

**APPENDIX IX – NP EVIDENCE BASE
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Lamerton Parish Council

February 2026

Quality information

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Non-Technical summary

What is Strategic Environmental Assessment?

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken to inform the Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as “the LNP”). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to help avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

What is the Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan?

The LNP has been prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Purpose of this Environmental Report

This Environmental Report, which accompanies the Regulation 14 version of the LNP, is the latest document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (February 2025), which included information about the neighbourhood area’s environment and community.

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe, and evaluate the likely significant effects of the LNP and alternatives.
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the LNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes.
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues for the area.
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the LNP has been assessed.
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the LNP.
- The likely significant effects of the LNP.
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the LNP.
- The next steps for the LNP and accompanying SEA process.

Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives for the LNP

Introduction

In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include...

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.

Strategic factors (top-down considerations)

As noted in **Chapter 2** within the main body of this Environmental Report, the strategic planning context is set by the adopted Plymouth and South West Devon JLP 2014-2034. Within this adopted Local Plan, Lamerton is within the 'Sustainable Villages' category within the spatial strategy. The Local Plan outlines growth in these sustainable villages will be focused on meeting local needs, and the Local Plan will encourage communities to identify sites to meet these needs (particularly through the preparation of neighbourhood plans). The JLP indicates that Lamerton could accommodate up to 20 new homes during the plan period. Upon considering recent commitments and completions in the neighbourhood area, the Neighbourhood Plan Group have identified a residual requirement of 10 homes across the LNP period.

Appraisal of site options (bottom-up considerations)

With a view to meeting the identified housing need over the plan period, landowners were invited to submit sites under a local Call for Sites (CFS) process in 2022. The results of the CFS, alongside the South Hams and West Devon Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) from 2017 and a previous Lamerton CFS undertaken in 2016/17, were then taken forward for a Sites Options Assessment (SOA), undertaken by AECOM¹. A total of 15 sites were assessed in detail and are listed in **Table 4** in the main body of the Environmental Report.

The AECOM SOA uses a 'traffic light' rating to indicating whether a site is suitable, available and likely to be achievable for development and therefore appropriate for allocation in the LNP. Red indicates the site is not appropriate for allocation and green indicates the site is appropriate for allocation. Amber indicates the site is less sustainable or may be appropriate for development if certain issues can be resolved or constraints mitigated.

On this basis, seven of the sites were given a red rating and considered not to be appropriate for allocation, and as such are discounted from the SEA. These are: Site 1, Site 3, Site 6, Site 8, Site 9, Site 11, and Site 12. The rationale for discounting these sites is as follows:

- **Site 1:** considered unsuitable for development due to heritage and landscape sensitivities, reflecting the site being within the Lamerton Conservation Area and within the setting of listed buildings. This conclusion also reflects the limited screening offered by boundary trees and hedgerows, and its elevated position which is likely to impact upon visual amenity.

¹ AECOM (2025): Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan SOA

- **Site 3:** considered unsuitable for development due to issues relating to access and the impact development could have on the landscape character in this part of the neighbourhood area.
- **Site 6:** considered unsuitable due to the potential for development to impact upon landscape and settlement character, as well as flood risk issues and significant tree cover.
- **Site 8:** considered unsuitable for development due to concerns relating to landscape and settlement character impacts. It is noted that planning permission has been refused on this site for the same reasons (ref 2424/17/OPA).
- **Site 9:** considered unsuitable due to the size of the site and the potential level of growth it could bring forward, which could impact upon settlement character in the neighbourhood area. It is also a distance from the existing settlement of Lamerton, given it is located on the approach to the village, and could bring forward traffic concerns.
- **Site 11:** this site has no remaining potential for development due to development having occurred on part of the site; the remaining undeveloped part of the site is considered under Site 8.
- **Site 12:** considered unsuitable due to access issues to the site, as well as its visual sensitivity and elevated position.

The remaining eight sites were all given an amber rating, none were given a green rating. Further context on the 'amber' sites is provided below.

Policy TTV26 (Development in the countryside) in the Plymouth and South West Devon JLP indicates that isolated development in rural areas will be avoided and only permitted in exceptional circumstances. Additionally, Policy TTV27 (Meeting local housing needs in rural areas) included in the Plymouth and South West Devon JLP stipulates that residential development proposals on sites adjoining or very near to an existing settlement may be permitted providing that it can be demonstrated that it meets a proven need for affordable housing for local people. On this basis, **Site 4** and **Site 9** are discounted from further consideration; this is due to their position in the open countryside and away from the settlement boundary.

Furthermore, **Site 2** is also discounted from consideration for the purposes of the SEA. This is due to the site receiving planning approval for 19 dwellings². This site was approved by West Devon Borough Council, and whilst it would meet and exceed the residual housing requirement of 10 homes for the Lamerton neighbourhood area, the Neighbourhood Plan Group recognise that the types of homes proposed through the approved scheme would not address the mix of homes required by the community, as identified through the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)³.

Additionally, **Site 7** is also discounted from further consideration, as the site in its entirety is not available for development – only the part included under Site 7b which came forward under the local CFS process in 2022.

Reflecting the above, the remaining four sites have been considered through the SEA as spatial strategy options to appraise their potential for a Neighbourhood Plan allocation to meet the locally specific needs identified through the HNA. These are:

² West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Planning Online Status: 0107/22/OPA](#)

³ Devon Communities Together (2021): [Parish of Lamerton Housing Needs Report](#)

Court Cottage (**Site 1b**), Behind Farriers (**Site 5**)⁴, Behind Trenance (**Site 6b**), and The Bull's Field (**Site 7b**), as shown in **Figure NTS1** below.

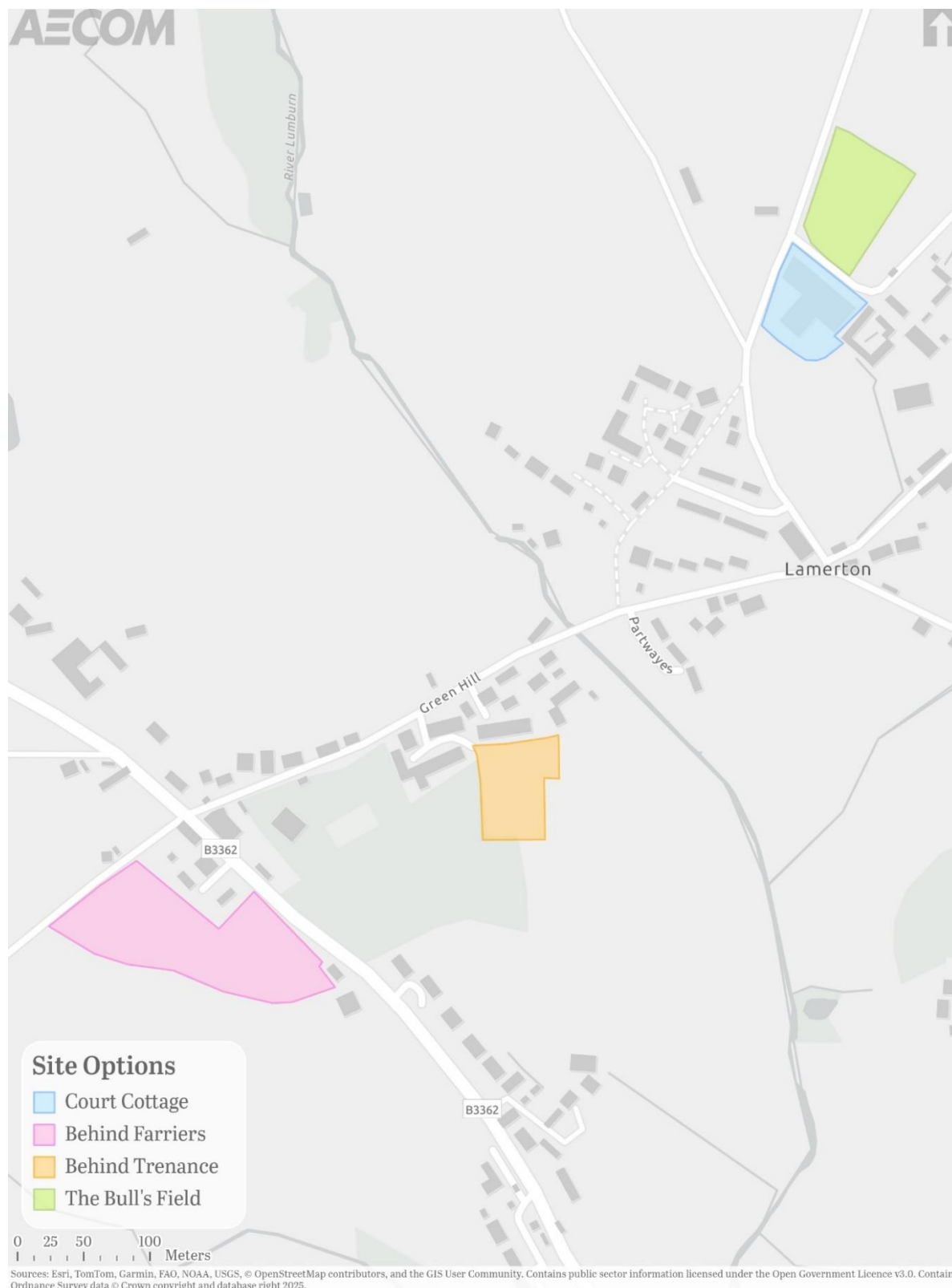


Figure NTS1: Spatial options taken forward for assessment

⁴ It is noted that an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted for the site, as shown on West Devon's Planning Register (December 2025): [Planning application: 3217/25/OPA - Planning Page for DEF | West Devon Borough Council](#)

Assessing reasonable alternatives

The four spatial strategy options identified have been appraised through the SEA. For each of the options, the assessment examines likely significant effects on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability themes and objectives identified through SEA scoping as a methodological framework. Where appropriate neutral effects, or uncertainty, will also be noted.

An initial discussion of the similarities across the four options has been established under each SEA theme. This is followed by a detailed summary of the key differences between the options, to enable the sustainability trade-offs to be identified.

Every effort is made to predict effects accurately, however, where there is a need to rely on assumptions to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text. Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects based on reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of 'significant effects'. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that perform most or least favourably against each SEA theme, with 1 performing the best. Also, '=' is used to denote instances where there are no significant differences in the relative sustainability performance of the options.

Summary of assessment findings

Detailed assessment findings are presented in **Chapter 4** within the main body of the Environmental Report.

A summary of the assessment findings is presented in **Table NTS1**, below. For each of the topics that comprise the SEA Framework) the columns to the right-hand side rank the options in order of performance and conclude whether the options are likely to have likely significant effects on the baseline.

