

Tavistock Neighbourhood Plan

Developing Policy Intents from Aims and Objectives

27th March 2023

Introduction

This paper sets out the latest version of the Tavistock Neighbourhood Plan Vision, Aims and Objectives, following consultation with members of the community, and suggests various policy areas (“intents”) which will help to respond positively to the objectives, in particular. The intents are a draft and provide a “direction of travel” for a first set of draft policies for discussion and inclusion in the Plan.

The Steering Group has considered the first draft of policy intents and discussed whether they are appropriate, whether any are not considered necessary and whether there are any other policy areas which could usefully be explored and draft policies developed. The Group was invited, at its meeting on 13th March 2023, to consider the first draft intents and forward any further comments to the consultant, to enable further evolution of the intents to those set out in this draft. Further comments from the Group are not “closed off” however, as both the intents and resultant draft policies will continue to be shaped during the Plan-making process. Further comments were received following a meeting with the Steering Group and have been taken into account in this final version of the Intents Paper.

As context, the emerging Vision for the Plan is as follows.

Tavistock Plan Vision

In 2034, Tavistock is a sustainable, thriving market town that benefits from and safeguards its natural and built historic environment, riverside setting, green spaces and surrounding moorland landscape and has responded positively to the challenges posed by our changing climate.

Tavistock retains its renowned town centre and markets which showcase a diverse range of sustainable businesses to serve the community and maintains high-quality community facilities and infrastructure that promote the health and well-being of residents.

Tavistock has a variety of sustainable and accessible homes designed to meet the needs of a balanced community, developed with respect for the character and heritage of the town.

Travel within and around the town is convenient by healthy and sustainable means accessible to all and the town is well-connected to Plymouth and other nearby communities by public transport.

Parks, allotments, and other green spaces in Tavistock are protected and maintained to promote active outdoor pursuits, mitigate the effects of climate change and increase biodiversity.

The following table sets out the emerging aims and objectives and several policy intents.

Aims	Objectives	Comments on Draft Objectives (if any)	Policy Title	Policy Intent
Sustainable Development				
New development takes place in appropriate locations, is well-designed, provides social benefit, and responds positively to the challenges of climate change.	Promote well-designed, sustainable and accessible development in appropriate locations that meets the identified needs of the community.		SD1: Sustainable Development Locations	This policy would cover preferred locations for development, e.g. within settlement boundary, brownfield sites, infill, on edge of boundary - but without making allocations cannot be specific about specific locations for development. This can also be the policy area to introduce a settlement boundary, if you wish to pursue this.
			SD2: High Quality Design	Encouraging and supporting high quality design in development. Policy can be used to embed a Design Guide and / or Character Assessment into policy. The policy will include a requirement which encourages developers of major development to engage with the community at an early stage in the proposal's formation and encourage mechanisms such as Design Review Panels. The policy could also include matters such as provision of informal public open space, private amenity greenspace and expanded provision of community facilities as part of development unless already covered by LP policies.

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	Promote sustainable development which responds positively to the challenges of climate change.		SD3: Development which Responds Positively to a Changing Climate	A policy which encourages best practice in new development to drive delivery towards net zero carbon targets at a quicker rate than Building Regulations will allow.
	Promote sustainable environmental practices and support adaptations and mitigations to climate change, recognising increased flood risk as a particular vulnerability.		SD4: Responding to Flood Risk	A policy which introduces criteria for proposals to meet which are not already covered by JLP and NPPF policy. Can include reference to green and open SuDS as part of a wider green and blue infrastructure network and need for management plans to be put in place through planning conditions.
	Support improvements to the environment of the town		SD5: Environmental Enhancements	A policy which identifies key projects which will improve and enhance the town, both the town centre, and the wider town area. This could be the place to capture improvements and projects which are then amplified through other policies in the Heritage, Environment, Business and Transport & Connectivity sections, for example.
	Support identified priorities for the provision of social and other infrastructure.		SD6: Proposals for Community Social Infrastructure and Other Projects	A policy which supports proposals for community infrastructure and other identified projects. The definition of “social infrastructure” will need to be clear in the justification text for the policy.

