
- Review of Core Strategy by independent inspector - Early 2011
- Inspector's Report Autumn 2011
- Adoption of Core Strategy Winter 2011

WHY IS THIS DOCUMENT SO IMPORTANT?

To understand why, it helps to look at how the planning process works. If a developer (or anyone) puts in a planning application to build a number of houses, the first thing that the planning officers do is to see if the application is in line with agreed policy. **This Core Strategy document will be the backbone of the agreed policy.**

If the application follows what is written in the policy, then it is very likely to be approved, regardless of any protests others might make. The plans committee have to have good reason to turn down an application that conforms to the policy. If they did, then the developer could go to appeal and say, "Hey, I followed the rules in your own published and agreed plan and you have turned me down, that isn't fair, and it's cost me thousands of pounds in architects' fees to put these plans together. I want the decision overturned and I claim compensation for my costs."

In the past, Torrington has had to pay costs for turning plans down, unfairly. One example is the Midas development in Shebbear. So they are reluctant to go against policy unless there is a very good reason.

What gets written down and adopted in this document will set the seal on how Shebbear and its environs will look in 15 years' time.

It's no good thinking it won't ever happen, not in my time. I heard several voices saying just that, ten years ago when the current Local Plan was being considered. Sitting on one's hands and doing nothing is not a formula to guarantee nothing changes. Quite the reverse. Look at Aish Park, Meadow Park, and Ackland Close to see how the planned increase in the number of houses eventually became a reality.

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