

# PLYMOUTH AND SOUTH WEST DEVON JOINT LOCAL PLAN (JLP)

## Submission draft regulation 19 (March 2017)

### Frequently Asked Questions

Please note that this document has been written in preparation for the consultation which is due to commence on **15 March 2017**.

1. What area does the JLP cover?
2. What relationship does the JLP have with the Plymouth Plan and the South Hams and West Devon Our Plans?
3. Why are we writing a joint local plan?
4. What is this consultation about?
5. How long does the consultation last?
6. Why should I comment?
7. Can comments only be made on soundness and legal compliance?
  - a) Soundness
  - b) Legal requirements
8. Hasn't the public already been consulted on the JLP?
9. I made comments on previous engagement phases, do I need to comment again?
10. What happens when people comment on the JLP?
11. Why does it take so long to produce a local plan and who decides whether the Plan meets the government's approval?
12. How do I make my views known?
13. Are any public events being held?
14. Where can I see the documents?

#### **1. What area does the JLP cover?**

The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan is a joint local plan which covers the administrative areas of Plymouth City, South Hams District and West Devon Borough Councils.

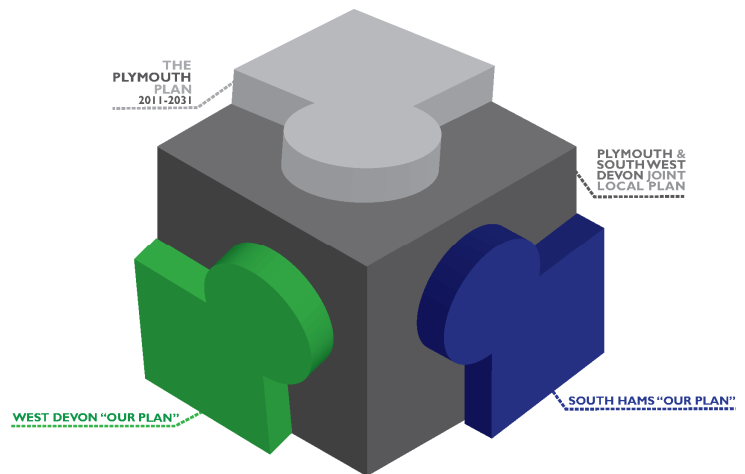
While the Dartmoor National Park Authority sits within the HMA and is also required to produce a Local Plan, it also includes parts of Teignbridge District Council, which is recognised as being part of the Exeter HMA. Because of this the National Park will not be part of the JLP and will instead produce a single Local Plan for the park itself.

We are collaborating with the National Park on producing the evidence which will inform the JLP and the Dartmoor Local Plan and we are also working with Devon

County Council and the local authorities neighbouring the JLP area on any cross boundary issues using the Duty to Cooperate.

## 2. What relationship does the JLP have with the Plymouth Plan and the South Hams and West Devon Our Plans?

The JLP brings together work that has already been carried out separately by the councils on the Plymouth Plan, South Ham's 'Our Plan' and West Devon's 'Our Plan'. It will create single objectives and policies whilst retaining each Council's individual identities.



## 3. Why are we writing a joint local plan?

Plymouth plays a key role in the wider area with important relationships to the surrounding market towns and villages. It has many facilities which people travel from the wider area to use and there are many employment opportunities. All of these connections mean that Plymouth is key to the lives of people living in and around the city. In addition to this is the surrounding towns in South Hams and West Devon which provide local services and facilities that support residents. It makes sense to produce a local plan which recognises these links.

We must therefore plan to meet the needs of this area – the Plymouth Housing Market Area (HMA) and this is a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework. Every Local Planning Authority must produce a Local Plan to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Plan should steer future development over a period of at least 15 years and meet stringent guidelines across a range of land use issues including:

- Allocating land for housing
- Creation of employment opportunities
- Identifying necessary infrastructure improvements; and
- Safeguarding environmental assets and heritage.

The Plymouth HMA is recognised as being the whole areas of the three local authorities so producing a JLP is the most effective way of meeting this requirement.