Table NTS1: Assessment findings - rankings and likely significant effects

SEA theme		Court Cottage (Site 1b)	Behind Farriers (Site 5)	Behind Trenance (Site 6b)	The Bull's Field (Site 7b)
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	1	4	2	3
Climate change and flood risk	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=1	=1	=1	=1
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive

SEA theme		Court Cottage (Site 1b)	Behind Farriers (Site 5)	Behind Trenance (Site 6b)	The Bull's Field (Site 7b)
	Rank	1	2	4	3
Historic environment	Significant effect?	Yes - negative	No	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	4	=1	=1	3
Land, soil and water resources	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	1	4	2	3
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	2	4	1	3
Transportation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=1	4	3	=1

Establishing the preferred approach for the LNP

It is recognised that the residual requirements for the neighbourhood area (specifically in terms of the total housing number) will be achieved by the approval of 19 dwellings at Site 2 'Land adjacent to Green Hill'⁵. Additionally, an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted on Site 5 'Behind Farriers'⁶. However, the Neighbourhood Plan Group recognise that the types of homes proposed through these schemes would not necessarily address the mix of homes required by the community, as identified through the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)⁷.

On this basis, the preferred approach for the LNP has been informed by the various surveys and evidence base documents prepared to support the LNP (to date), responses from community consultation events, and the SEA findings. Specifically, the Regulation 14 version of the LNP is supportive of allocations at the following three sites subject to the local design guidance and criteria listed within the respective site-specific policies, as follows:

- **Policy H3a:** Land adjacent to Court Cottage (for up to 6 homes).
- **Policy H3b:** Land behind Trenance (for up to 8 homes).
- **Policy H3c:** Land at Bull's Field (for up to 5 homes).

⁵ West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Planning Online Status: 0107/22/OPA](#)

⁶ It is noted that an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted for the site, as shown on West Devon's Planning Register (December 2025): [Planning application: 3217/25/OPA - Planning Page for DEF | West Devon Borough Council](#)

⁷ Devon Communities Together (2021): [Parish of Lamerton Housing Needs Report](#)

Appraisal of the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan

For each SEA theme scoped in to the assessment, 'significant' effects of the policy framework within the Regulation 14 version of the LNP on the baseline are predicated and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations. For example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' have been described within the appraisal, as appropriate.

Detailed appraisal findings are presented in **Chapter 5** in the main body of this Environmental Report. A summary of the appraisal findings is presented below.

Significant positive effects are considered most likely in relation to community wellbeing. This reflects the LNP's understanding of the needs and aspirations of the Lamerton community in regard to safeguarding infrastructure, promoting healthy lifestyles, and meeting locally identified housing needs as informed by evidence and community engagement.

Minor positive effects are considered likely in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity. This reflects the focus of the LNP on safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity within the site allocation boundaries and through the wider policies across the neighbourhood area. These stipulations work well to protect wildlife and enhance biodiversity value and connectivity.

Minor positive effects are also anticipated in relation to the landscape. This reflects the site-specific design stipulations which have been outlined to ensure that development proposals are sensitive to and respect the surrounding landscape character and quality. This conclusion also reflects the wider LNP policies, which seek to protect and enhance green spaces and features, which in turn contribute to local amenity and settlement identity.

Overall, **neutral effects** are considered likely in relation to climate change and flood risk under the LNP. Whilst additional development has the potential to increase emissions originating in the neighbourhood area, it is considered that the level of growth across the three site allocations is unlikely to lead to a large-scale increase. Additionally, the policies of the LNP work well to prioritise sustainable development, including through renewable energy usage. It is further noted that the site allocations avoid areas at greater risk of flooding, and the policies of the LNP supports opportunities to deliver natural drainage solutions to improve flood resilience.

Neutral effects are also considered likely in relation to the historic environment. The site allocation policies and wider policy framework have a focus on protecting the setting and identify of both designated and non-designated heritage assets within the neighbourhood area. However, **the SEA recommends** that Policy H3a could be updated to include specific reference to the Lamerton Conservation Area, given that the site is located adjacent to the designated area and development could impact upon its setting and significance and change how the designated area is interpreted in the wider landscape.

Overall, **neutral effects** are further considered in relation to the land, soil and water resources theme. This reflects the reduced potential for the loss of productive agricultural land, and the focus of the LNP policies on safeguarding important resources in terms of their quantity and quality.

Broadly **neutral effects** are anticipated in relation to transportation. This conclusion reflects the relatively small-scale growth likely to come forward through the site allocations, and the wider provisions of the plan policies on improving accessibility and connectivity within the neighbourhood area (where possible). This is important for Lamerton considering that sustainable transportation opportunities are limited.

Next Steps

Plan finalisation

This Environmental Report accompanies the LNP for Regulation 14 consultation.

Following Regulation 14 consultation, responses will be considered in finalising the LNP and SEA for submission. Following submission, the LNP and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the LNP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the LNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by West Devon Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the LNP, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the LNP will become part of the Development Plan for West Devon, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

Monitoring

The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the LNP will be undertaken by West Devon Borough Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the LNP that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by West Devon Borough Council.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'LNP').
- 1.2 The LNP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and in the context of the local planning framework for West Devon Borough Council. Once 'made' the LNP will have material weight when deciding on planning applications alongside the local development framework.
- 1.3 The neighbourhood area covers the civil parish of Lamerton in West Devon and is located to the north-west of Tavistock.

SEA explained

- 1.4 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and the potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. SEA of the LNP is a legal requirement⁸. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the LNP seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.5 Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:
 - I. When deciding on 'the scope and level of detail of the information' which must be included in the Environmental Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues; and
 - II. A report (the 'Environmental Report') is published for consultation alongside the draft plan (i.e., the draft LNP) that presents outcomes from the environmental assessment (i.e., discusses 'likely significant effects' that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.
- 1.6 This Environmental Report is concerned with item 'II' above.

Structure of this Environmental Report

- 1.7 This document is the SEA Environmental Report for the LNP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed below with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations. Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

⁸ Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the Local Authority alongside either: A) an environmental report; or, B) a statement of reasons why SEA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process completed in accordance with Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations ('the SEA Regulations').

Table 1: Questions that must be answered by the SEA Environmental Report to meet the regulatory requirements⁹

Environmental Report question		In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ¹⁰
What's the scope of the SEA?	What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan.
What's the scope of the SEA?	What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes. The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
What's the scope of the SEA?	What is the sustainability 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
What's the scope of the SEA?	What are the key issues and objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e., provide a 'framework' for) assessment.
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with. The likely significant effects associated with alternatives. Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the current version of the plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the Regulation 14 version of the plan. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the Regulation 14 version of the plan.
What happens next?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for the plan making / SEA process.

⁹ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

¹⁰ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

2. What is the LNP seeking to achieve?

Introduction

2.1 This section considered the strategic planning policy context provided by the local development framework for West Devon Borough Council, before then presenting the vision and objectives of the draft LNP. **Figure 1** below shows the location of Lamerton Parish (i.e., the neighbourhood area)¹¹.



Figure 1: Lamerton Parish (i.e., the neighbourhood area)

¹¹ Whilst the neighbourhood area mostly aligns with Lamerton Parish (as shown in the Figure), a small section of the Parish that falls within Dartmoor National Park (north eastern corner, at Heathfield) is excluded. See Chapter 1 in the Regulation 14 version of the LNP for a map of the neighbourhood area which excludes the small section covered by the National Park.

Strategic planning policy context

- 2.2 The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) 2014-2034¹² was adopted in 2019 and forms part of the development plan for the administrative areas of Plymouth, South Hams, and West Devon. Within Chapter 5 ‘Strategy for Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area’¹³, the JLP identifies Lamerton as a Sustainable Village which has a *“limited but vital provision of services and amenities”*. This is reiterated in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan Five Year Review Report 2024, which seeks to ensure that the JLP and its policies remain effective and works to discern whether the plan may need updating. The Five-Year Review Report 2024 demonstrates that the JLP continues to provide an effective strategy for the management of growth and development across the whole plan area. The Councils conclude that the spatial strategy, strategic objectives, and planning policies and JLP remain up to date when read as a whole. The JLP therefore remains sound and will continue to be used in full for the purpose of decision making.
- 2.3 The JLP supports growth in these sustainable villages to meet local needs and encourages communities to identify sites to meet these needs (particularly through the preparation of neighbourhood plans). The JLP indicates that Lamerton could accommodate up to 20 new homes during the plan period. Upon considering recent commitments and completions in the neighbourhood area, the Neighbourhood Plan Group have identified a residual requirement of 10 homes across the LNP period.

Vision, aims and objectives of the LNP

- 2.4 The vision for the LNP is as follows:

“The shared vision for Lamerton is to secure a strong future for our parish by supporting sustainable development that meets the needs of the current and future residents:

- *without detriment to the unique and high prized landscape and environment; and*
- *without jeopardising the strong community feeling that exists; and*
- *that maintains the feeling of safety and security that residents value”.*

- 2.5 To support this vision, aims and objectives have been identified under the following themes: housing; environment and heritage; employment and local economy; low carbon development; and community and wellbeing.

¹² West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan](#)

¹³ West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan - 5 Strategy for Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area](#)

3. What is the scope of the SEA?

Introduction

- 3.1 The aim here is to introduce the reader to the scope of the SEA, i.e., the sustainability topics and objectives that should be a focus of the assessment of the plan and reasonable alternatives. The full SEA Scoping Report, including detailed baseline information and policy context, will be available to access on the LNP website at Regulation 14 consultation.

Consultation

- 3.2 The SEA Regulations require that *‘When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies’*.
- 3.3 In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Historic England¹⁴. These authorities were consulted from 12th February 2025 to 19th March 2025.
- 3.4 Responses were received from Natural England and Historic England and are presented in **Table 2** overleaf. No response was received from the Environment Agency.

¹⁴ In-line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because ‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme’.

Table 2: Consultation responses

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Natural England <i>Consultations Team (email response received on 18th March 2025)</i></p>	
<p>Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 11 February 2025.</p> <p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p>Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.</p> <p>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping request: Natural England has no specific comments to make on the scope of this neighbourhood plan’s SEA.</p> <p>However, we refer you to the advice in the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>Comment noted with thanks. The linked guidance has been a useful source of evidence during the subsequent stages of the SEA process.</p>

Historic England

Historic Places Adviser for Historic England London and South East Region (response received on 18th March 2025)

Thank you for your consultation on the SEA Scoping Report associated with the emerging Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan.

This would appear to be our first involvement with the making of this Plan. An agreement between the Plan's community and the local planning authority that a full SEA would be required does not of course require any consultation with the statutory agencies.

But it would then be helpful to those agencies – especially on their first involvement - if the Scoping Report could set out or summarise the reasons why a full SEA has been deemed necessary as this would help us identify those considerations, and sources of advice and evidence, likely to be most useful to ensuring that the SEA process is appropriately informed from a heritage perspective. This is a point we have made to AECOM several times previously.

