DARTMOOR LOCAL PLAN

guiding planning applications in Dartmoor National Park

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

November 25

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All our planning policy documents and their supporting evidence are available on our website. View Local Plan Documents



1. Introduction and key principles

Dartmoor National Park Authority recognises the importance of good communication and engagement. This isn't just how we tell you what we're doing, or ask for your views, but also how we listen to you and how we explain the reasons for the decisions we have made.

We have principles of good communication and engagement which state:

- We will be clear about how people can be involved, and ensure that our processes are understandable
- We will be open about what can and cannot change and why, and ensure we provide information to help people understand
- We will be responsive to people's concerns and demonstrate how we have listened to these concerns in our decisions
- We will communicate our decisions clearly

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the main ways in which we engage with communities, businesses, organisations and individuals around planning. It sets out our plans for involving the public in considering planning applications, neighbourhood planning and preparing the Local Plan for Dartmoor National Park. The SCI has the following aims:

- To ensure that everyone has the maximum opportunity to participate in and contribute to the review and preparation of planning policy and other planning guidance
- To consult in a way which meets the needs of different groups so that public participation is helpful, effective and relevant
- To target engagement to ensure the appropriate statutory consulted parties and interest groups are involved

It is important to get involved in Local Plan consultation as Local Plan documents are the foundation of all our decisions on planning applications within Dartmoor National Park



2. What do we actively engage on?

2.1 Planning Policy

Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) is the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the whole of the National Park and has to prepare and maintain an up-to-date Local Plan' for the area. The policies in the Local Plan and relevant Neighbourhood Plan are the basis for making decisions on planning applications in the National Park. Supplementary Planning Documents are also important in linking with the Local Plan, and can be relevant or 'material considerations' in decision making. There are three different types of local planning documents:

- *Development Plan Documents* (e.g. the Local Plan): are formal planning documents containing policies and objectives for development within Dartmoor National Park. These documents are formal plans subject to rigorous procedures including several consultation stages and an independent examination. They also require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – an assessment of the economic, social and environmental impacts of a plan.

- *Neighbourhood Development Plans:* Communities can supplement the Local Plan with their own Neighbourhood Development Plans. Neighbourhood Development Plans are normally led by Town/ Parish Councils and enable communities to play a greater role in determining the future of their area. They are examined by an independent examiner and are also subject to a community referendum before being formally 'made' and form part of the Dartmoor Local Plan.

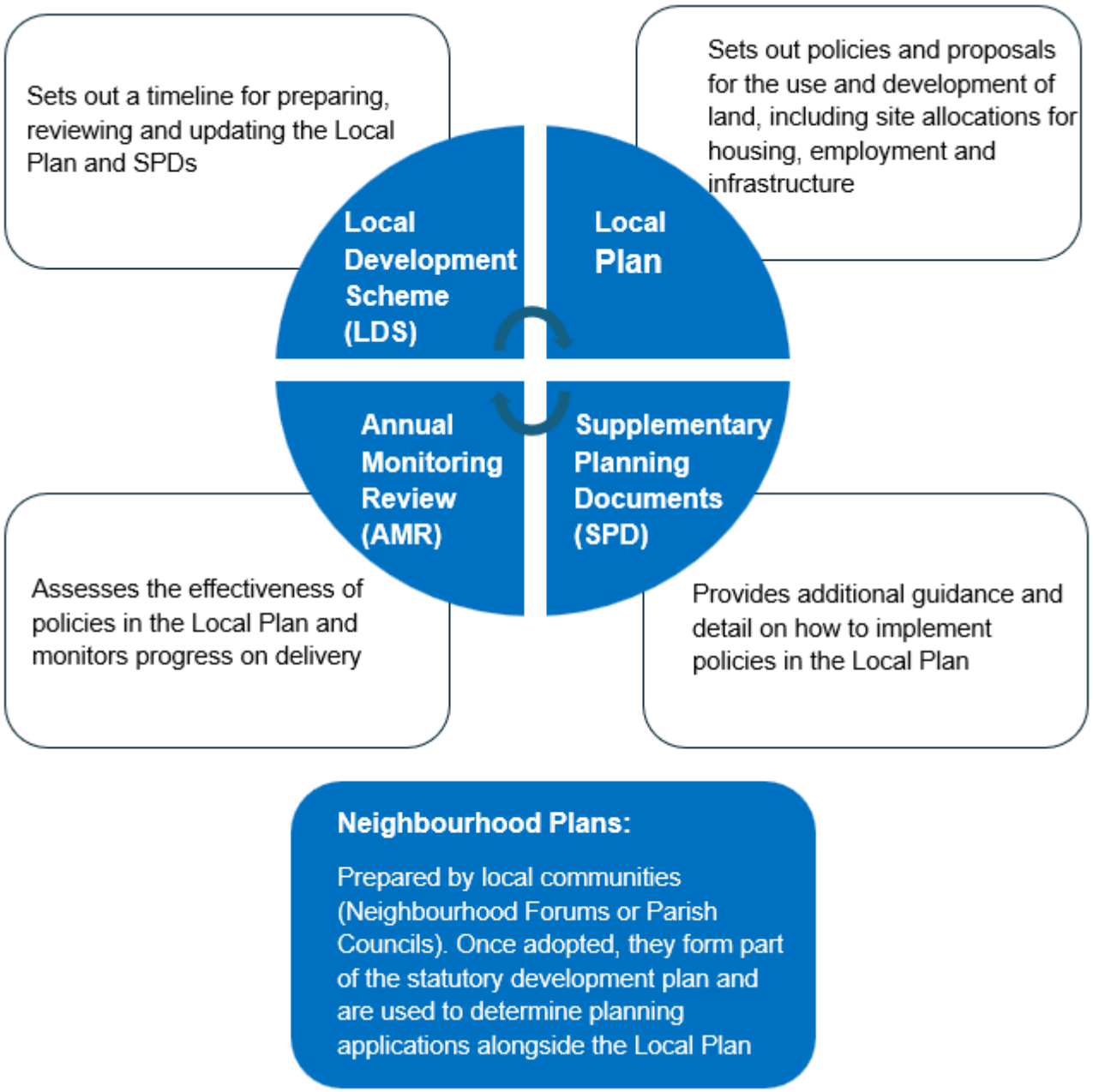
- *Supplementary Planning Documents:* provide additional guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies. These need to be consulted on and are agreed by the Authority without the need for independent examination.