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	Support renewable and low carbon energy proposals		SD7: Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation	A policy which supports small scale renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes. The term “small-scale” will need to be defined and criteria introduced which ensure that support in principle does not mean that other things of value (e.g. landscape) are not adversely effected / harmed.
Housing				
New housing meets the identified needs of the community, is well-designed, provides social benefit, delivers homes that are affordable to local people and response positively to the	Support the use of community land trusts to achieve affordable, sustainable and high-quality housing design for the benefit of local people.		HOU1: Community Land Trusts	Encouraging and supporting CLT development proposals. Policy to generally support, rather than specifically identify areas of land / sites.
	Support windfall town centre development for dwellings where it supports the overall vitality and viability of town centre uses.		HOU2: Residential Development in the Town Centre	A policy which supports residential development in the defined town centre, subject to various criteria which seek to protect the vitality and viability of the town centre.

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challenges of climate change.	Support developments with a housing tenure, size and mix that redress imbalances in the age and income demographics of the community to ensure that Tavistock remains a vibrant and diverse market town.		<p>HOU3: Responding to Local Housing Needs (type, size and mix)</p> <p>HOU4: Responding to Local Housing Needs (tenure)</p>	<p>Two policies which encourage developments to respond positively to the Housing Needs Assessment findings around type, mix and tenure.</p> <p>Other specific policies may or may not also come from the HNA evidence such as support for live-work units or local connections (affordable housing) allocations.</p>
Business				
Tavistock's Town Centre remains the commercial and social heart of Tavistock and sustainable neighbourhood retail sites that meet local needs are supported.	Support sustainable and inclusive town centre development which sustains and safeguards a diverse and flourishing town centre with retail at its heart, supporting appropriate mixed-use development in the town centre where it meets the identified housing needs of the community.		B1: Supporting a Managed Transition in the Town Centre to Ensure Vitality is Retained	Largely about protecting Primary Shop Frontage from inappropriate change of use, within the context of supporting residential in some locations and as part of mixed development, and where proposals require planning permission (not all change of use does in the town centre). The policy could introduce a tiered preference of uses before 100% residential is considered appropriate. Policy must align with "Residential Development in the Town Centre" policy.
	Encourage the positive and acceptable use for residential, offices and services, on the		B2: Supporting Upper Floor Non-retail Uses	A policy which supports conversion of upper retail floors to other uses, where these require planning permission.

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	upper floors of shops and commercial premises.			
	Promote vibrant daytime and evening activities, including hospitality businesses, to enhance town centre vitality and viability and support the development of cultural uses and activity.	The promotion of activities is not something which planning policy can do. However, you could perhaps introduce a policy which supports proposals for development and changes of use which will extend the night-time economy and cultural “offer” of the town. See suggested policy intent.	B3: Supporting the Evening Economy and Cultural Activity	A policy which provide policy support for proposals which support the night-time economy and cultural provision, introducing various caveats to ensure that things like local amenity (noise, light pollutions etc) and access are not compromised.
Development that is sustainable and recognises the importance of Tavistock’s unique market town heritage and place within a working rural community is promoted.	Support sustainable business development in town that respects the town’s character.		B4: Town Centre Uses and Protecting Character	A policy which seeks to protect the character of the town centre. The policy may be covered by Heritage policies, and this can be confirmed or not as policy wording is developed.
	Support agricultural development outside town that enhances a sustainable supply chain.		B5: Supporting Farm Shops	A policy which supports farm diversification through provision or farm shops which support the local food retail market including farmers’ markets in the town centre. Proposals to be subject to various criteria to make them acceptable. Policy wording would need to reflect JLP coverage of the issues (JLP policies might be sufficient to cover intended outcomes).