We assume on the basis of probability that the need for a full SEA might be based on proposed site allocations generating the likelihood of significant environmental effects. This being the case, we would recommend adding, to the welcome schedule of our guidance referred to, our guidance on site allocations – a recommendation that has also been made to AECOM on previous similar occasions. While titled with reference to site allocations in Local Plans it is equally applicable to Neighbourhood Plans.

This can be found at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/>

There are no other issues associated with the Scoping Report on which we wish to comment.

Comment noted. The linked guidance has been a useful source of evidence during the subsequent stages of the SEA process.

Key sustainability issues

Air quality

3.5 There are no air quality management areas (AQMAs) within the West Devon area, and with the exception of the hot spot at Okehampton, air quality is relatively good across the area. Whilst the Lamerton neighbourhood area is within proximity to the Area 4 – Gunnislake AQMA, it is likely that residents travel to Tavistock to access a wider range of goods, services and employment opportunities, given that it is closer. As such, development through the LNP is not anticipated to impact upon air quality within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area. Based upon the baseline information, the air quality topic has been scoped out of the SEA for the LNP.

Biodiversity and geodiversity

3.6 Whilst the Lamerton neighbourhood area does not have any internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity within its boundaries, it is located in a biodiverse and geologically diverse landscape. This is demonstrated by the number of County Wildlife Sites within the neighbourhood boundaries. Given the neighbourhood area is positioned within proximity to a number of designations, it is likely that development through the LNP could impact upon these important designated areas. This could further impact upon the wider biodiversity and geodiversity network of West Devon.

3.7 The Lamerton neighbourhood area intersects with areas of Network Enhancement Zone 1, Network Enhancement Zone 2, and Network Expansion Zone. These areas could provide opportunities to bring forward enhancements to biodiversity, largely through improving connectivity. The LNP should take advantage of these opportunities wherever possible, to help deliver and potentially exceed the national 10% biodiversity net gain standard¹⁵.

Climate change and flood risk

3.8 Fluvial flood risk is limited to the waterbodies that traverse the neighbourhood area. Surface water flood risk is largely linked to the drainage pattern of these water bodies. On this basis, new development through the LNP could exacerbate flood risk in the Lamerton neighbourhood area. As such, the LNP should seek opportunities to improve drainage through the targeted application of natural drainage solutions (e.g., SuDS).

3.9 Whilst the agricultural sector is the largest contributor to CO₂ emissions in West Devon, there are limited opportunities for the LNP to help reduce these emissions. However, the second largest contributor to emissions is the transport sector. The LNP could seek to address transportation emissions locally through strengthening active travel routes and opportunities to increase self-containment. This would help to reduce private vehicle usage to access key services and facilities.

3.10 It is noted that domestic emissions could also be addressed through the LNP by reducing emissions linked to households – for example, by including design principles that bolster energy efficiency.

¹⁵ GOV.UK (2025): [Guidance: Understanding biodiversity net gain](#)

Community wellbeing

- 3.11 Lamerton experiences a high level of deprivation linked to barriers to housing and services. Bringing forward new housing in line with the JLP (of around 20 homes) will likely contribute to alleviating a level of this housing deprivation without increasing pressure on existing local services and facilities in Lamerton. This includes providing homes for people looking to downsize. However, this level of growth is unlikely to support new community infrastructure and services. As such, it is unlikely to contribute to reducing deprivation linked to the living environment or barriers to services.
- 3.12 There is an ageing population within the neighbourhood area. Whilst this could be due to the two residential care homes within Lamerton (Camplehay Residential Home and Venn House Residential Home) present in Lamerton, it will still be important to ensure housing development meets the needs of the local community. This could include affordable homes, and of a type and tenure which meets locally specific needs.

Historic environment

- 3.13 The Lamerton Conservation Area has been designated since 1993; however, there is not an associated appraisal or management plan for the designated area. These plans detail the various aspects of interest within the conservation area, and how it will be managed in relation to everyday living and future development. As such, the lack of appraisal or management plan for the Lamerton Conservation Area presents a gap in the baseline.
- 3.14 The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) is located approximately 3 km to the south-east of Lamerton village, and approximately 750m from the southern boundary of the neighbourhood area. It is likely that the neighbourhood area contributes to the wider setting of this significant heritage designation. As such, development will need to be considerate of the special characteristics and qualities of the designation, in order to ensure its significance is maintained.
- 3.15 There are 54 listed buildings in the neighbourhood area (one Grade I, four Grade II*, and 49 Grade II). There are also three scheduled monuments in the neighbourhood area, and the Lamerton Conservation Area which covers the area around the Church and the historic buildings along Church Avenue. As such, the neighbourhood area is considered to have a sensitive historic environment which will likely be impacted upon by development. Given this, any development that is proposed in close proximity to important designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas will need to consider the potential impact on the intrinsic qualities of the asset and its wider setting.

Land, soil and water resources

- 3.16 Allocating land for development through the LNP is unlikely to lead to changes to land and soil resources, given the low potential of the underlying soil to be of good quality agricultural land, and given that most of the available site options are within or adjacent to the village (which will contribute to safeguarding the open countryside).
- 3.17 According to the latest brownfield land register provided by West Devon Borough Council, there are no brownfield sites within the neighbourhood area.

However, Lamerton Parish Council have identified one site locally that has been previously developed and is now derelict that could provide a brownfield development opportunity. This is Court Cottage.

- 3.18 Development in the northern and southern extents of the Lamerton neighbourhood area could impact upon the waste consultation area (north), and the mineral safeguarding area and associated consultation zone (south). However, given these areas are isolated, and the JLP confirms that growth in sustainable villages should be within settlement boundaries wherever possible, it is anticipated that development can be focused away from these important areas – thus reducing the impact on important waste and mineral infrastructure.
- 3.19 Water resources are present in the eastern and western extents of the Lamerton neighbourhood area. It is considered that development can largely avoid these areas by being focused within and around the existing Lamerton settlement, which is not subject to these designations. The LNP presents an opportunity to help maintain and enhance water quality in the neighbourhood area by encouraging development to include measures that ensure water pollution does not occur during the construction and operational phases of new development.

Landscape

- 3.20 The Lamerton neighbourhood area is located in a sensitive landscape; adjacent to the Dartmoor National Park, and partially within the Tamar Valley National Landscape. As such, it is likely the neighbourhood area contributes to the setting and character of these nationally protected landscapes and their special qualities and scenic beauty. It will be important for LNP to consider the management plans for the Dartmoor National Park and the Tamar Valley National Landscape, to ensure development does not adversely impact upon the settings, character and qualities of these landscapes.
- 3.21 The neighbourhood area has a diverse landscape, reflecting its overlap with one NCA, four local landscape character areas, and three local landscape character types. As such, it will be important for the LNP to encourage growth to come forward within or adjacent to the existing settlement boundary wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the various national and local landscape character area assessments could be referred to in order to ensure development is sympathetic to the unique landscape character and quality of the neighbourhood area.

Transportation

- 3.22 Public transport networks within the neighbourhood area comprise infrequent bus services. There are no train stations, and the nearest larger town with a greater variety of services is Tavistock, approximately 5km to the south-east of the village. As such, development through the LNP is likely to promote additional private vehicle use in the neighbourhood area, linked to new development and the need to access community facilities and employment opportunities. Whilst the LNP is unlikely to be able to add to the sustainable transport network itself, it could seek to promote growth in close proximity to the PRoW, to encourage an uptake in safe active transportation where appropriate.
- 3.23 The LNP could help to reduce the number of private vehicles on the road linked to commuting patterns by encouraging infrastructure that allows for increased

levels of working from home. This could include improved internet connections. It could also include shared remote working spaces. However, it is noted that design considerations like these are largely dependent on development proposals that come forward.

SEA Framework

3.24 The SEA scope is summarised in a list of themes and objectives, known as the SEA Framework. The full SEA Framework is presented below in **Table 3**.

Table 3: SEA Framework

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, including supporting the maintenance and / or improvement of their condition, and support habitats and species that are important to the integrity of these sites? • Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats as well as priority habitats and species? • Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks? • Support access to, interpretation of, and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?
Climate change and flood risk	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid vulnerable development in areas of elevated flood risk? • Reduce the number of journeys made and reduce the need to travel? • Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources? • Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area? • Sustainably manage water runoff, and reduce runoff where possible?

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing? • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population? • Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? • Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities? • Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements, including improved access to open space? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life for all residents?
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings? • Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key monuments of cultural heritage interest? • Protect the heritage importance of the Lamerton Conservation Area? • Protect the heritage importance and contribution of the neighbourhood area to the setting of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS? • Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the neighbourhood area?
Land, soil and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible?

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
	<p>protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and avoid the development of BMV agricultural land? • Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste? • Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality? • Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development? • Protect waterbodies from pollution? • Protect the integrity of the mineral safeguarding area and associated consultation zone?
Landscape	<p>Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and / or enhance the landscape designations within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area, and align with the associated Dartmoor National Park and Tamar Valley National Landscape Management Plans where possible? • Protect and enhance the local landscape and villagescape character and quality of place, including the different landscape character areas and types identified through the Devon Landscape Character Assessment? • Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character? • Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?
Transportation	<p>Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the objectives within the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3, including to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes where appropriate? • Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? • Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement? • Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area? • Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?

4. Consideration of reasonable alternatives for the LNP

Introduction

- 4.1 In accordance with the SEA Regulations, an Environmental Report must include:
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
 - The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives appraised.
- 4.2 The ‘narrative’ of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the SEA Environmental Report. Specifically, how the SEA process to date has informed the consideration of different approaches for key elements of the LNP.
- 4.3 The following sections therefore describe how the SEA process to date has informed the preferred strategy for the neighbourhood area and potential locations for development.

Strategic factors (top-down considerations)

Adopted Plymouth and South West Devon JLP

- 4.4 As noted in **Chapter 2**, the strategic planning context is set by the adopted Plymouth and South West Devon JLP 2014-2034. Within this adopted Local Plan, Lamerton is within the ‘Sustainable Villages’ category within the spatial strategy. The Local Plan outlines growth in these sustainable villages will be focused on meeting local needs, and the Local Plan will encourage communities to identify sites to meet these needs (particularly through the preparation of neighbourhood plans). The JLP indicates that Lamerton could accommodate up to 20 new homes during the plan period. Upon considering recent commitments and completions in the neighbourhood area, the Neighbourhood Plan Group have identified a residual requirement of 10 homes across the LNP period.