2.2 Planning and related applications[1] (Development Management)

Planning Applications relate to specific, detailed decisions being made about what happens to a building or piece of land. Applications are judged against the relevant adopted policies in the local plan, neighbourhood development plans, guidance in any supplementary planning documents, government guidance on policy and any other matters 'material' to the application.

[1] Planning Applications include; applications for planning permission, listed building consent, change of use and certificates of lawfulness

2.3 Dartmoor National Park Local Plan structure



3.How and when do we engage?

	General news	Planning Policy	Planning or listed building applications	Masterplan or Development Brief	Neighbourhood planning	
Website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	www.dartmoor.gov.uk/planning
Print copies		✓		✓		The Local Plan will be largely web-based, however we will provide a printed copy for public viewing to Parish Councils and local libraries
News release	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sign up to our news releases or contact us to receive email notifications about planning policy consultations and other planning news
Social media	✓	✓		✓	✓	Follow us on Facebook @enjoydartmoor1, on Instagram @lovedartmoor, on LinkedIn @DartmoorNationalParkAuthority, on TikTok @dartmoornationalpark and on X @dartmoornpa
Site Notice			✓	✓		Planning applications: Site notices will be placed on publicly accessible land near the application site.
Specific Newsletter		✓		✓		We may prepare newsletters for some specific pieces of work or consultations
Email/mail circulation		✓	✓	✓	✓	We will hold a list of names and address of people who wish to be notified about a specific issue
Public meeting or exhibition		✓		✓	✓	We will sometimes hold meetings or exhibitions to raise awareness and get public views. These will be advertised locally
Formal consultation		Min. 6 weeks	21 days	Min. 4 weeks	Min. 6 weeks	Some planning applications or policy documents will have a formal consultation period
Special interest groups		✓	✓	✓		Certain local or national groups, organisations or agencies will be notified of issues which we think may be relevant to them
Parish Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parish Councils will be notified or consulted, principally electronically, on a range of issues in their area
Authority Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Authority members will be notified or made aware of a range of issues

Hard to reach groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Using the most appropriate methods to engage with hard to reach groups, including the production of large print and screen reader-compatible documents

4. Who do we engage with?

Who we engage with depends on the type of planning document or application being considered. There are a number of bodies that the Authority is required to engage with and invite to participate.

4.1 Planning Policy

- Those on The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 list must be consulted at certain key stages of plan production, these are known as the 'specific consultation bodies'. The list below is not prescriptive but shows the broad range of organisations, groups and people that are consulted.

- There are many other groups and organisations that may have an interest. Listed are some of the bodies and organisations that we will keep informed and involve at key stages as appropriate, these are known as the 'general consultation bodies'.

