**Totnes Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

**Referendum 16th November 2023**

**Part 2 – Vision and Objectives**

**Vision:** As Totnes changes and develops over the coming decades its identity MUST not be lost.

The town will continue to be a model of sustainability, innovation, inclusivity and creativity, becoming an even better place for residents of all ages, visitors and businesses.

**Objectives:** The NP must support the vitality and diversity of the Totnes community, making sure that its needs are met and creating new opportunities to build on the strengths of the community. NP policies aim to maintain and enhance the well-being of all and to deliver the following objectives:

a. Protect the distinctive historic character of Totnes and its many architecturally significant buildings, streets, squares, open spaces and the wider public realm for their vital importance to the identity and heritage of the town.

b. Seek to ensure that all new housing developments, small or large, give priority to the needs of local people, with particular emphasis on social and affordable homes.

c. Support community-led development and community asset ownership as ways of achieving sustainable development.

d. Support and enhance the Totnes retail and service roles and the way they combine to create a place which is much more than just the sum of its physical attributes.

e. Support and enhance the Totnes economic capability and its role as a visitor destination via the associated hospitality sector.

f. Extend the strength, variety and distinctiveness which characterise the thriving local economy.

g. Encourage and support 'green' and 'ethical' businesses and their local networks and clusters based on the existing strengths in this area of the town.

h. Support the improvement of existing business space and expansion of new space to meet the needs of the local economy.

i. Support and extend the Totnes pioneering approach to sustainable development and local resilience, seeking to reduce the environmental impacts of the town, and mitigate and adapt for climate change.

j. Seek to create a more sustainable transport network for Totnes and its hinterland via transport development which reduces the need for travel by independent vehicle and makes the best use of more sustainable modes of travel, directly reducing the adverse impact of vehicular traffic on the environment and health.

k. Enhance opportunities for open space and recreation facilities to be developed and contribute more to the community's active health and wellbeing.

l. Eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and advance good relations between those sharing protected characteristics and those who do not.

**Policy V1: LOCAL IDENTITY**

Support will be given to new development in Totnes which conserves and enhances the town and its reputation by:

a. respecting local distinctiveness and historic character in land use, scale, form and appearance;

b. stimulating innovation and creativity in design and practice;

c. enriching culture and community wellbeing by providing facilities, services or amenities of local value; and/or

d. enhancing sustainability by promoting low carbon travel, employing low energy use materials and construction techniques and incorporating renewable energy generation.

**Policy V2: HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Support will be given to new development which results in benefits to local community health and wellbeing through:

a. more opportunities for food to be grown and consumed locally;

b. new housing options for those excluded from the market;

c. new employment opportunities and raised job security and quality;

d. increased access to public green spaces and the river;

e. greater participation in culture, sport and recreation;

f. safe, convenient, comfortable movement without recourse to a car; and/or

g. equal accessibility and opportunity for all.

**Part 4 – Environment**

**Policy En1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY**

1. Within the settlement boundary development will only be supported in accordance with the development plan and where:

a. it will help to meet local needs or enhance local services and facilities;

b. it will make efficient use of the site in terms of layout, density and mix of uses;

c. its scale and character will be in keeping with the site and surroundings;

d. it will maintain or enhance local identity and distinctiveness; and

e. it will incorporate all reasonable measures to reduce adverse impacts and deliver environmental benefits including improved access for all.

2. Outside the settlement boundary development will be supported in accordance with the development plan where:

a. it meets the above criteria; and

b. it will meet a proven local need which is neither being nor likely to be met in the town and cannot reasonably be met inside the boundary.

3. In all cases development should be of a high design quality, respecting and complementing the site and its setting, being of sustainable construction, promoting sustainable lifestyles and incorporating the latest energy efficiency measures.

**Policy En2: DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN**

All new development should display a high quality of design by meeting the following criteria:

a. maintaining and where possible enhancing local distinctiveness;

b. respecting historic character and interest above and below ground;

c. being in scale and keeping with its site and setting, protecting the local landscape and important views;

d. using appropriate materials not only for buildings but also for boundaries;

e. including where possible and practicable enough garden space to enable food growing;

f. incorporating meters, bin storage and other such features inconspicuously and so as to avoid street clutter;

g. being safe, attractive, inclusive and accessible for all, reducing opportunities for crime and the fear of crime;

h. being of sustainable construction, promoting sustainable lifestyles and incorporating the latest water and energy efficiency measures;

i. reducing the need to travel, causing no unnecessary noise, light, air or other pollution, safeguarding against risks of contamination, erosion or flooding, and ensuring satisfactory surface water drainage including Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS); and

j. providing safeguards during and after construction to protect against environmental damage, local nuisance, unnecessary noise, light, air or other pollution.