Appraisal of site options (bottom-up considerations)

Call for sites

- 4.5 To meet the identified housing need of up to 20 dwellings over the plan period, landowners were invited to submit sites under a local Call for Sites (CFS) process in 2022. The results of the CFS, alongside the South Hams and West Devon Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) from 2017 and a previous Lamerton CFS undertaken in 2016/17, were then taken forward for a Sites Options Assessment (SOA), undertaken by AECOM¹⁶. In total, 17 sites were identified across the three sources, and 15 were taken forward for assessment – two were discounted from the SOA as they have been

¹⁶ AECOM (2025): Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan SOA

developed. Additionally, it is noted that part of Site 11 is developed. These 15 sites are presented in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Site options

Site reference	Site name	Site area (hectares)	Indicative housing capacity
Site 1	Court Cottage Farm	1.5	44
Site 1b	Court Cottage	0.4	6
Site 2	Land adjacent to Green Hill	3.5	103
Site 3	Land at Chestnut Close	4	116
Site 4	Land at Hurlditch Farm	0.7	15
Site 5	Behind Farriers	1.1	10
Site 6	Land behind Trenance Drive	1.3	10
Site 6b	Behind Trenance	0.4	5
Site 7	The Bull's Field	0.8	22
Site 7b	The Bull's Field	0.5	8
Site 8	Summer Green	0.7	20
Site 9	Rushford, Lamerton	3.4	99
Site 9b	Rushford	0.9	25
Site 11	St John's, Lamerton	0.3	10
Site 12	Land at Camplehaye	0.6	16

4.6 The AECOM SOA uses a 'traffic light' rating to indicating whether a site is suitable, available and likely to be achievable for development and therefore appropriate for allocation in the LNP. Red indicates the site is not appropriate for allocation and green indicates the site is appropriate for allocation. Amber indicates the site is less sustainable or may be appropriate for development if certain issues can be resolved or constraints mitigated.

4.7 On this basis, seven of the sites were given a red rating and considered not to be appropriate for allocation, and as such are discounted from the SEA. These

are: Site 1, Site 3, Site 6, Site 8, Site 9, Site 11, and Site 12. The reasons for these are as follows:

- Site 1: considered unsuitable for development due to heritage and landscape sensitivities, reflecting the site being within the Lamerton Conservation Area and within the setting of listed buildings. This conclusion also reflects the limited screening offered by boundary trees and hedgerows, and its elevated position which is likely to impact upon visual amenity.
- Site 3: considered unsuitable for development due to issues relating to access and the impact development could have on the landscape character in this part of the neighbourhood area.
- Site 6: considered unsuitable due to the potential for development to impact upon landscape and settlement character, as well as flood risk issues and significant tree cover.
- Site 8: considered unsuitable for development due to concerns relating to landscape and settlement character impacts. It is noted that planning permission has been refused on this site for the same reasons (ref 2424/17/OPA).
- Site 9: considered unsuitable due to the size of the site and the potential level of growth it could bring forward, which could impact upon settlement character in the neighbourhood area. It is also a distance from the existing settlement of Lamerton, given it is located on the approach to the village, and could bring forward traffic concerns.
- Site 11: this site has no remaining potential for development due to development having occurred on part of the site; the remaining undeveloped part of the site is considered under Site 8.
- Site 12: considered unsuitable due to access issues to the site, as well as its visual sensitivity and elevated position.

4.8 The remaining eight sites were all given an amber rating, none were given a green rating.

4.9 Policy TTV26 (Development in the countryside) in the Plymouth and South West Devon JLP indicates that isolated development in rural areas will be avoided and only permitted in exceptional circumstances. Additionally, Policy TTV27 (Meeting local housing needs in rural areas) included in the Plymouth and South West Devon JLP stipulates that residential development proposals on sites adjoining or very near to an existing settlement may be permitted providing that it can be demonstrated that it meets a proven need for affordable housing for local people. On this basis, Site 4 and Site 9b are discounted from further consideration; this is due to their position in the open countryside and away from the settlement boundary.

4.10 Furthermore, Site 2 is also discounted from consideration for the purposes of the SEA. This is due to the site receiving planning approval for 19 dwellings¹⁷. This site was approved by West Devon Borough Council, and whilst it would meet and exceed the residual housing requirement of 10 homes for the Lamerton neighbourhood area, the Neighbourhood Plan Group recognise that

¹⁷ West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Planning Online Status: 0107/22/OPA](#)

the types of homes proposed through the approved scheme would not address the mix of homes required by the community, as identified through the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)¹⁸.

- 4.11 Additionally, Site 7 is also discounted from further consideration, as the site in its entirety is not available for development at this time – only the part included under Site 7b which came forward under the local CFS process in 2022.
- 4.12 The remaining four sites have been considered through the SEA as spatial strategy options to appraise their potential for a Neighbourhood Plan allocation to meet the locally specific needs identified through the HNA. These are: Court Cottage (Site 1b), Behind Farriers (Site 5)¹⁹, Behind Trenace (Site 6b), and The Bull's Field (Site 7b), as shown in **Figure 2** overleaf.

¹⁸ Devon Communities Together (2021): [Parish of Lamerton Housing Needs Report](#)

¹⁹ It is noted that an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted for the site, as shown on West Devon's Planning Register (December 2025): [Planning application: 3217/25/OPA - Planning Page for DEF | West Devon Borough Council](#)

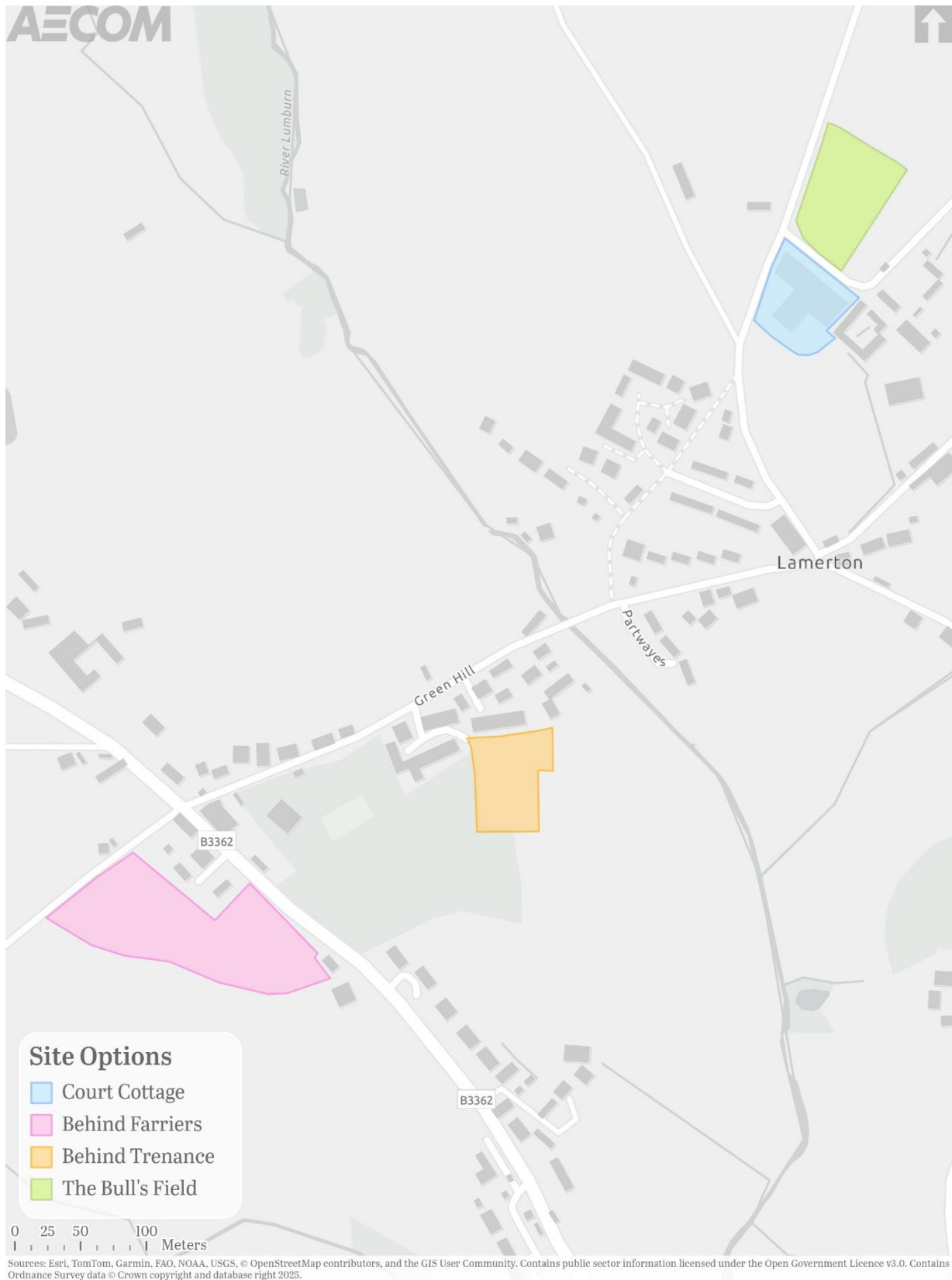


Figure 2: Site options taken forward for assessment

Assessing reasonable alternatives

Methodology

- 4.13 The four spatial strategy options identified have been appraised through the SEA. For each of the options, the assessment examines likely significant effects on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability themes and objectives identified through SEA scoping as a methodological framework. Where appropriate neutral effects, or uncertainty, will also be noted.
- 4.14 Within each row of **Table 5**, the summary table, below (i.e., for each of the topics that comprise the SEA Framework) the columns to the right-hand side rank the alternatives in order of performance and conclude whether the options are likely to have likely significant effects on the baseline.
- 4.15 An initial discussion of the similarities across the four options has been established under each SEA theme. This is followed by a detailed summary of the key differences between the options, to enable the sustainability trade-offs to be identified.
- 4.16 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately, however, where there is a need to rely on assumptions to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text. Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects based on reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of 'significant effects'. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that perform most or least favourably against each SEA theme, with 1 performing the best. Also, '=' is used to denote instances where there are no significant differences in the relative sustainability performance of the options.

Assessment findings

Table 5: Assessment findings - rankings and significant effects

SEA theme		Court Cottage (Site 1b)	Behind Farriers (Site 5)	Behind Trenance (Site 6b)	The Bull's Field (Site 7b)
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	1	4	2	3
Climate change and flood risk	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=1	=1	=1	=1
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
	Rank	1	2	4	3
Historic environment	Significant effect?	Yes - negative	No	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	4	=1	=1	3
Land, soil and water resources	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	1	4	2	3
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	2	4	1	3
Transportation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=1	4	3	=1

Similarities across all four spatial strategy options

Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 4.17 None of the options are within internationally designated sites for biodiversity and / or geodiversity (Ramsar, Special Areas of Conservation, and Special Protection Areas). Furthermore, none of the options are within or in proximity to nationally designated sites for biodiversity and / or geodiversity (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves). There is also no overlap with SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the type of development likely to come forward through the Lamerton Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.18 Furthermore, none of the options would deliver growth in an area with Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat, either within the boundaries or within proximity to them.