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Community Facilities				
Community facilities across the parish are maintained and enhanced and new community facilities are supported where they increase the quality of life in the parish and encourage positive economic activity.	Protect and maintain existing community facilities.		CF1: Protecting Existing Built Community, Sports and Play Facilities	A policy which seeks to protect identified existing community, sports and play facilities. Could be merged with the policy below, subject to wording and length.
	Support proposals that enhance or maintain Tavistock's leading position within the surrounding rural community in the provision of facilities meeting identified needs or enhancing the quality of life for local people.		<p>CF2: Enhancing Community Facilities through New and Improved Provision</p> <p>CF3: Provision of a Skateboarding Facility at Pixon Lane.</p> <p>CF4: Provision of a Multi-use Games Area (MUGA)</p> <p>CF5: Supporting Proposals for Young People's Facilities</p>	<p>A policy which seeks to support the improvement of existing and new community facilities. Could be merged with the policy above, subject to wording and length.</p> <p>Policies which support provision of a skate facility and MUGA in the town.</p> <p>A general supportive policy for provision of additional facilities for young people to capture any others which may be brought forward during the Plan's timeframe.</p>

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Planning decisions enhance and do not adversely impact community facilities.	Engage with relevant planning applications early on to understand the impacts on community facilities.	This is an action really rather than a policy in its own right. However, a policy criteria could be added to another policy to help ensure that proposers of major development, for example, are positive in engaging with the community, e.g. policy SD2 above.		
	Enhance the quality of development by mitigating adverse effects on community facilities.	Depending on what you are trying to achieve with this objective, it is likely to be covered, policy-wise, by others above. It is worth retaining the objective here for the time being, until policy wording has been drafted.		
Environment				
Development in Tavistock enhances biodiversity and protects the environment, green space, and the landscape attractiveness of the town.	Protect and enhance formal and informal public green space, and extend green space provision in parts of the parish where it is less accessible or less diverse.		ENV1: Local Green Spaces ENV2: Extending Access to Informal Green Space	A policy which protects designated local green spaces which qualify, in accordance with the NPPF. Relates to only existing spaces and not proposed extended. The policy could identify generic support to proposals which support or provide improved access into the countryside / edge of the town / settlement boundary (if you pursue it).

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	Protect and enhance habitats and increase biodiversity.		ENV3: Protecting and Enhancing Habitats and Biodiversity ENV4: Trees and Hedgerows	A policy which protects identified habitats and biodiversity through a green infrastructure network and specific sites (e.g. woodland, river corridors, hedgerows, nature recovery network, etc). You could introduce a policy which seeks to require replacement of trees which are lost through development.
	Value and protect landscape, its role and character and the views it frames as part of Tavistock's setting.		ENV5: Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and Value	A policy which protects landscape areas of value, based on characteristics – openness, separation between settlements, topography e.g. ridgelines, etc)
Heritage				
Buildings, structures and streetscapes that contribute to the heritage and history of the parish are safeguarded for the future and protected from harm.	Protect heritage assets within the parish not currently having the protection of national (i.e. listed building or scheduled monument status) or local listing, that warrant policy protection until such time as they are added to the West Devon Borough Council 'Local list'.		HER1: Protecting Local Heritage Assets	A policy which protects locally valued heritage assets and character not yet already benefitting from existing designations.

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	Identify streetscapes of importance outside the two conservation areas that are linked to the heritage and history of the Parish, and which contribute to the significance of the area to ensure the character is maintained.	"Protect" instead of "Identify". The identification should take place as the Plan is developed. You could either then probably identify them in policy (separate to or as part of the above policy on heritage) or work with the LA to extend the Conservation Area.	HER2: Protecting Historic Streetscapes and Character	A policy which, subject to comments on the objective, seeks to protect historic streetscapes.
The character of the heritage and history environment in the two Conservation Areas is enhanced for the benefit of the present and future generations.	Support and encourage improvements to the quality of our built heritage in the two Conservation Areas where it requires enhancement.	An action rather than a policy. A planning policy cannot make owners upgrade existing buildings. Likely that JLP policy already supports or at least sets the parameters for acceptability for development within the Conservation Areas, but can check. Alternatively a Design Guide could this ground.		
	Improve and enhance degraded or poorly maintained areas of the public realm within the Conservation Areas.		HER3: Priority Projects in the Historic Environment	A policy which lists and supports priority projects with a direct relationship to heritage assets – e.g. from Town Council building renovation list. It can introduce criteria which help ensure that proposals cause no harm to the asset.
Transport and Connectivity				