A JLP will mean a more efficient use of resources, sharing skills and plan-making budgets; a simpler and more cost-effective process with one examination process instead of three; giving the area a clear voice for engaging with regional bodies that guide funding decisions.

#### **4. What is this consultation about?**

The Regulation 19 consultation is the final public consultation/engagement phase before the Joint Local Plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination and eventually adopted as the local development plan.

The submission draft (which is what will be consulted on) will take forward all earlier Regulation 18 consultations and all representations made alongside updated evidence.

The submission draft will set out the vision, policies and proposals to guide future development and the use of land within the Joint Local Plan area and will give a degree of certainty to members of the public and developers as to where development is likely to take place. It will guide decision-makers on the most appropriate forms of development over the Plan period to 2034.

#### **5. How long does the consultation last?**

The consultation will be available for comment for **6 weeks from Wednesday 15 March 2017 to Wednesday 26 April 2017 at midnight.**

Please note that comments submitted after that time will not be considered.

#### **6. Why should I comment?**

As a place-shaping document, everyone can be affected and so everyone who is interested is encouraged to contribute.

#### **7. Can comments only be made on soundness and legal compliance?**

At this stage the Planning Inspector is seeking views on whether the plan is sound and meets the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. In other words whether:

- The Council has planned for the area's housing, employment and infrastructure needs;
- The JLP is based on sound evidence;
- The JLP can be delivered by 2034; and
- The JLP is consistent with national policy, and enables sustainable development.

Representations will be passed to the Inspector and it is recommended that comments are clear, concise and targeted. Whilst respondents are free to comment as they choose, to have greatest influence at this stage it is advisable that representations should relate to the soundness of the Draft Joint Local Plan or to its compliance with legal requirements. These are explained below.

##### **a. Soundness**

Regulations state that a local planning authority should submit a plan for examination which it considers to be “sound” – namely that it is:

- **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure

requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;

- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
- **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

It is advisable that representations made at this stage should therefore focus on whether the plan meets the tests listed above. This is because these are the broad areas that the Inspector will focus on in examining the Local Plan.

**b. Legal requirements**

When considering if the plan meets its legal requirements, the Inspector will consider a number of issues including:

- **Local Development Scheme:** has the plan been prepared in accordance with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme?
- **Statement of Community Involvement and relevant regulations:** has consultation on the plan been in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Consultation and have the appropriate bodies been consulted?
- **Duty to Cooperate:** has the plan been prepared in cooperation with other local planning authorities and prescribed bodies, such as the Environment Agency and the Local Enterprise Partnership, to identify and address any issues which will have a significant impact on at least two planning areas?
- **Sustainability Appraisal:** has an adequate Sustainability Appraisal been carried out?
- **Appropriate Assessment:** has an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations Assessment been carried out?
- **National Policy and Legislation:** does the Plan comply with national policy and legislation, for example, the National Planning Policy Framework.

**8. Hasn’t the public already been consulted on the Local Plan?**

Yes – we have consulted the public several times over the last few years and each local authority held their own consultations/engagement phases for each of their respective Plans before the decision was taken to write a Joint Local Plan. On each Council’s website you can see all the comments received on each consultation which include:

Name of Engagement	Date
<b>Plymouth City Council</b>	
Plymouth Plan Conversation	October to July 2013

Plymouth Plan Connections	July to October 2014
Plymouth Plan Check-Up	21 January 2015 to 4 March 2015
Plymouth Plan Collect	28 September 2015 to 8 January 2016
<b>South Hams District Council</b>	
'Our Plan' publicity campaign	May 2014 to June 2014
Sustainability Appraisal Framework issued	July 2014
<b>West Devon Borough Council</b>	
'Our Plan' publicity campaign	May 2014 to June 2014
Sustainability Appraisal Framework issued	July 2014
Regulation 19 Stage	February 2015 (6 weeks)
<b>Plymouth and South West Devon Local Plan</b>	
Crunch Time! and Have Your Say	1 July 2016 to 12 August 2016
Considerations	9 November 2016 to 21 December 2016
<b>Regulation 19 Consultation</b>	<b>15 March 2017 – 26 April 2017</b>

**9. I made comments on previous engagement phases, do I need to comment again?**

While each comment made previously has been taken into account to produce the Joint Local Plan, This time the comments will go straight to the Planning Inspector who will use your comments to decide whether the plan is good enough. Therefore any comments previously submitted that you think have not been resolved will need to be submitted again as part of this consultation to be taken into account by the Planning Inspector.