Climate change and flood risk

- 4.19 All four sites are either within or adjacent to Lamerton village, and as such relate well to the existing built up area and development. As such, all four sites have the potential to encourage sustainable and active travel into the centre of Lamerton, which could help reduce transport emissions related to local journeys. However, reflecting the limited provision of services and facilities within Lamerton, all four sites are anticipated to lead to increases in transport emissions further afield.
- 4.20 Furthermore, all four sites are considered to have similar growth capacities, ranging from five to ten new dwellings. As such, the anticipated increase in carbon and greenhouse gas emissions linked to new growth is considered to be similar across the four sites.
- 4.21 Additionally, all four sites are considered to have a low risk of fluvial flooding and surface water flooding, reflecting their distance from watercourses, associated drainage and areas at risk of flooding in Lamerton.

Community wellbeing

- 4.22 All four sites are considered likely to lead to positive effects with relation to community wellbeing by contributing additional land for housing, to work towards meeting the identified local need across the plan period.
- 4.23 All four sites are located well in relation to the existing Lamerton settlement boundary and built up area. This is anticipated to allow for good access to the centre of the village, and is likely to support community cohesion between new and existing residents.
- 4.24 It is noted that all four sites are located over 1.2km from the nearest secondary school, and as such provide the same level of access to this type of educational facility.
- 4.25 Furthermore, allocating any of the sites for development will not result in the loss of land with social, amenity or community value for the residents of Lamerton, nor will development remove a site allocated for a particular use or designated as open space in the adopted Plymouth and South West Devon JLP.

Historic environment

4.26 None of the sites overlap with or are in proximity to scheduled monuments, registered parks or gardens, or registered battlefields. Additionally, none of the sites would deliver growth within proximity to locally important historic environment features that are contained within the Devon and Dartmoor Historic Environment Record (HER).

Land, soil and water resources

4.27 All four sites are within proximity to existing areas of agricultural activity, which could demonstrate their potential to support agricultural practices. It is also noted that none of the sites are anticipated to experience land contamination issues that would need to be remediated before development.

4.28 None of the sites are within drinking water protected areas, or drinking water safeguarding zones, nor is there an overlap with nitrate vulnerable zones or source protection zones.

Landscape

4.29 None of the sites are within, nor are they in proximity to, a National Park or National Landscape (though it is noted that Lamerton village sits within the wider landscape setting for the Tamar Valley National Landscape to the west and Dartmoor National Park to the north-east). Additionally, there is no overlap with Green Belt land.

4.30 All four sites are within the River Tavy Middle Valley Devon Landscape Character Area. This is described as a landscape of contrasts, and some key features include (but are not limited to): ridges of higher land separated by the winding wooded valley of the River Tavy, extensive dark mixed plantation, a network of streams, sunken lanes, and long views across to Dartmoor and the River Tamar in either direction. The rich and diverse landscape has a strong sense of history, with prehistoric hillforts, farms, estates, villages and industrial remains all contributing to its sense of time-depth.

4.31 Additionally, all four sites are within the River Valley Slopes and Combes Devon Landscape Character Type. This is characterised by a variety of features, such as ancient stone bridges, extensive views over river valleys, and pastoral cultivation in regular and irregular small to medium scale fields with hedgerows and localised market gardening.

Transportation

4.32 All four sites are over 1.2km from the nearest train station, are within 400m of the nearest bus stop, and over 800m to the nearest cycle route. This demonstrates that sustainable and active travel opportunities are limited, and as such development on any site is likely to lead to increased private vehicles on the local road network. However, as the growth capacities of the site are low (ten dwellings maximum), this is not anticipated to be a significant increase.

Differences across all four spatial strategy options

Biodiversity and geodiversity

4.33 With regards to the Living England Habitat Map layer on MAGiC²⁰, each option has a different habitat coverage.

- Site 1b is comprised largely of built-up areas and gardens, reflecting its brownfield nature, with areas of dwarf shrub heath on the northern and western boundaries, as well as an area of acid, calcareous, neutral grassland on the western boundary, and improved grassland in the southern part of the site.
- Site 5 largely comprises of acid, calcareous, neutral grassland, with areas of dwarf shrub heath on the northern and eastern boundaries.
- Site 7b comprises the same habitats as Site 5 – largely acid, calcareous, neutral grassland with a small area of dwarf shrub heath on the southern boundary.
- Site 6b is largely fen, marsh and swamp habitat, with a small area of built-up areas and gardens on the northern boundary.

4.34 As such, it is considered that growth focused on Site 1b or Site 6b would not likely have any significant effects on priority habitats or local ecological networks, given these two sites contain existing built-up areas.

4.35 Site 1b and Site 7b are both located within an extensive area of Network Enhancement Zone 1. This is defined by Natural England as land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is likely to be suitable for the creation of primary habitat. Action in this zone should be focused on expanding and joining up existing habitat patches and improving the connections between them. As such, it is considered that growth on Site 1b or Site 7b could more readily deliver biodiversity enhancements. In contrast, Site 5 and Site 6b are within an extensive area of Network Expansion Zone – which is defined by Natural England as land outside of the Network Enhancement Zones which have the potential for expanding, linking / joining networks across the landscape. Action in this zone should be focused on improving connections between existing habitat networks, with the potential to indirectly support ecological networks. As such, development through either of these sites is less likely to support direct opportunities for ecological enhancement.

4.36 Considering the above, Site 1b is ranked the most favourably. This is due to the site not comprising priority habitats in its current form, given it is primarily an area of brownfield land. As such, redevelopment at this location has the potential to enhance existing habitats on site and provide opportunities for biodiversity net gain. Furthermore, Site 1b is within an extensive area of Network Enhancement Zone 1 – and as such has the potential to deliver biodiversity improvements through redevelopment (though it is noted this is largely based on the potential design). Following this is Site 6b, reflecting its slight overlap with existing developed land – again, this is anticipated to help reduce impacts to habitats. Site 7b is ranked the third favourably, reflecting its potential to support greater levels of biodiversity improvements in comparison to Site 5, which is ranked least favourably.

²⁰ DEFRA (2024): [MAGiC](#)

4.37 Overall, no significant effects are anticipated in relation to biodiversity by allocating any of these sites. Neutral effects are considered likely for Site 5, Site 6b and Site 7b, and minor positive effects are anticipated for Site 1b.

Climate change and flood risk

4.38 No differences are identified for the sites in relation to climate change and flood risk. This is due to all four sites being located within or adjacent to Lamerton village, and their little to no risk of fluvial and surface water flooding. All four sites are ranked equally, and no significant effects are anticipated by allocating any of the four sites in relation to climate change and flood risk. Broadly neutral effects are considered likely.

Community wellbeing

4.39 Two of the sites are positioned less than 400m from the nearest open space or recreational facilities; however, Site 1b and Site 7b is over 800m from the nearest site. As such, engagement with sport and recreational opportunities may be less accessible for new residents if growth were to come forward at either of these locations.

4.40 Whilst Site 1b and Site 7b are located within 400m of Lamerton Church of England Primary School (to the south of both sites), Site 5 and Site 6b are located between 400m and 800m of the educational facility to the west, with Site 6b being located closer than Site 5. This could reduce residents engaging with active travel opportunities (namely walking and cycling) to access the facility.

4.41 In relation to site size and capacity, Site 5 is the largest site – approximately 1.1ha, with a capacity of 10/20 homes. Following this is Site 7b at approximately 0.5ha, with a capacity of around eight homes; then Site 1b at approximately 0.4ha and a six home capacity. Finally, Site 6b is approximately 0.4ha in size, with a five home capacity. It is possible that larger sites could increase the viability of delivering affordable homes, and / or a variety in housing types and tenures.

4.42 Overall, all four sites are likely to have significant positive effects with respect to community wellbeing, as they seek to bring forward development to meet the identified housing need in the most sustainable locations. Site 1b is found to be the most favourable, reflecting its close proximity to existing facilities. The remaining three sites are ranked based on their size and their potential to support a greater mix of housing types and tenures: Site 5 is the second most favourable, followed by Site 7b and then Site 6b. Significant positive effects are anticipated for all four sites.

Historic environment

4.43 Delivering growth on Site 6b is not likely to have any significant effects on the historic environment of Lamerton. This is due to growth coming forward in an area that is not within proximity to designated heritage assets, areas and features. The same applies to Site 5; whilst the nearest listed structure is approximately 55m to the north-east (Grade II listed Signpost at SX 444 645), it is visually screened from the site by existing development along the road.

4.44 In contrast, growth via Site 7b would be located within the wider setting of the Grade II* listed Lamerton St Peter's Church to the south, as well as a number

of Grade II listed buildings and the Lamerton Conservation Area which are located to the south. It is noted that the sloping topography, existing nearby buildings and natural boundary features may contribute a level of screening. Furthermore, it is noted that there is a standing stone within Site 7b, however it is not certain whether this holds historic significance. As such, development of the site could lead to impacts to the historic environment in this part of the settlement.

- 4.45 Growth at Site 1b would focus development within the Lamerton Conservation Area itself – within the open space to the west of the Grade II* listed Lamerton St Peter’s Church and associated churchyard. This is a key component of the conservation area, as it contributes to the setting and visual amenity of the listed structure and churchyard, as well as Court Barton House, the vicarage and property opposite it, and the approach to the church itself. As such, it is likely that development at this site will impact upon the historic environment of Lamerton. However, it is noted that there is likely to be a level of screening of the site due to the presence of existing nearby buildings and trees. Additionally, the existing structure on the site (a redundant barn) is in a poor state of repair, and it currently detracts from the site’s contributions to the historic setting of this part of Lamerton and the conservation area. It is possible that redevelopment of this site could improve its contribution to the historic environment in this part of Lamerton, though this would be dependent on the design scheme taken forward.
- 4.46 Overall, Site 5 and Site 6b are found to be the most favourable in relation to the historic environment. No significant effects are anticipated if growth were to come forward at these locations – given they are either removed from (Site 6b) or screened from (Site 5) designated heritage assets and areas. Following this is Site 7b, reflecting its proximity to the Lamerton Conservation Area and its potential to impact upon the historic setting of the conservation area and its associated structures. Option 1b is ranked least favourably in relation to the historic environment, due to being located within the Lamerton Conservation Area and its increased likelihood of development impacting upon the historic character and setting of the area and its associated features. However, it is noted that Site 1b represents a brownfield opportunity, and as such development could benefit the historic environment by ensuring new growth positively contributes to the conservation area.
- 4.47 Neutral effects are considered likely for Site 5 and Site 6b. However, significant negative effects are considered likely for Site 1b and Site 7b. However, it is recognised that there could be opportunities to enhance the character and setting of the Lamerton Conservation Area through development at Site 1b, depending on design and mitigation measures proposed.