Specific Consultation Bodies

- **The Environment Agency**
- **Historic England**
- **Natural England**
- **The Coal Authority**
- **Homes England**
- **NHS Devon Integrated Care Board (ICB)**
- **Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities**, including Devon County Council, Teignbridge District Council, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council and Mid Devon District Council
- **Town and Parish Councils**
- **South West Water** (as the water and sewerage undertaker)
- **National Grid Electricity Transmission** and **National Grid Gas Transmission**
- **Western Power Distribution** (electricity distribution network operator)
- **Wales & West Utilities** (gas distribution network operator)

General Consultation Bodies

- Voluntary organisations whose activities benefit the Dartmoor National Park area
- Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups, different religious groups, disabled persons and businesses in the Park area
- Local community and residents' associations
- Environmental, heritage, and access organisations
- Landowners, developers, and planning agents with local interests
- Educational and youth organisations
- Health and wellbeing bodies
- Transport and infrastructure providers
- Other interest groups or individuals who may be affected by local planning policies or proposals

- e are committed to involving a wide range of other individuals and organisations, including 'hard to

reach' groups. 'Hard to reach' groups within Dartmoor National Park include, in particular:

- Young people (specifically aged 16-24)
- People with disabilities (including people with learning disabilities)
- People from socially deprived areas (including areas of rural deprivation)
- Black and Minority Ethnic groups (including Gypsies and Travellers)
- People with no or limited internet access

- We will employ a variety of consultation methods to facilitate engagement with 'hard to reach' groups, including the use of a variety of online channels and face to face events, and the production of screen reader-compatible documents and large print (where requested).

4.2 Planning Applications

- We will maintain a database of individuals, groups and other interested parties wishing to be informed when documents are published, which will be updated regularly. To add your information to this list please contact us.
- We are required to consult various organisations and bodies and are advised to consult others depending on the type of application[2]. A complete list can be accessed on the The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
- Officers will use their professional judgement to contact the relevant organisations for specific planning applications.
- We will notify the Neighbourhood Planning Body of relevant planning applications, or changes to relevant planning applications, if there is a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place in that area.

4.3 Neighbourhood Development Plans

- Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are prepared by communities for their own parishes or areas with advice and support from their Local Planning Authority (LPA).
  - NDPs will be brought forward by a Neighbourhood Planning Group. This could be formed by a Town or Parish Council, or where there is no recognised co uncil, a Neighbourhood Forum.
  - Dartmoor National Park will act as the lead LPA for Neighbourhood Plan Areas wholly within the Dartmoor National Park boundary,
  - Where a Neighbourhood Plan Area falls partly within Dartmoor National Park and partly within a neighbouring District or Borough Council, the LPA with the main centre or majority of population within its boundary will act as lead[3].

- Community engagement and consultation undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Group will take place throughout its preparation. In addition, there are several key formal consultation stages that a NDP must go through before it is 'made' and becomes planning policy:
  - The Neighbourhood Planning Group will carry out consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks on the early stages of the NDP. A Consultation Statement must then be submitted to Dartmoor National Park along with the draft NDP indicating what consultation has been carried out and how it has informed the preparation of the draft NDP.
  - Dartmoor National Park is then required to consult on the NDP for a further minimum period of 6 weeks once it has been submitted to them and before it is

submitted for examination.

- Finally, a referendum will allow those in the area to vote on whether they want to accept or reject the proposed NDP.

- Post-examination, the NDP becomes a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications within the area covered by the NDP. After the referendum stage, the NDP forms part of the Local Plan.

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[2] As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (DMPO)

[3] Protocol for joint working on Neighbourhood Planning (Dartmoor National Park Authority, West Devon Borough Council, South Hams District Council, Teignbridge District Council and Mid Devon District Council).

- As lead LPA, Dartmoor National Park will undertake the following to support the production of NDPs[4]:

