

Teignbridge District Council
Full Council
19 May 2026
Part i

Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 – Adoption

Purpose of Report

To agree adoption of the Local Plan.

Recommendation(s)

The Council RESOLVES to:

1. Note the content of the Inspectors' Final Local Plan Report (Appendix 1).
2. Amend the Local Plan 2020-2040 in accordance with the further modifications requested in the Inspectors Report.
3. Adopt the Local Plan 2020-2040 to use as the basis for decision-making on planning applications in Teignbridge (outside of the Dartmoor National Park).

Financial Implications

These are as set out in section 5.1.

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Legal Implications

These are as set out in section 5.2.

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Risk Assessment

These are as set out in section 5.3.

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Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

These are as set out in section 5.4.

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Executive Member

Executive Member for Planning and Building Control (Cllr Gary Taylor)

Appendices – see www.teignbridge.gov.uk/mainmodifications

1. Local Plan Inspectors' Report
2. Inspectors' Main Modifications Appendix
3. Equalities Impact Assessment
4. Inspectors' further changes to the Main Modifications
- 5a. Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040
- 5b. Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 Appendix 1 Superseded and Extant Policies
- 5c. Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 Appendix 2 Useful Terms
- 5d. Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 Appendix 3 Housing Trajectory
- 5e. Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 Appendix 4 Teignbridge Design Code

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Full Council with the Local Plan Inspectors' Final Report on the Examination of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040. This report recommends that the Council notes the content of the Inspectors' Final Local Plan Report (Appendix 1), agrees to amend the Local Plan according to the Main Modifications (as appended to the Inspectors' Report), and agrees to adopt the Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 (Appendix 5).

2. REPORT DETAIL

Overview

2.2 The Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 ('the Plan') has been under preparation since 2018 and has included seven rounds of public consultation. It was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 14 March 2024, and two Government Inspectors were subsequently appointed to carry out an independent examination of the Plan. Public hearings, led by the Inspectors, were held between September and November 2024, and anyone who had previously commented on the Plan was invited to speak and register their views or concerns at these hearings. A further closed hearing session was also held on the 24 January 2025 in relation to the Design Codes.

2.3 Following the hearings, the Inspectors issued a Post-Hearing Letter which provided their initial advice in relation to the Plan. The letter stated that, with modifications, the plan was "*likely to be capable of being found legally compliant and sound*".

2.4 A series of Main Modifications to the Plan were finalised and agreed by the Planning Inspectors, to address the matters discussed at the hearing sessions. The Main Modifications did not include any significant amendments to the Local Plan that would change the meaning of the policies or proposals but were largely for clarification purposes. Full Council agreed to publish the Main Modifications for consultation at the meeting on 25 February 2025.

2.5 The Main Modifications and the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (Sustainability Appraisal) and Habitats Regulation Assessment were published for consultation between 30 July to 1 October 2025 and all comments received were sent to the Planning Inspectorate on 2 October 2025 for consideration.

2.6 The Inspectors' Report on the Examination of the Teignbridge Local Plan was received on 24 March 2026. The Report finds the Plan sound and legally compliant (subject to the Modifications).

2.7 Once adopted, the Plan will form the principal basis for determining development proposals within the district (excluding areas within the Dartmoor National Park).

3. INSPECTORS' REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION OF THE TEIGNBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN

3.1 The Planning Inspectors' Report on the Examination of the Teignbridge Local Plan sets out that, subject to the Main Modifications, which are provided at Appendix 2 of this report, the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. The only changes made to the agreed Main Modifications comprise minor editorial changes to 3 of the 400 or so modifications (see Appendix 4).

3.2 The ability to implement specific policies by virtue of time and resources required, whilst meeting prescribed determination timescales is referenced in the Inspectors' Report, although it is not considered a soundness issue. However, this highlights our need, as a council, to support applicants through the pre-application enquiry process, continue to hold agent and developer forums, to be pragmatic in our expectations and decision-making and to hold early Councillor briefings about our strategic development sites.

4. TEIGNBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN 2020-2040

4.1 The Local Plan 2020-2040 comprises a start from scratch review of the 2013-2033 Local Plan and sets high standards for new development. It will supersede the

2013-2033 Local Plan but saves allocated development sites from this plan that have not yet been built.

4.2 The 2020-2040 Plan allocates sufficient development sites to meet the Council's Objectively Assessed Need (housing need) following the Standard Method and includes a "primary residence" clause for development in our coastal communities. It sets net zero carbon standards, takes a positive approach to low carbon energy generation and storage and identifies areas of potential for wind turbine development.

4.3 The 2020-2040 Local Plan will secure between 20% and 30% of all new development as affordable homes and will require more affordable homes to be provided through social rent. The Plan includes stricter and more comprehensive policies to secure good design, including a District Wide Design Code, sets minimum parking standards (including for cycles) to prevent the problems of parking on pavements in new developments, and requires new street trees to be planted.