Land, soil and water resources

- 4.48 Three of the four sites are greenfield, and the development of any of them could result in the loss of soil resources. This is likely to be more prevalent for Site 5, given it has a higher likelihood of being underlain with productive agricultural soils (Grade 3 agricultural land classification) – in comparison, Site 6b is considered to be underlain with Grade 4 quality soils, and Site 7b a mix a Grade 3 and Grade 4.
- 4.49 In contrast, growth focused on Site 1b would deliver development on a brownfield / previously developed site, which would support the most efficient

use of land in the neighbourhood area. This is due to development at this site not resulting in the loss of best and most versatile land for agricultural purposes.

- 4.50 It is further noted that Site 1b and Site 6b have low voltage powerlines on the site boundaries. As such, development at either of these locations will need to consider the potential impacts on utility infrastructure, though it is anticipated this will be incorporated into the scheme design if growth comes forward on either of these two sites.
- 4.51 Overall, Site 1b is considered the most favourable, reflecting the brownfield nature of the site and the reduced potential for development to impact upon soil resources and quality. Following this is Site 6b, and then Site 7b and finally Site 5 – reflecting the provisional agricultural land classification results. All sites are anticipated to avoid significant effects; broadly neutral effects are considered likely for Site 1b, Site 6b and Site 7b, and minor negative for Site 5.

Landscape

- 4.52 Site 1b is relatively flat according to the Lamerton SOA, and is in a slightly elevated area when compared to the elevation of the existing Lamerton village. There are no tree preservation orders, significant trees, or veterans or ancient trees on the site. It has been given a medium landscape sensitivity and a medium visual sensitivity, due to potential impacts to long views to the south / south east.
- 4.53 Site 5 is relatively flat according to the Lamerton SOA, and is at a similar elevation to existing development in Lamerton village. Whilst there are no significant trees, or veteran or ancient trees on the site, there are tree preservation orders in place. The site has been given a high landscape sensitivity and a high visual sensitivity – reflecting the open nature of the site, its medium to long views across the landscape to the west / south west, and its high intervisibility. If development were to come forward on this site, it would be peripheral in nature and impact upon open landscape features that define existing settlement boundary.
- 4.54 Site 6b is a gently sloping site according to the Lamerton SOA, and is at a similar elevation to existing development in Lamerton village. Whilst the site is not subject to tree preservation orders, nor does it have veteran or ancient trees within its boundaries, there are significant trees on the site. Overall, this site has a low landscape and visual sensitivity, reflecting the site being located adjacent to relatively recent development.
- 4.55 Site 7b is a gently sloping site in a slightly elevated area when compared to the elevation of the existing Lamerton village, according to the Lamerton SOA. There are no tree preservation orders, significant trees, or veterans or ancient trees on the site. The site has been given a medium landscape sensitivity and visual sensitivity, which reflects its slightly enclosed nature and long distance views to the south / south east. If development were to come forward on this site, it would be on the settlement boundary peripheral and could impact upon open landscape and natural features.
- 4.56 Overall, development on Site 6b is considered the most favourable in terms of impacts to the landscape. This is due to its low landscape and visual sensitivity, however it is noted that the significant trees on the site could be

affected by development. Following this is Site 1b; whilst the site has a medium landscape and visual sensitivity, it is located within the existing Lamerton settlement boundary. As such, development focused on this site could be. In contrast, Site 7b is ranked the second least favourably – it has a medium landscape and visual sensitivity, but is located on the periphery of the settlement boundary and as such has the potential to lead to negative impacts to views and character. Similarly, Site 5 is ranked the least favourably due to its position on the periphery of the settlement – and its high landscape and visual sensitivity relating to its intervisibility in the wider landscape.

4.57 The landscape and visual sensitivities of the sites have been the defining factor in determining the potential for development to lead to significant effects. As such, significant effects are not anticipated for Site 1b, reflecting its low sensitivities. Significant effects are also not anticipated for Site 6b, though it is noted that the site has a medium landscape and visual sensitivity – as such, uncertainty is concluded at this time. Significant negative effects are considered likely for Site 5 and Site 7b, which reflects their focus of growth on the village periphery and the landscape and visual sensitivity of Site 5.

Transportation

4.58 Three of the four sites have existing vehicular access to the local road network:

- Access is assumed to be achievable from the single carriageway lane adjacent to the north for Site 1b.
- Access is assumed to be achievable from Trenance Drive to the west for Site 6.
- Access is assumed to be achievable from a single carriageway lane to the south / south east of Site 7b, or along the north-western boundary of Site 7b via Pittiscombe Lane.

4.59 These access points are also anticipated to facilitate pedestrian and cyclist ingress and egress to the sites, but could disrupt boundary vegetation where this is present – especially in relation to Site 7b.

4.60 Comparatively, access to Site 5 could be created by connecting to the two carriageway road adjacent to the south / south western site boundary, however this would likely result in the loss of boundary vegetation. Whilst there is existing access to Site 5 from a single track lane on the western / south western site boundary, it has poor visibility – especially at the junction with the two carriageway road. It is noted that these access points could also facilitate pedestrian and cycle access to the site.

4.61 In terms of further opportunities to engage with active travel opportunities, Site 1b has a public footpath adjacent to the south-eastern site boundary; and Site 7b is also within proximity to this public right of way. Site 5 has an existing public footpath intersecting the site in a broadly north-south direction. Site 6b does not have a public right of way connection.

4.62 Overall, Site 1b and Site 7b are considered the most favourable options for growth with respect to the Transportation SEA topic. This is due to both sites having existing access points that can facilitate vehicular, cycle and pedestrian ingress and egress. It also reflects the proximity of the sites to public rights of way. Following this is Site 6b – reflecting its likely access from Trenance Drive.

Site 5 is ranked the least favourably in relation to transportation, given access to the site would need to be established to the two carriageway road, and whilst existing access exists it has poor visibility with the road. Broadly neutral effects are considered likely for Site 1b, Site 6b and Site 7b, reflecting their limited potential to impact upon the baseline. Site 5 is anticipated to bring forward minor negative effects. Effects are not likely to be significant considering the scope of the LNP and the anticipated level of growth during the plan period.

5. Establishing the preferred approach for the LNP

- 5.1 As noted in **Chapter 2**, the strategic planning context is set by the adopted Plymouth and South West Devon JLP 2014-2034. Within this adopted Local Plan, Lamerton is within the 'Sustainable Villages' category within the spatial strategy. The Local Plan outlines growth in these sustainable villages will be focused on meeting local needs, and the Local Plan will encourage communities to identify sites to meet these needs (particularly through the preparation of neighbourhood plans). The JLP indicates that Lamerton could accommodate up to 20 new homes during the plan period. Upon considering recent commitments and completions in the neighbourhood area, the Neighbourhood Plan Group have identified a residual requirement of 10 homes across the LNP period.
- 5.2 It is recognised that the residual requirements for the neighbourhood area (specifically in terms of the total housing number) will be achieved by the approval of 19 dwellings at Site 2 'Land adjacent to Green Hill'²¹. Additionally, an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted on Site 5 'Behind Farriers'²². However, the Neighbourhood Plan Group recognise that the types of homes proposed through these schemes would not necessarily address the mix of homes required by the community, as identified through the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)²³.
- 5.3 On this basis, the preferred approach for the LNP has been informed by the various surveys and evidence base documents prepared to support the LNP (to date), responses from community consultation events, and the SEA findings. Specifically, the Regulation 14 version of the LNP is supportive of allocations at the following three sites subject to the local design guidance and criteria listed within the respective site-specific policies, as follows:
- **Policy H3a:** Land adjacent to Court Cottage (for up to 6 homes).
 - **Policy H3b:** Land behind Trenance (for up to 8 homes).
 - **Policy H3c:** Land at Bull's Field (for up to 5 homes).

²¹ West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Planning Online Status: 0107/22/OPA](#)

²² It is noted that an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted for the site, as shown on West Devon's Planning Register (December 2025): [Planning application: 3217/25/OPA - Planning Page for DEF | West Devon Borough Council](#)

²³ Devon Communities Together (2021): [Parish of Lamerton Housing Needs Report](#)



Figure 3: Site allocations proposed within the LNP

6. Appraisal of the Regulation 14 version of the LNP

Overview

6.1 The aim of this part of the Environmental Report is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the current Regulation 14 ‘pre-submission’ version of the LNP. This chapter presents:

- An appraisal of the current version of the LNP under the SEA themes that form the SEA Framework.
- The overall conclusions at this current stage and recommendations for the next stage of plan-making.

LNP policy framework

6.2 The draft LNP contains 25 policies. These are listed below:

Table 6: Policy framework within the LNP

Policy reference	Policy name
H1	Settlement boundary for Lamerton
H2	Sustainable housing development
H3	Allocate land for 19 new homes for local needs, 2026-34
H3a	Land adjacent to Court Cottage
H3b	Land behind Trenance
H3c	Land at Bull’s Field
H4	Rural Exception Sites
H5	Design and Quality of New Development
H6	Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside
H7	Transport and Accessibility
H8	Flood risk
HGE1	General Landscape
HGE2	Farm Diversification
HGE3	Local Green Space Designations
HGE4	Wildlife Protection
HGE5	Trees and Hedgerows
HGE6	Heritage Assets
E1	General Business Development
E2	Small Scale Business Expansions
E3	Protection of employment sites

Policy reference	Policy name
E4	Communications Infrastructure
E5	Tourism Development
LC1	Microgeneration energy development
CW1	Community assets and facilities
CW2	Sporting / recreational facilities

Methodology

- 6.3 For each theme, 'significant' effects of the Regulation 14 version of the LNP on the baseline are predicated and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations. For example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' will be described within the assessment, as appropriate.
- 6.4 Every effort is made to identify / evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high-level nature of the LNP. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects to ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.
- 6.5 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the criteria presented within Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 6.6 Whilst there are no European designated sites for biodiversity within the neighbourhood area, the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is within 5km of the neighbourhood area. This designation is threatened by changes in abiotic conditions; urbanisation, industrial and similar activities; human induced changes in hydraulic conditions; outdoor sport and leisure activities, recreational activities; and pollution to groundwater.
- 6.7 Whilst there are no nationally designated sites for biodiversity or geodiversity within the Lamerton neighbourhood area, there are six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 3km of the neighbourhood area boundaries. However, whilst the neighbourhood area does intersect with multiple Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) linked to these designations, these are not linked to the type of development likely to come forward through the LNP. It is also recognised that there are a number of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) within and in proximity to the Lamerton neighbourhood area, and a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats.