**10. What happens when people comment on the Local Plan?**

Each Council will consider all the comments received during the consultation period. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether to submit the Local Plan for Examination by a Government appointed Inspector.

At the Examination in Public (EiP) to the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (Submission version), the Inspector will examine the plan, the evidence supporting it and representations received during the Submission round of consultation and judge whether it is sound and meets its legal requirements. Further information will be provided about the examination process before that stage begins.

## **11. Why does it take so long to produce a Local Plan and who decides whether the Plan meets the government's approval?**

Local Plans must be based on robust and up-to-date evidence, which meets legal requirements and tests of soundness. Evidence is rigorously tested and challenged at an independent examination. Many plans have had to be withdrawn for various reasons before or after Examination, including failure to comply with national policy or statutory requirements. The Council should not submit its Local Plan before it is confident that it will succeed at examination. To do otherwise would be inefficient and wasteful of resources, and ultimately delay adoption. And without an adopted Local Plan the district is vulnerable to unplanned development occurring in undesirable locations.

## **12. How do I make my views known?**

There are different ways to send in your comments:

- Online at <http://plymouth.objective.co.uk/portal/planning/jlp> This is the most convenient means of submitting comments and ensures that you will be kept informed of future stages of plan preparation.
- Via email: [plymouthplan@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:plymouthplan@plymouth.gov.uk) or [strategic.planning@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@swdevon.gov.uk)
- Via post: Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ.
- At any of our Public Consultation Events

**Remember: the deadline for all comments is midnight on Wednesday 26 April 2017.**

**Please note:** it is a requirement of the Local Plan process that comments can only be deemed legitimate (“duly made”) if they are received in a written format with a name and address supplied. Comments made verbally or anonymously cannot be accepted. It is also important to appreciate that the Council is obliged to make all duly-made representations available for public inspection on its website.

This means that we will not be able to accept any anonymous comments or comments which do not include a full postal address.

## **13. Are any public events being held?**

Public ‘surgeries/drop –in’ events will be held throughout the Joint Local Plan area. Due to the statutory nature of the consultation the surgeries will be clearly targeted to the people who want to have a planning inspector to hear their objections and will be a chance for people to help formulate their comments for the inspector.

They will be very focused on this question and helping people to set out clearly the specific part of the plan they object to – and the specific change they want to see to

overcome their concern – plus any evidence they want the inspector to see to support their case.

Due to the sensitiveness of the workshops and the messaging surrounding the consultation a team leader will be present at each surgery/drop-in session with at least one supporting officer.

The dates and times of the surgeries will be published on our website when they have been finalised.

#### **14. Where can I see the documents?**

As well as the public events above, the consultation documents can be seen at the following locations:

In Plymouth:

- All public libraries in Plymouth
- Plymouth's First Stop Shop, New George Street
- Ballard House, West Hoe Road

In South Hams and West Devon:

- Dartmouth – Town Council
- Ivybridge – Watermark Centre
- Ivybridge – Town Council
- Kingsbridge – Town Council
- Totnes – Town Council
- Totnes – Library
- Salcombe – Town Council
- Woolwell – Community Centre
- Okehampton – One-stop-shop
- Okehampton – Town Council
- North Tawton – Town Council
- Hatherleigh – Town Council/Community Centre
- Follaton House
- Kilworthy Park
- Okehampton Office

Documents will also be sent to each member and each Town and Parish Council to share with neighbourhood planning groups.