Designation of Neighbourhood Plan Area	• Explain the Neighbourhood Plan process • Check that the designation of area application is valid and complete • Publicise designation of area application • Signpost to other support and advice
Draft Plan Preparation	• Foster an open and collaborative approach to the development of the NDP. • Offer advice and support, for example on meeting basic conditions, consideration of the need for environmental assessments, suitability of supporting evidence and consultation statement, compatibility with national planning guidance and Local Plan policies. • Consider the need for an independent assessment or health check.
Submission to Local Planning Authority	• Validate, check and publicise the submission for a minimum of 6 weeks. As a minimum, the documents will be published on website and comments invited from prescribed statutory bodies and those who have previously indicated an interest.
Examination	• Appoint the examiner and publish all required documents • Make arrangements for any hearing, publicity, notification and make documents available on website as directed by the examiner • Arrange for the modification to be undertaken as recommended by the examiner • Publish decision statement on website
Referendum	• Inform the electoral authority (EA) as soon as possible of the likely timescale for referendum. • Work with the EA to ensure that the timings and resourcing of referendum are reasonable, clearly understood and agreed in advance. • Meet the reasonable costs of the referendum.
'Made'	• Publish the decision statement on website, advising that the document is now 'made' and forms part of the local plan. • Send a copy of the decision statement to the Neighbourhood Planning Group and advise any person or body who asked to be notified, that the NDP has been made.

- As the lead LPA, Dartmoor National Park will also assist in modifying existing NDPs.

Visit the community planning pages of our website for support for preparing a NDP or to find out which areas of Dartmoor are already preparing NDPs

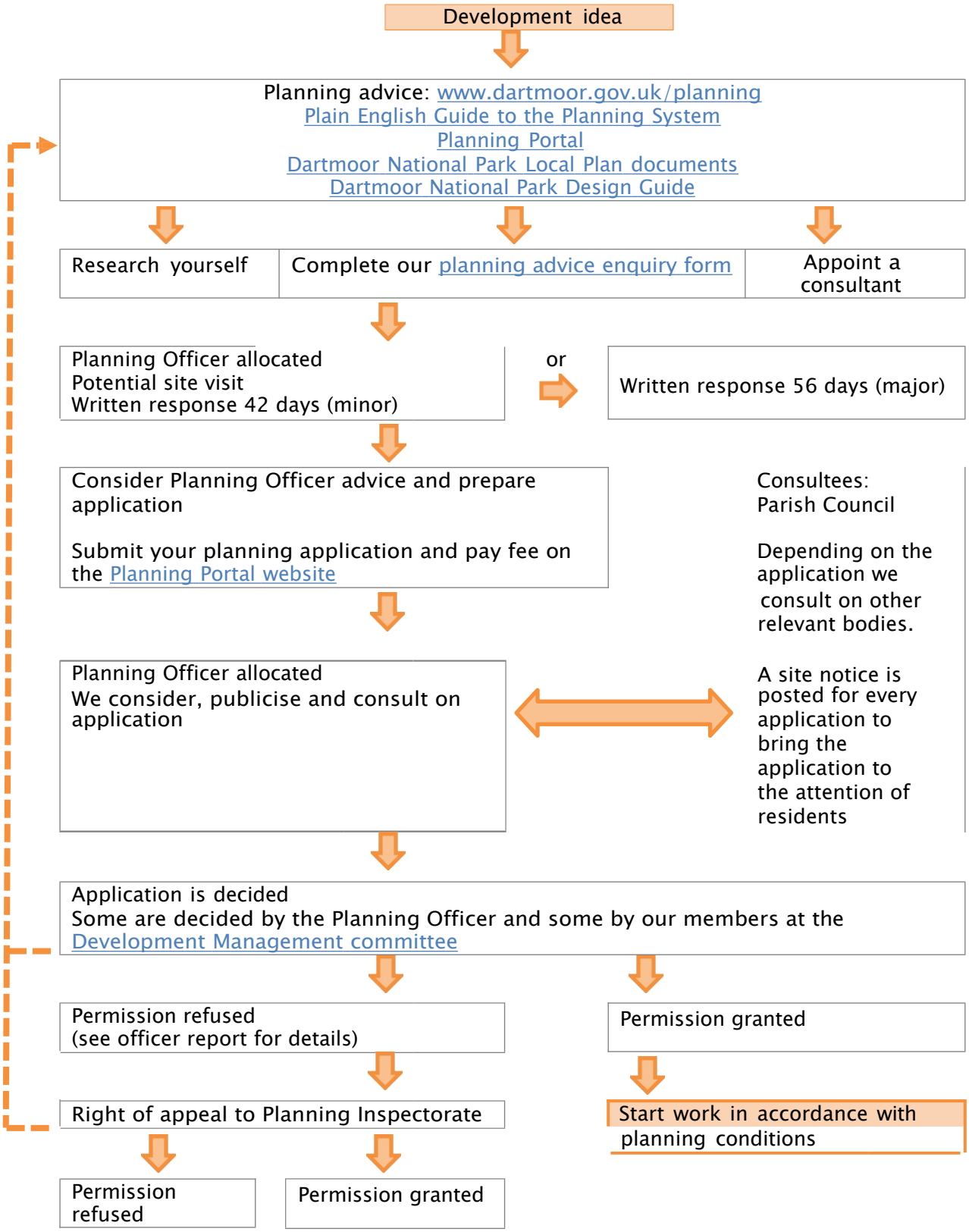


[4] This advice and assistance also applies to Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders (in the absence of any other specific agreement)