- 6.8 The site allocation policies make provision for biodiversity and geodiversity. This includes through ensuring existing boundary trees and hedgerows are retained (Policy H3a, Policy H3b and Policy H3c). This will help to ensure biodiversity interest and connectivity is maintained through development, which contributes to biodiversity value across the neighbourhood area. Additionally, Policy H3b indicates that development proposals for the Land behind Trenance site will be subject to a full ecology study, with a report to be submitted alongside any planning application. This will further ensure that any features within the site that contribute to biodiversity value and / or connectivity are maintained through development.
- 6.9 There are policies within the LNP that relate specifically to biodiversity and geodiversity. Policy HGE4 seeks to protect wildlife by ensuring nature development retains any nature conservation interest associated with a site or building and provides net gains where possible, and supports the protection, restoration and creation of habitat features. Policy HGE5 seeks to protect existing trees and hedgerows of biodiversity and conservation value and provide additional planting opportunities within the neighbourhood area. These stipulations are anticipated to provide positive benefits by ensuring biodiversity value and connectivity within Lamerton are maintained and enhanced.
- 6.10 The wider LNP policies also have a biodiversity and geodiversity focus. This is demonstrated through ensuring new development respects and works with the existing natural environment and enhances biodiversity (Policy H5), and development involving the conversion of buildings retains any nature conservation interest and provides biodiversity net gains where possible (Policy H6). Furthermore, development should respect, conserve and enhance wildlife value wherever possible, and should maintain existing and plant new hedgerows, trees and woodland (Policy HGE1). Additionally, new small-scale business development will be supported where the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on sites designated for their biodiversity importance (Policy E1). It is anticipated that these policies work well to mitigate potential adverse impacts to biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 6.11 Overall, **minor positive effects** are considered likely in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity. This reflects the stipulations included under the site allocation policies, which work to safeguard and enhance biodiversity within the site boundaries. This conclusion also reflects the policy provision of the wider LNP policies, which seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity through development and the protection of wildlife and important habitat features.

Climate change and flood risk

- 6.12 With regards to flood risk, there are parts of the Lamerton neighbourhood area that are within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. These areas are focused in the south-western extent of the neighbourhood area (primarily along the neighbourhood boundary, and linked to a tributary of the River Tamar), in the south-eastern extent (linked to a tributary of the River Tavy), and associated with the River Lumburn that runs through the settlement of Lamerton itself. With regards to surface water flood risk, most of the areas at risk are adjacent to the aforementioned waterbodies. There are also large areas at low risk in the northern / north-eastern extent of the neighbourhood area.

- 6.13 It is noted that the three allocated sites (Policy H3a, Policy H3b and Policy H3c) have a low risk of fluvial and surface water flooding. However, Policy H3b includes stipulations to ensure development does not exacerbate surface water runoff into areas of Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 that are within proximity to the east. This is anticipated to have positive effects by ensuring that development of the site does not adversely impact upon flood effects elsewhere in the neighbourhood area.
- 6.14 The wider LNP policies also make stipulations in relation to flood risk. Policy H8 indicates that all development should be located away from areas at risk of flooding, and where necessary flood measures should be incorporated into development design to ensure flood risk does not increase. The need for flood risk management is also reiterated in Policy H5, which indicates that new development will need to utilise sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). These policies are anticipated to work well to reduce flood risk and effects.
- 6.15 Carbon emissions have been on a downward trend in West Devon, following the same trend as that across Devon, the South West, and England. The largest contributor is the agricultural sector.
- 6.16 The site allocation policies (Policy H3a, Policy H3b, and Policy H3c) are anticipated to contribute additional greenhouse gas emissions to the Lamerton neighbourhood area, due to the increase in the built footprint. However, given the size of the sites and their proposed growth, this increase is not anticipated to be significant. Whilst none of the site allocation policies include stipulations related to reducing emissions, it is recognised that Policy H5 outlines support for development that incorporates sustainable construction techniques, energy conservation measures, and small-scale energy production. By including these design and quality standards, it is anticipated that development through the site allocation policies could have a reduced impact.
- 6.17 The wider plan policies also have a climate change mitigation focus. Policy E1 and Policy E2 seeks to support general business development proposals and small-scale business expansions where they include sustainable construction forms, provide energy conservation measures, and utilise renewable energy where practical. Additionally, Policy LC1 seeks to support the installation of microgeneration renewable energy infrastructure. These policies demonstrate the focus of the LNP on integrating and promoting renewable energy infrastructure and sustainable construction practices, which is anticipated to reduce emissions linked to construction and operation.
- 6.18 Overall, **neutral effects** are considered likely in relation to climate change and flood risk under the LNP. This is due to the location of site allocations away from areas at risk of flooding, and the policy provisions of the LNP on ensuring additional growth does not exacerbate flood risk effects in the neighbourhood area. This conclusion also reflects the low level of growth likely to come forward through the site allocations, and the focus on ensuring emissions linked to construction and operation are reduced.

Community wellbeing

- 6.19 It is recognised that the residual requirements for the neighbourhood area (specifically in terms of the total housing number) will be achieved by the

approval of 19 dwellings at Site 2 'Land adjacent to Green Hill'²⁴. Additionally, an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted on Site 5 'Behind Farriers'²⁵. However, the Neighbourhood Plan Group recognise that the types of homes proposed through these schemes would not necessarily address the mix of homes required by the community, as identified through the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)²⁶.

- 6.20 To achieve this, the LNP seeks to allocate three sites through Policy H3a, Policy H3b and Policy H3c – to deliver up to 19 homes across a total of 1.3 hectares over 2026-34 (Policy H3). Policy H3a allocates the Land at Court Cottage site for up to six dwellings (of which two will be affordable housing), Policy H3b allocates the Land behind Trenance site for up to 5 dwellings (of which a minimum of three will be affordable housing), and Policy H3c allocates the Land at Bull's Field site for up to eight dwellings (of which a minimum of five will be affordable housing). Each of the site allocation policies include stipulations relating to the community wellbeing theme. This includes provisions ensuring that the sites are deliverable and readily available, providing stipulations over ingress and egress of the site, and ensuring development is designed to mitigate adverse impacts upon existing residential and community interests. This will help to ensure that new development reflects the needs of the community.
- 6.21 Policy H1 seeks to define a development boundary for Lamerton. Policy H2 seeks to support proposals for new housing development where they support sustainability and viability within the community and provide new homes to meet the local need. Policy H4 seeks to support development on rural exception sites within proximity to the development boundaries of Lamerton where they provide affordable housing or maintain the vitality of the community. These policies are anticipated to bring forward positive effects by enhancing a sense of community identity, meeting the housing needs of the community, and maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the neighbourhood area.
- 6.22 The employment and local economy policies also work well to enhance community wellbeing in the neighbourhood area. This is achieved through supporting applications for new small-scale business development (Policy E1), supporting small scale business expansions on existing employment sites (Policy E2), protecting existing employment sites (Policy E3), expanding communications infrastructure (Policy E4), and supporting tourism development (Policy E5). This is anticipated to enhance community wellbeing by making working within the Lamerton neighbourhood area a more viable and attractive option to residents and communities within proximity to the neighbourhood area boundaries, which has the potential to help enhance the local economy within Lamerton.
- 6.23 Additionally, the inclusion of Policy CW1 and Policy CW2 is also anticipated to have a positive effect in relation to community wellbeing. This is achieved through protecting community assets and facilities that are valued by residents of the neighbourhood area (Policy CW1) and supporting proposals for sporting and recreational facilities which meet the needs of the schools and the wider

²⁴ West Devon Borough Council (2025): [Planning Online Status: 0107/22/OPA](#)

²⁵ It is noted that an outline planning application for up to 20 homes has been submitted for the site, as shown on West Devon's Planning Register (December 2025): [Planning application: 3217/25/OPA - Planning Page for DEF | West Devon Borough Council](#)

²⁶ Devon Communities Together (2021): [Parish of Lamerton Housing Needs Report](#)

community (Policy CW2). Community wellbeing is also considered through Policy HGE3, which seeks to designate and protect local green spaces.

- 6.24 These policies will help to maintain and enhance community wellbeing by promoting community cohesion – through providing spaces for residents to come together and interact. They also support healthy lifestyles by promoting space for engagement with physical activity.
- 6.25 Overall, the LNP performs well in relation to the community wellbeing SEA theme. It demonstrates an understanding of what the community wants in relation to a housing mix, by allocating sites to deliver additional homes and affordable housing options. The policies also work well to support health, and maintain and enhance the infrastructure provision, which will contribute to community wellbeing by promoting community cohesion and healthy lifestyles. As such, **significant positive effects** are considered most likely.

Historic environment

- 6.26 The historic environment is a key consideration locally, given the 54 listed buildings, three scheduled monuments, conservation area and 459 locally important, non-designated heritage assets. An additional consideration is the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site, which is within proximity to the neighbourhood area.
- 6.27 The consideration of the historic environment is reflected in the spatial strategy of the LNP. Site allocation Policy H3a and Policy H3c indicate that development design will need to be sensitive to the Grade II listed buildings within proximity to the site, and Policy H3a further indicates that development of the site will need to be designed to mitigate any potential adverse impacts upon the conservation area. Furthermore, Policy H3c indicates that the potential historic significance of the standing stone within the site boundaries will be investigated. However, **the SEA recommends** that Policy H3a could be updated to include specific reference to the Lamerton Conservation Area, given that the site is located within the designated area and development could impact upon its setting and significance and change how the designated area is interpreted in the wider landscape²⁷.
- 6.28 Further design stipulations are provided under Policy H5, which seeks to ensure high quality design (for example, including through the use of materials and detailing) that reflects the local character and distinctiveness, and support development where it respects and works with the existing historic environment. This is anticipated to help ensure the setting and historic character of Lamerton is maintained through new residential development.
- 6.29 It is noted that Policy EH6 specifically addresses heritage assets within the neighbourhood area, demonstrating that the impact of development proposals on heritage assets will need to be fully assessed – including non-designated heritage assets. This is likely to bring forward positive effects by ensuring development does not adversely impact upon important heritage assets, areas and features, nor their settings or significance. This will help to maintain the historic environment in the neighbourhood area.

²⁷ This recommendation has since been incorporated into the Regulation 14 version of the LNP, with the relevant policy updated to state “The design and layout will be sensitive to the Conservation Area, the site proximity to the Grade II Listed Buildings, and shall be in accordance with the Design Criteria”.

- 6.30 Wider LNP policies also make provisions that are anticipated to have an impact on the historic environment. Policy HGE1 indicates that development will need to respect, conserve and enhance the heritage value of Lamerton, for example through reflecting the existing layouts, materials and landscaping. This will help to ensure new development is complimentary and does not visually detract from the historic built form and setting of heritage assets. The historic setting is further considered through Policy HGE5, which indicates trees and hedgerows of historic value should be protected through development proposals, which will help to maintain heritage value. Additionally, Policy E4 indicates that proposals to expand communications infrastructure will be supported where they would not have a harmful impact upon heritage assets in the Lamerton neighbourhood area. This demonstrates a focus on maintaining the historic environment.
- 6.31 Overall, **neutral effects** are considered likely in relation to the historic environment. This is due to the inclusion of design stipulations within the site allocation policies, which is anticipated to reduce the potential for adverse effects on heritage assets, areas and features, and their setting. This conclusion also reflects the focus of the wider plan policies on encouraging high quality design – which will help to reduce the impact of new development and infrastructure on heritage, its setting and its significance. It is recommended that Policy H3a is revised to include specific reference to the Lamerton Conservation Area, given that the site is located within the designated area and development could impact upon its setting and significance and change how the designated area is interpreted in the wider landscape.