**Policy En3: HISTORIC AND BUILT CHARACTER**

1. New development should:

a. respect the historic and built character of the town;

b. protect and where possible enhance heritage assets, both designated and non-designated; and

c. have regard to the Totnes Conservation Area Appraisal.

2. Good innovative design offering a fresh interpretation of local distinctiveness will be welcomed.

**Policy En4: LANDSCAPE SETTING OF TOTNES**

1. New development should protect the landscape setting of Totnes and its historic landscape features in accordance with national policy and the development plan.

2. New building should not be of a height or mass to obscure important views shown on the Proposals Map, nor of a height to break the historic skyline.

3. New development should protect and where possible enhance the contribution the town makes to the landscape character of the wider area.

**Policy En5: POLICY En5: THE RIVER DART**

Development on or adjacent to the river should:

a. conserve or improve local identity and the appearance of the riverside;

b. provide biodiversity net gain in accordance with national policy; and

c. create increased opportunities for improved public access for all, leisure and community use.

**Policy En6: ENHANCING LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITY**

Development of new dwellings, employment, commercial or community buildings should provide an overall enhancement in local environmental capacity commensurate with the scale of the development. This should be demonstrated in terms of the current and proposed environmental capacity of the site.

**Policy En7: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION**

New development should incorporate and maximize opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation and storage which will not negatively impact on local built character, landscape or amenity. Solar gain, through the orientation of new buildings and solar panels on south facing roofs will be supported.

**Policy En8: DOMESTIC AND SMALL-SCALE WASTE MANAGEMENT**

New development should make provision for waste to be processed on site wherever possible. Support will be given to:

a. on site processing of putrescible waste for small scale domestic, employment and community facilities;

b. the provision of community composting facilities; and

c. improvements to waste management and recycling, particularly in residential areas and the town centre.

**Policy En9: LOCAL FOOD GROWING**

New development, where appropriate, is encouraged to take full advantage of and enable on-site potential to grow food for those living on or visiting the site, including on all land not built on, within and on the outside of buildings, and in public spaces.

**Part 5 – Economy**

**Policy E1: THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

1. New employment and economic development should, without harming the town's social and environmental qualities:

a. reinforce the local economy and the function of Totnes as a market town;

b. enhance its reputation as a vibrant and distinctive place;

c. enable innovation and diversification in the local economy, including the formation of clusters and networks of local enterprises; and

d. enhance local employment opportunities and the trading experience of locals and visitors.

2. Businesses drawing on the town's distinctive character and identity will be particularly welcomed.

3. Development which will generate significant amounts of movement must be accompanied by a travel plan and transport assessment to demonstrate their acceptability.

**Policy E2: EXISTING EMPLOYMENT LAND AND PREMISES**

Existing employment land and premises will be safeguarded and kept available for such use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of their continued use for employment purposes.

**Policy E3: THE TOWN CENTRE**

1. Developments which promote the vitality, viability and retail health of the town centre area are encouraged and will be supported.

2. Proposals which reinforce the distinct character of Totnes as an independent market town focussed on its historic centre will be particularly welcomed.

3. Within the town centre’s primary shopping area, as defined in the JLP, ground floor space and shopping frontages should be retained predominantly in retail use.

4. Development which will maintain or enhance existing or new markets, community and arts events will be supported.

5. Retail developments outside the town centre’s primary shopping area will be resisted unless:

a. they are minor and ancillary to an established business, or

b. it can be demonstrated that there is an operational need for them to be so located, there is no suitable central site available and they satisfy the requirements of the sequential test set out in the JLP.

**Policy E4: TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

1. New development which will support the provision of local training and education and, where possible, enhances the distinct cultural offer of Totnes will be supported.

2. New development which will support the provision of vocational training to meet the needs of local employees, young people and those seeking work will be supported.

**Policy E5: THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**

1. New development increasing the amount and quality of industrial floor space on the industrial estate will be supported and must include adequate parking and servicing arrangements. Retail use will only be supported where it is ancillary and subsidiary to the business.

