

Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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22nd September 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Torbay Local Plan: 2025-45 – Publication Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation August 2026

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the Torbay Local Plan: 2025-45 – Publication Plan (Regulation 19) Consultation August 2026.

The County Council's principal interests relate to potential strategic cross boundary implications as neighbouring authorities. Therefore, the County Council is responding in its role as the Local Transport Authority (LTA), the Local Education Authority (LEA) and Mineral and Waste Planning Authorities (MPA and WPA) for Devon.

As you will be aware, the County Council and the Devon and Torbay County Combined Authority (DTCCA) are concurrently fulfilling the LTA role. The Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DTCCA) Regulations 2025 came into effect on 5 February 2025 and since 1 April 2026, the DTCCA has been responsible for all Local Transport Authority (LTA) functions. However, the 2026/27 financial year is a transitional year, during which the constituent councils will continue to undertake work relating to LTA functions. This response therefore includes comments relating to the LTA functions.

Devon County Council is broadly supportive of the Draft Local Plan, in terms of the County Council's responsibilities as neighbouring authority. Detailed comments are provided below.

Highways and Transport (including public transport)

The County Council welcomes the commitment to support the delivery of the objectives of the Local Transport Plan, the strategic document that sets out the priorities for transport across Devon and Torbay between 2025 and 2040. In addition, the Council welcomes the reference to considering the impacts of development in Torbay on transport networks outside of Torbay, as there is the potential for cross-boundary impacts on the County Council's highways network, which would need to be considered and mitigated.

However, it is noted that policy text no longer explicitly refers to Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) or Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs). The County Council would therefore recommend an amendment to Policy TA2 (emphasis added to show additions):

“The Council will support strategic transport improvements that strengthen connections within Torbay, to the wider sub-region, and to national and international markets, where they enable efficient, reliable and inclusive movement in line with the transport hierarchy, **including those set out in the Local Transport Plan and other supporting modal plans, including Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Bus Service Improvement Plans.**”

This would help ensure the policy is ‘effective’, as it would make explicit that improvements set out in these plans should be considered in relation to development proposals, and help ensure the policy is ‘consistent with national policy’, in particular NPPF policy TR1, which states that “Plans should align land use policies and allocations with wider strategies (such as Local Transport Plans, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and Rights of Way Improvement Plans)”.

In addition to this, there is no reference to aligning the delivery of the Hospital Train with the Kingskerswell and Torbay route within the Heart of Teignbridge LCWIP. It is noted that the Bay Trails is referenced generally in policy TA2. It is recommended that this is addressed to further support the improvements of links to and from Torbay.

Local Education Provision (including early years)

The County Council as LEA made comments as part of the Regulation 18 version of the plan. The County Council wishes to make no further comments on the Regulation 19 version.

Minerals and Waste Planning

The Draft Local Plan seeks to allocate a future growth area in the White Rock and Inglewood area of Paignton (ref. H2P.4). Whilst Torbay Council is the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) for its administrative area, the County Council wishes to make comments on this matter given the allocation is on the boundary between the two authorities and could therefore influence future working on the Devon boundary.

The County Council notes that the proposed allocation is located adjacent to the Torbay Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA), and in close proximity and partly adjoining the Devon MSA and wider Mineral Consultation Area associated with a nearby limestone resource. Development at this proposed site allocation has the potential to sterilise future mineral working, either directly, through the introduction of built development on the limestone resource, or indirectly, through the introduction of sensitive uses that have the potential to constrain future mineral working. As such, Devon County Council as an adjoining MPA objects to the inclusion of this allocation at this stage. This is in line with Paragraphs 223(c) and 225 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and Policy M2 (Mineral Safeguarding Areas) of the Devon Minerals Plan 2011-2033 which both highlight the importance of identifying Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas for the protection of mineral resources from non-mineral development.

It is considered that it would be possible to address these concerns in the following way:

- A Mineral Resource Assessment is undertaken by Torbay Council prior to the allocation of this site which indicates the mineral resource is not of current or potential economic value. The County Council would be happy to discuss this further with Torbay Council, and discuss the extent to which this assessment covers.
- Amendments to the wording in Policy SDP5 to ensure the layout of development is carefully considered and limits the uses located closer to the MSA to those of a less noise sensitive nature, compatible with being located adjacent to mineral extraction.

In line with the comments made at Regulation 18 consultation, it is recommended that Policy M1 is updated to reference the most up to date limestone reserve to reflect the current status of limestone reserves in the County. Table 4 on page 14 of the 14th LAA¹ for Devon identifies the landbank for limestone as 33.8 years.

Housing and Unmet Need

The County Council would like to reiterate the comments made at the Regulation 18 consultation. These are included in full below.

Torbay Council's housing need target is 950 dwellings a year, and the Draft Local Plan proposes the provision of a minimum of 400 dwellings per year. The Draft Plan refers to unmet housing need being a sub-regional matter that needs to be resolved in cooperation with wider Devon Authorities.

The delivery of housing additional to that set out in the Local Plans of wider Devon Authorities will have an impact on infrastructure requirements within Devon and will therefore place a burden on the County Council in terms of education and highways in particular. It will be essential for Torbay to demonstrate a robust, evidence based need for development to be located out of area and to work closely with the County Council to ascertain infrastructure requirements to support this development.

We trust these comments are useful and we look forward to continuing our work with you as you progress your local plan. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Ratnage
Planning Manager

¹ 14th LAA for Devon <https://devoncc.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/PublicDocs/Planning/IQBeNZHzi-k1Rqzni8Mzq29RAeH5aAF-Wk2XR0XnFx3dm2M?e=MsoKeU>