5.Preparing Planning Policy

	What is it?	Who is consulted?	How does consultation happen?	What is the outcome of the consultation?
Stage 1 Issues (Topic Papers)	A continuous process of informal discussion on the topic papers	Specific groups will be targeted depending on the topic paper being considered. Everyone who wants to get involved should do so at this stage; it is important to raise issues early in the process	Topic papers will be published in stages; there is no statutory timescale	A full range of issues is considered to make sure all the important spatial planning issues are highlighted
Stage 2 Preferred Options Stage	A wide-ranging public consultation exercise on a first draft Local Plan. The approach and detail of the relevant Local Plan document will be clear	All organisations and individuals on our Local Plan consultee list, including Statutory Consultees (contact us to be added to this list)	See Section 3 and Section 4. For a minimum of 6 weeks from publication	Comments received will be formally registered and considered before changing the document as necessary. If significant changes are required, further consultation may be needed before moving to the next stage
Stage 3 Submission Stage	We publish a revised draft of the Local Plan for consultation, then formally submit the document to the Secretary of State	All organisations and individuals on our Local Plan consultee list, including Statutory Consultees (contact us to be added to this list)	For a minimum of 6 weeks from publication. The document is then submitted to the Secretary of State together with any comments received	The comments received will be considered as part of the examination
Stage 4 Examination in Public	The plan is examined by an independent Planning Inspector (there may be public hearings)	The Examination is publicised and those who submitted a formal representation at the submission stage will be notified	Notifications will be sent at the start of the Examination	If the Planning Inspector finds the Local Plan sound, the Plan can be adopted

6. The main stages in considering a planning application



- It is important to make comments on planning applications if you support or object to something which affects you. Comments should consider 'material' planning considerations; including for example:

    - Amenity (e.g. loss of sunlight, outlook, privacy and overshadowing)
    - Highway issues (e.g. traffic generation, vehicular access, highway safety)
    - Capacity of physical infrastructure (e.g. in the public drainage or water systems)
    - Deficiencies in social facilities (e.g. spaces in schools and health facilities)
    - Environmental Health (e.g. noise, disturbance, smells, hazardous materials)
    - Loss or effect on trees
    - Adverse impact on natural conservation interests and biodiversity opportunities
    - Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas
    - Layout and density of building design, visual appearance and finishing materials

    Examples of issues that are not planning considerations include the loss of value on a property or the loss of a person's private view.

We recommend using our pre-application planning advice service before submitting a planning or related application. Further information, including details of charges where applicable, is available on our website.



7.Are we doing what we promised?

We are committed to meaningful and useful engagement and providing opportunities for you to be involved in shaping planning within Dartmoor National Park. If you have any comments about our engagement please get in touch with the Forward Planning team at forwardplanning@dartmoor.gov.uk.

If you feel we have not been doing what we promised and would like to send us a complaint, please see our complaints procedure which is available on our website. Before making a formal complaint we would encourage you to discuss your concerns with a senior manager of the Planning Team.

We will review the Statement of Community Involvement every 5 years. However, it may be reviewed sooner if necessary.

Contact us

Forward Planning
Dartmoor National Park Authority
Parke, Bovey Tracey,
Newton
Abbot, TQ13
9JQ

Tel: (01626) 832093
Email: forwardplanning@dartmoor.gov.uk
Website: www.dartmoor.gov.uk/planning
Facebook: @enjoydartmoor1
Twitter: @dartmoornpa
Instagram: @lovedartmoor
LinkedIn: @Dartmoor-national-park-authority
TikTok: @dartmoornationalpark

Where can I get further help?

The Planning Portal

The Planning portal is the Government gateway to planning information throughout the UK. It provides information on plans, appeals applications, contact details and research areas. You can access the Planning Portal online: www.planningportal.co.uk

Planning Aid

Planning Aid offers free and independent professional planning advice to community groups and individuals who cannot afford to pay professional fees.
You can contact Planning Aid England (general enquiries) at:

Helpline: 020 7929 8338
Email: advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
Web: https://www.rtpi.org.uk/need-planning-advice/planning-aid-england/