2. Development should include improvements to the quality or function of the industrial estate wherever possible, including improved public transport, parking and pedestrian, cyclist and riverside access.

**Policy E6: THE GREEN ECONOMY**

New development enabling the green economy in Totnes will be supported and encouraged. This includes development which enables circular economy, re-localisation, the local food economy, reducing waste, generating renewable energy, and social and community-supported enterprise.

**Policy E7: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT**

1. New development should be designed to reduce the likelihood of travel by car and support a more sustainable local transport network. This means that it should:

a. prioritise walking and cycling as the most favoured modes of transport;

b. prioritise public and community transport as the next most favoured modes of transport; and

c. take all available and reasonable steps to reduce use of cars, local road congestion and air pollution.

2. Development which would prioritise travel by car will not be supported.

3. Development will be expected to contribute, either through on-site works or by way of a S106 agreement, towards whatever traffic and transport measures may be required to enable that development to be delivered and used sustainably. Such measures may include:

a. green travel plans, information points and signposting;

b. provision of safe and convenient footpaths, cycle lanes, cycle racks and storage;

c. subsidising public and community transport;

d. local collection points to support green deliveries; and

e. provision of charging points for electric vehicles.

**Policy E8: WALKING AND CYCLING**

1. New development must be well connected to, maintain and seek to improve the functionality and quality of the walking and cycling network in and beyond the town.

2. Good connections to the walking and cycling network must be a design priority, taking up opportunities to improve freedom of use and road safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

3. Good provision for safe cycle storage, parking, charging and changing facilities for cyclists and motorcyclists should be designed into development proposals.

**Policy E9: PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

New development should:

a. maintain and improve the functionality and quality of the public and community transport network in the town;

b. incorporate good, safe connections to the public and community transport network as a design priority;

c. support the development of the railway station as a transport hub for train, bus and coach connections, with good, safe cycle and pedestrian routes and taxi facilities; and

d. promote car sharing.

**Policy E10: CAR PARKING**

1. Existing public car parking should be used and managed to best support the overall functional sustainability of the town. Where new development has impacts on public car parking these should be neutral or positive in terms of the overall functional sustainability of the town.

2. Development that would involve the loss of public car parking will not be supported unless that loss is made up for elsewhere which will be of equal benefit to the overall functional sustainability of the town or it can be demonstrated that the parking is no longer needed due to changes in vehicle use.

3. New development should meet its assessed needs for parking on site unless off site provision would be of greater overall benefit to the functional sustainability of the town and the development in question, and that off-site provision can be guaranteed as permanently available to the development.

4. Parking and charging facilities for electric vehicles, car club/pool vehicles and autonomous vehicles will be preferred to parking for normal private cars. Where new housing development can demonstrate a reduced need for parking due to the utilisation of car club/pool vehicles and autonomous vehicles this will be supported, provided that there are measures in place to support their use.

5. Provision for cycle and motorcycle storage, parking and EV charging should be provided wherever appropriate.

**Part 6 – Community**

**Policy C1: THE PUBLIC REALM**

1. New development should, wherever possible, make a positive contribution to the public realm, particularly within the historic core of the town, supporting Totnes’ reputation as a cultural and tourist destination.

2. Design and layout should create public spaces and streets and spaces which are:

a. in character with the town;

b. safe and well connected;

c. accessible and inclusive;

d. uncluttered and easy to maintain; and

e. incorporate suitable materials, landscaping, planting, street furniture and surfaces.

**Policy C2: PUBLIC OPEN SPACES**

1. The open spaces, amenity spaces, growing spaces and civic spaces shown on the Proposals Map are protected and should be retained in their current use, enhanced to raise their usefulness and should not be built on unless:

a. an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or

b. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

c. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

2. New developments should include open space at least in accordance with adopted standards and provide for its long-term management and maintenance.

3. Where the need for open space cannot be met on site a commensurate contribution towards provision of such open space elsewhere in the town should be made.

4. Open space provision should include:

a. formal and informal spaces for leisure, sport, recreation and play;

b. amenity green spaces, spaces for nature conservation and greenways; and

c. growing spaces.