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Getting around Tavistock on foot, by bicycle or using mobility aids is an attractive and convenient option.	Ensure that all types of new development are connected by convenient, safe, walkable routes to its immediate setting and to key facilities.		TC1: Accessible Development	A policy which sets out connectivity and accessibility requirements in relation to new development, with specific reference to footpaths.
	Protect, improve and add to traffic-free paths and safe cycling routes within the town and connecting to neighbouring settlements.		TC2: Protecting and Improving the Local Walking and Cycling Network	A policy which sets out general policy support for improvements and could also support potential improvements and new indicative routes on a map or “transport plan”.
	Ensure street furniture (including electric vehicle charge points) does not obstruct pedestrians.	An action rather than a policy. A planning policy can only be set out where something requires planning permission. Most street furniture and EV charge points are likely to be permitted development. You could have a policy though which refers specifically to any such proposals which do require planning permission to cover the few which will need it.	TC3: Facilitating Pedestrian Access	A policy which, where planning permission is required, seeks to ensure that pedestrian and cyclist access is not hindered by street furniture and EV charge points. Noted that DCC are producing a design guide.
Tavistock has good facilities for public and shared transport connecting to nearby villages and towns.	Safeguard the route for a restored rail link in both directions (to Bere Alston and to Okehampton).		TC4: Safeguarding the Former Railway Line Route	A policy which protects the former railway line for a restored railway line / service but which also requires net gains in biodiversity given current role as a green corridor.

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	Protect and enhance the bus station and bus stops.	A planning policy cannot protect bus stops per se (in effect cannot protect bus routes / services), but could include wording which seeks to protect key public transport infrastructure from loss as a result of development proposals. Projects or actions could also come from this objective.	TC5: Protecting Public Transport Infrastructure Against Loss TC6: Improvements to the Bus Station	A policy which seeks to protect essential public transport infrastructure and support provision of infrastructure required to charge larger vehicles such as minibuses and buses.. A policy which provides support to improvements to / regeneration of the bus station with its use as a transport hub remaining the focus for the site / facility. Can integrate requirements for cycle infrastructure and rapid EV charging. Links to TC7 policy.
	Ensure any larger developments have road layouts which provide for bus access and for shared transport schemes (Eg car club and bike share parking).	Could be covered by the “Accessible Development” policy but the objective can remain.	TC1: Accessible Development	A policy which sets out connectivity and accessibility requirements in relation to new development.
	Encourage provision of transport hubs with park and change facilities within sites identified for development on key roads into the town.		TC7: Supporting New Sustainable Transport Hubs	A policy which supports new sustainable transport hubs including possible “areas of search” for such facilities on the edge of or within the town.
Negative impacts of transport, including traffic congestion and	Support initiatives which reduce the need to travel, including improvements to	Much of this will be covered by an action / projects rather than a policy. However, a policy which	TC8: Telecoms Infrastructure and / or	A policy which seeks to ensure that proposals for infrastructure such as telecoms masts do not cause adverse

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pollution, are minimized.	digital communication. (eg public Wifi, full fibre broadband)	seeks to ensure that proposals for infrastructure such as telecoms masts do not cause adverse impact on the environment or harm to heritage assets and their setting.	“Fibre Infrastructure”	impact on the environment or harm to heritage assets and their setting (where such infrastructure requires planning permission – many do not).
	Ensure that overall off-street parking provision for vehicles, cycles, and micromobility transport meets the changing needs of residents, visitors and businesses.		TC9: Protecting Off-street Parking Capacity Tavistock TC10: Non-Motor Vehicle Parking Provision	A policy which seeks to protect existing off-street public parking capacity and mitigates loss through replacement provision. A policy which supports parking provision for bicycles, e-scooters, and mobility vehicles. Specific areas for provision or intervention could be identified indicatively as part of a “transport plan” for the town.
	Facilitate provision for electric vehicle charging, including sites convenient to homes without off-street parking.	Provision is not always going to require planning permission and so this falls into action and / or policy territory. Policy could cover provision which requires permission, which could apply to larger installations in particular and could apply to some new housing developments too. A Design Guide would be a good way to cover this with the policy signposting it.	TC11: Provision of Electric Charge Points	A policy which sets parameters for EV charge points which require planning permission.