4.4 The Local Plan allocates sufficient land to meet our growing economic development needs, promotes sustainable and active travel, and includes more comprehensive protection for wildlife.

4.3 By adopting the Plan, the housing figure of 720 homes per year, against which we are tested (5-year land supply and Housing Delivery Test), will be saved for five years following adoption.

4.4 The success of the Plan at Examination reflects the partnership working approach that was followed during its preparation, which included close liaison with Members, through the Local Plan Working Group, with statutory bodies and neighbouring authorities, as was shown by the numerous Statements of Common Ground, and with local communities (Planning Cafes). The level of engagement, including the additional Proposed Submission Addendum consultation, added time to the preparation of the Plan, but put us in a strong position at the Examination Hearings, and the fact that the Main Modifications required to make the Plan sound

did not significantly alter the Plan or add or remove any development sites is testament of this.

5. IMPLICATIONS, RISK MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

5.1 Financial

- i. Previous reports prepared for each stage of preparation of the Local Plan have set out costs incurred and any remaining costs required by either the preparation or examination of the Plan.
- ii. All costs have now been accounted for and there are no further budget pressures or requests arising from this report.

5.2 Legal

- i. Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out a statutory framework for local planning authorities to prepare development plans. These plans must identify the priorities for the development and use of land in the authority's area.
- ii. Legislation requires that Plans are accompanied by Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment. These have been carried out at each stage of the plan making process and published for consultation alongside each version of the Plan. The Inspectors' Report considers these matters as part of the examination.
- iii. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 came into force of 25 March 2026. These regulations replace the previous 2012 Regulations and require the Inspector's Final Report to be published on the Council's website and sent to those on the Council's database. Officers advise that these steps have been undertaken.
- iv. Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires Local

Planning Authorities to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS). These should be kept up to date. The LDS was agreed at the Teignbridge Executive Committee meeting on 10 March 2026.

- v. The Inspector's Report concludes that the Plan is legally compliant and sound, subject to the main modifications, and the Council is therefore able to proceed to adoption.

5.3 Risks

- i. There are various risks associated with not having an up-to-date plan in place which include loss of local control to determine planning applications, and harsher penalties for not meeting housing-related targets. Importantly, the Council will lose the ability to plan strategically, identify appropriate funding mechanisms, and ensure the most sustainable outcomes for our communities and environments.
- ii. The adoption of the Local Plan will 'set' the Council's housing requirement at 720 homes per year for five years from the date at which the Plan is adopted. Without the Plan in place, the Council's housing requirement will be determined by the 'standard method' formula which currently requires 1,088 homes per year.

5.4 Environmental/Climate Change Impact

- i. The Local Plan 2020 to 2040 has significant potential to directly and positively influence issues relating to climate change and contribute towards meeting local and national carbon budgets aligning with the Paris Agreement. The Plan provides further clarity on the following policy areas:
 - Climate change/wind turbines/electric vehicles
 - Green infrastructure standards
 - Undeveloped Coast and European wildlife sites
 - Site specific measures.

6. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 The Main Modifications have not affected the strategic direction of the plan or made any significant changes to housing numbers or the development strategy. Therefore, the Plan as proposed for adoption reflects closely the Plan supported by Members at earlier stages.

6.2 The alternative option to the proposed recommendation is to not adopt the Local Plan. Instead, we would rely on the adopted Local Plan 2013-2033 and the emerging National Development Management Policies set out in the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). However, many of the 2013-2033 Local Plan policies are out of date and, as stated at 5.3 (ii), without the Plan in place, the Council's housing requirement will be determined by the 'standard method' formula which currently requires 1,088 homes per year, rather than the 720 homes per year as set for 5 years by the adoption of the Local Plan 2020-2040.

6.3 There are significant risks to not adopting the Plan, which include reliance on outdated policies, inability to meet our housing targets and lack of control over how new development is coordinated with infrastructure. It is therefore recommended that this is not pursued as an option.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The receipt of the Inspectors' Report on the Examination of the Teignbridge Local Plan and the finding of the Plan to be sound and legally compliant is a milestone to be celebrated, as only about a third of local authorities across the country have an up-to-date Local Plan. The fact that the Main Modifications required to make the Plan sound did not significantly alter the Plan or add or remove any development sites, is also testament to the partnership working approach taken to preparing the Plan, including close liaison with the Local Plan Working Group, statutory bodies, neighbouring authorities, local interest groups and members of the public.

7.2 By adopting the Plan, Teignbridge will have an up-to-date Local Plan, that will meet the social, economic and environmental needs of the district up to 2040.