**Policy C3: LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The following are designated as local green spaces:

1a-c. Totnes Cemetery, St Mary’s and St John’s Churchyards;

2a-d. Allotments at Kingsbridge Hill, Castle Meadow, Camomile Lawn, and Smithfields,

3. Borough Park;

4a-c. Leechwell, Heath and Lamb Gardens;

5a. Vire Island;

5b. The Chicken Run in Bridgetown;

5c. Follaton House Arboretum;

5d-e. Totnes Castle Grounds and meadow;

5f. Dedicated green spaces in new developments at Follaton Oak, Baltic Wharf and Camomile Lawn;

5g. Wetland adjacent to Brutus Bridge; and

6a-f. Play areas at Smithfields, Meadow Park, Westonfields Park, Higher Westonfields Loop, rear Follaton Community Hall and Collapark.

**Policy C4: HOUSING**

1. New housing development should address housing needs, particularly in terms of tenure and size, with priority given to meeting local housing needs.

2. Affordable homes should be included at least in line with adopted targets and arrangements should be made to ensure that they remain affordable in perpetuity.

3. New homes should be designed for sustainable living, incorporate carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures, minimise waste, complement their setting and enhance the locality. Incorporation of the latest energy efficiency measures and sustainable construction methods will be supported.

**Policy C5: SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

New development is expected to maintain or enhance community services and facilities as a whole within the town. Proposals involving the loss of community services or facilities will not be supported unless:

a. they are to be replaced with services or facilities of an equal or higher quality and value to the community on the same site, or another equally or better suited site within the town; or

b. the services or facilities can be demonstrated to be no longer needed or viable, and the proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits to the local economy and community, including through contributions to development on other sites.

**Policy C6: NEW SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

1. The provision of new services and facilities which will improve the breadth, depth and distinctiveness of the overall provision of services and facilities in the town will be welcomed.

2. Provision of new ‘everyday’ services and facilities in areas of the town where these are lacking will be particularly welcomed.

**Policy C7: EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT AT KEVICC**

Proposals for the rationalisation and upgrading of secondary educational facilities on land currently occupied by KEVICC will be supported providing they:

a. make appropriate provision to at least maintain and where possible or enhance community use of sports, leisure and arts/cultural facilities;

b. adopt appropriate measures to minimise the impact of traffic through provision for sustainable travel by staff, pupils and visitors; and

c. are part of a holistic approach to the whole site.

**Policy C8: DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AT KEVICC**

Residential development will be supported on land at KEVICC in accordance with Policy TTV20 of the JLP and Paragraph 99 of the NPPF 2021.

Widespread inclusive community consultation which encompasses all of the KEVICC site and the Sheepfield is encouraged.

**Policy C9: STEAMER QUAY**

At Steamer Quay only leisure or river related development will be supported, providing it has no adverse impact on the South Hams Special Area of Conservation’s population of greater horseshoe bats and where they:

a. maintain or enhance leisure and river related facilities and activities on the site;

b. maintain or enhance existing services, uses, facilities, public areas and rights of way;

c. do not harm the character, amenity, wellbeing, historic, environmental, nature conversation or archaeological values of the area and its surroundings;

d. respect the site's scenic quality and distinctive sense of place and the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area; and

e. adopt a high standard of design reflecting the prominence of the location and enhancing the riverside scene.

Widespread, inclusive community consultation in developing proposals is encouraged.

**Policy C10: MARKET SQUARE AND CIVIC HALL**

Proposals for positive change to the Market Square and Civic Hall will be supported where they:

a. support and complement the economic and social functioning of Totnes town centre;

b. ensure continuity of market operations;

c. as a minimum, maintain the number of trading pitches available;

d. as a minimum, maintain current levels of town centre parking; and

e. reflect the sensitive historic nature of the location.

Widespread, inclusive community consultation in developing proposals is encouraged.

**Policy C11: TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS**

Proposals for redevelopment of any land currently used for town centre car parking (Victoria Street, Heath’s Nursery, North Street, the Lamb, Heath Way and the Nursery) will only be supported where:

a. the current levels of parking are maintained with sufficient resident and visitor car parking within easy walking distance of the town centre;

b. there is provision for the introduction of electric car and car sharing technologies;

c. the visual appearance of town centre parking is enhanced through the introduction of hard and soft landscaping; such as permeable surfaces, tree planting and flower beds;

d. local amenity, especially for neighbours is respected; and

e. it contributes to the vitality, viability and functioning of the town centre.

Widespread, inclusive community consultation in developing proposals is encouraged.