Land, soil and water resources

- 6.32 A key consideration relating to the land, soil and water resources theme is the avoidance of development coming forward on best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. The majority of the Lamerton neighbourhood area is underlain with Grade 3 provisional agricultural quality land, with pockets of Grade 4. As such, any level of development could have the potential to result in the loss of land that could support agricultural activity, given that it is not possible to differentiate between Grade 3a (best and most versatile) and Grade 3b land. However, the LNP works well in this respect, by focusing growth on three site allocations that have a lower potential to support agricultural activity (Policy H3a, Policy H3b and Policy H3c) – which will help to reduce the amount of potential agricultural quality land loss.
- 6.33 Another consideration is water quality. There is one monitored waterbody within the Lamerton neighbourhood area, which has been classified as having a moderate ecological water status. It is anticipated that water sources and their quality will be managed by South West Water and its associated Water Resources Management Plan.
- 6.34 More broadly with respect to this theme, the policy framework has a focus on protecting the quality of soil and water resources. For example, through ensuring that proposals that enable farm diversification or changes to agricultural or land management practices are compatible with existing agricultural use (Policy HGE1). This will help to ensure the quality and productivity of soils are protected. Additionally, microgeneration energy development proposals will need to demonstrate that the development will not have an adverse impact on the local hydrology of the neighbourhood area (Policy LC1).

6.35 Overall, **neutral effects** are considered likely in relation to the land, soil and water resources theme. This reflects the reduced potential for the loss of productive agricultural land, and the focus of the wider policies to safeguard soil and water resources and quality.

Landscape

6.36 The Lamerton neighbourhood area sits wholly within the South Devon National Character Area, and across four Devon local character areas – Tamar Upland Fringe, River Tavy Middle Upper, Middle Tamar Valley, and Tavistock Dartmoor Fringes. Notably, the Lamerton neighbourhood area is within the Tamar Valley National Landscape within its western extent, and adjacent to Dartmoor National Park to the north east. The overlap with these designations and character areas lends to the overarching character of the Lamerton neighbourhood area.

6.37 The site allocation policies make provisions for the landscape – indicating that development proposals will need to be landscaped to minimise visual impacts, will need to be of a density that reflects the rural nature of the area, and have limited heights (Policy H3a, Policy H3b and Policy H3c). This is considered to help mitigate any adverse impacts that development could have, for example by ensuring views are maintained and new development is complementary of the existing built environment. Additionally, Policy H5 contains design and quality stipulations for new developments to incorporate, which includes ensuring development reflects the local character and distinctiveness, respects and works with the existing landscape, and protects properties and residents from overshadowing and overlooking. Each of the site allocation policies are required to be in line with Policy H5, and as such the potential for negative landscape impacts are further reduced.

6.38 The landscape in Lamerton is further considered through landscape specific Policy HGE1, which indicates that the visual landscape character of the area should be respected, conserved and enhanced, and the importance of the open countryside on the setting and visual quality of the settlement should be recognised. This is anticipated to have positive effects through ensuring the landscape character and quality is fully considered within development proposals, which will help to reduce the potential for adverse effects.

6.39 The wider policies of the LNP also include landscape provisions. This is largely through defining a settlement boundary for Lamerton (Policy H1), and ensuring proposals consider the potential impacts the development could have upon the landscape and the setting of the Lamerton settlement (Policy H4). This helps to ensure development comes forward within the settlement as far as possible, and where it does come forward outside of the boundaries, it respects the landscape character. This further helps to reduce the potential for adverse effects on the open countryside within the neighbourhood area. Linked to this, Policy H6 seeks to support the conversion of buildings in the countryside where the design will respect the original character of the building and its surroundings and protects buildings and individuals from overlooking and overshadowing. Again, this is considered likely to bring forward positive effects by ensuring landscape character is maintained, and redundant properties are brought back into appropriate use.

- 6.40 It is considered that designating green spaces (Policy HGE3), protecting areas of nature conservation interest and areas of wildlife value (Policy HGE4), and trees and hedgerows (Policy HGE5) will also contribute positive effects in relation to landscape character and quality. This is achieved through providing visual screening of buildings and structures and maintaining features that help to visually break up the built environment within the neighbourhood area. Protecting these areas also helps to protect and promote the rural character of the neighbourhood area.
- 6.41 The employment policies within the LNP have the potential to deliver positive landscape effects. This includes through ensuring the scale and nature of development proposals would not have significant adverse impacts on the landscape (Policy E1, Policy E4 and Policy E5), include landscaping and green screening where necessary (Policy E1 and Policy E5), and would contribute to the character and vitality of the local area (Policy E2). These stipulations are anticipated to work well to reduce the potential for negative effects to the landscape, largely by ensuring character and views are maintained. It is also noted that Policy LC1 seeks to support microgeneration energy development proposals where they are compatible with landscape sensitivity, will not have an adverse impact on the special qualities of the landscape, and consider the landscape context of the surrounding area. This is anticipated to have positive effects by ensuring development fully considers the landscape and does not impact negatively on character, quality or sensitivity.
- 6.42 Overall, **minor positive effects** are anticipated in relation to the landscape. This reflects the site-specific design stipulations which have been outlined to ensure that development proposals are sensitive to and respect the surrounding landscape character and quality. This conclusion also reflects the wider LNP policies, which seek to protect and enhance green spaces and features, which in turn contribute to local amenity and settlement identity.

Transportation

- 6.43 The Lamerton neighbourhood area has a relatively limited sustainable transport network, given that there is one regular bus service that operates within the neighbourhood area. Additionally, the nearest train station is located approximately 4km to the south. As such, travel is largely facilitated through private vehicles.
- 6.44 New development through Policy H3a, H3b and H3c are likely to increase private vehicles on the local road network. However, given the level of proposed growth through these site allocations (i.e., small-scale growth to meet locally identified needs), it is unlikely that the increase will lead to adverse impacts. Additionally, Policy H3a includes access stipulations, which is likely to help reduce adverse impacts by ensuring access is provided via a road capable of facilitating additional journeys. Furthermore, Policy H3b includes the need to consider the impact of development on parking facilities on new and existing residents – to help ensure parking facilities are maintained through development. This is also anticipated to ensure continued connectivity, as parking facilities will reduce the amount of on-road parking. It is further noted that Policy H7 includes stipulations in relation to transport and accessibility in new development – indicating that development should provide an appropriate level of off-street parking, demonstrate safe and suitable access to the site for all users, and discourage on-street parking where feasible. This is anticipated

to positively contribute towards transportation by ensuring road connectivity is maintained.

- 6.45 The wider policies also include provisions in relation to transportation. This includes supporting the conversion of buildings where the road network can support the proposed use (Policy H6), supporting general business development where the road network in Lamerton can safely accommodate an increase in traffic (Policy E1), supporting small scale business expansions where parking provisions are made (Policy E2), and supporting tourism development where traffic, access and highways issues are considered and addressed (Policy E5). It also includes ensuring that proposals for additional public open space, sports facilities, or access to shared facilities provide suitable access and car parking, which is incorporated into the scheme's design (Policy CW2). These stipulations are anticipated to have positive effects, as they ensure that the road network can support additional growth in the neighbourhood area, and ensures access to important infrastructure and connectivity throughout the neighbourhood area is maintained.
- 6.46 Overall, broadly **neutral effects** are anticipated in relation to transportation through the LNP policies. This conclusion reflects the relatively small-scale growth likely to come forward through the site allocations, and the wider provisions of the plan policies on improving accessibility and connectivity within the neighbourhood area (where possible). This is important for Lamerton considering that sustainable transportation opportunities are limited.

Conclusions and recommendations

- 6.47 **Significant positive effects** are considered most likely in relation to community wellbeing. This reflects the LNP's understanding of the needs and aspirations of the Lamerton community in regard to safeguarding infrastructure, promoting healthy lifestyles, and meeting locally identified housing needs as informed by evidence and community engagement.
- 6.48 **Minor positive effects** are considered likely in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity. This reflects the focus of the LNP on safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity within the site allocation boundaries and through the wider policies across the neighbourhood area. These stipulations work well to protect wildlife and enhance biodiversity value and connectivity.
- 6.49 **Minor positive effects** are also anticipated in relation to the landscape. This reflects the site-specific design stipulations which have been outlined to ensure that development proposals are sensitive to and respect the surrounding landscape character and quality. This conclusion also reflects the wider LNP policies, which seek to protect and enhance green spaces and features, which in turn contribute to local amenity and settlement identity.
- 6.50 Overall, **neutral effects** are considered likely in relation to climate change and flood risk under the LNP. Whilst additional development has the potential to increase emissions originating in the neighbourhood area, it is considered that the level of growth across the three site allocations is unlikely to lead to a large-scale increase. Additionally, the policies of the LNP work well to prioritise sustainable development, including through renewable energy usage. It is further noted that the site allocations avoid areas at greater risk of flooding, and the policies of the LNP supports opportunities to deliver natural drainage solutions to improve flood resilience.

- 6.51 **Neutral effects** are also considered likely in relation to the historic environment. The site allocation policies and wider policy framework have a focus on protecting the setting and identify of both designated and non-designated heritage assets within the neighbourhood area. However, **the SEA recommends** that Policy H3a could be updated to include specific reference to the Lamerton Conservation Area, given that the site is located adjacent to the designated area and development could impact upon its setting and significance and change how the designated area is interpreted in the wider landscape.
- 6.52 Overall, **neutral effects** are further considered in relation to the land, soil and water resources theme. This reflects the reduced potential for the loss of productive agricultural land, and the focus of the LNP policies on safeguarding important resources in terms of their quantity and quality.
- 6.53 Broadly **neutral effects** are anticipated in relation to transportation. This conclusion reflects the relatively small-scale growth likely to come forward through the site allocations, and the wider provisions of the plan policies on improving accessibility and connectivity within the neighbourhood area (where possible). This is important for Lamerton considering that sustainable transportation opportunities are limited.

7. Next steps

Plan finalisation

- 7.1 This Environmental Report accompanies the LNP for Regulation 14 consultation.
- 7.2 Following consultation, any representations made will be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, and the LNP and the Environmental Report will be updated as necessary. The updated Environmental Report will then accompany the LNP for submission to the Local Planning Authority, West Devon Borough Council, for subsequent Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the LNP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the basic conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.
- 7.3 Assuming that the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the LNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by West Devon Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the LNP, it will then be 'made'. Once 'made', the LNP will become part of the Development Plan for West Devon Borough Council, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

Monitoring

- 7.4 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.
- 7.5 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be primarily undertaken by West Devon Borough Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). However, monitoring will be revisited in subsequent stages, considering feedback from consultation and finalisation of the LNP.

