Students

6.28 The continuing growth of the University of Exeter is important to the future prosperity of the city. The University of Exeter had 12,929 full-time students living away from home in 2010/11 and envisages that it will have approximately 3,300 additional full-time, living away from home students by 2025/26. The University’s aim to provide housing for all full-time students who want it is supported because it will ease pressure on existing family housing. 75% or more of additional student numbers should be accommodated in purpose built student housing. New purpose built student housing should be located on, or close to, the University Campuses, at sustainable locations at or near to major transport routes, or in the City Centre. Further guidance is provided by the University Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), the Student Accommodation Development in Residential Areas SPG, the University of Exeter Masterplan Framework SPD and the HMO (Use Class C4) SPD.

Gypsies and Travellers

6.29 The City Council has participated in a County wide assessment of the housing needs of gypsies and travellers. The intention is to meet any gaps in provision by identifying suitable sites for gypsies and travellers and discourage them from living on unauthorised sites. The assessment concludes that there is a need to provide 12 residential pitches in Exeter up to 2011. A further 13 residential pitches may also be needed by 2026 in view of national estimates of likely growth in the number of gypsy households. The RSS states that five transit pitches will also be needed in the city. Sites should be of a size and in a location that takes into account the needs of gypsies and travellers, and the interests of local residents and other local occupiers of land. Suitable and deliverable sites will be identified through the strategic allocations (see section 12) and the Site Allocations DPD. If a need is demonstrated for sites for travelling showpeople, the criteria in Policy CP6 will be applied.
**CP6:** Land will be allocated for 25 residential pitches and 5 transit pitches, for gypsies and travellers. Sites should:

a) be well located on the highway network;

b) have safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access;

c) be located within a reasonable distance of local facilities, including schools and health centres;

d) minimise environmental and landscape impact;

e) protect the amenities of adjacent occupiers;

f) have adequate levels of privacy, security, storage space and residential amenity; and

g) provide appropriate parking, including parking for visitors and for commercial vehicles related to any business activities likely to be carried out.

**Affordable housing**

Affordable Housing Percentage and Threshold

6.30 For Exeter, the HMA identified a level of affordable housing need that exceeds total annual completions. A judgment therefore has to be made on an appropriate affordable housing requirement. The Viability Assessment, completed in 2009, concludes that despite the economic downturn a requirement that 35% of dwellings should be affordable, on sites which are capable of providing three or more dwellings, is reasonable and viable. Developers will need to demonstrate if there are specific constraints on particular sites that result in the 35% requirement not being viable. Off-site provision or contributions of affordable housing will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances where the Council is satisfied that the affordable housing cannot be managed effectively on the site and where providing the affordable housing elsewhere in the city will significantly widen housing choice and encourage a better social mix. Where off-site provision or contributions is agreed, it will be on the basis of the developer providing the same ratio of affordable housing to market housing as would have been provided on-site.

**Social rented and intermediate housing**

6.31 There is evidence that the high cost of housing relative to incomes has a significant effect on the ability of the city to attract and retain people with professional and other skills that are especially needed. The Exeter Heart of Devon Economic Development (EHOD) Strategy identifies this as a particular weakness of the local economy.
12. Strategic allocations

12.1 Delivery of the Monkerton/Hill Barton, Newcourt and Alphington areas (see Policies CP1-CP3) as sustainable urban extensions is central to the achievement of the spatial strategy. It is proposed that, together, they will deliver around 21 hectares of employment land and around 6,500 dwellings (including permissions). These areas are, therefore, identified as strategic allocations (see Plans 1-3).

12.2 It will only be by achieving well planned and comprehensive development that the potential for these urban extensions to contribute to creating more sustainable development can be maximised. The sections below identify some of the features that will be important in creating strong, safe and prosperous communities, together with the infrastructure requirements to ensure delivery (see Section 11).

Delivering sustainable development

12.3 Certain requirements, related to delivering sustainable development, are common to all three urban extensions.

12.4 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) can be used to ensure the risk of flooding is minimised. The developments must provide the necessary infrastructure, and use decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy sources, to cut predicted CO₂ emissions by the equivalent of at least 10% over and above those required to meet the then current building regulations. The potential to achieve exemplary low and zero carbon development should be fully assessed. In particular the potential for CHP energy centres, district heating networks, connections to existing buildings in the locality and connecting to other heat networks or sources in the locality, should all be fully explored.

Newcourt

12.5 The Newcourt area should deliver a mix of residential, employment and community uses together with open spaces, green corridors and essential infrastructure. Some 3,500 dwellings (including 1,176 dwellings with planning permission) and around 16 hectares of employment land should be provided. The development must be well integrated with surrounding development and form a sustainable urban extension to Exeter.

12.6 The residential development should address the context of existing permissions and create distinctive neighbourhoods. At the heart of the development a local centre, positioned to the south of Old Rydon Lane, should provide local shops, community facilities and a local primary school; with a second primary school in the area also required to meet needs up to 2026. Newcourt House, which is an attractive grade two listed building, could extend its existing role as an administrative centre for Devon Primary Care Trust (PCT) to include General Practitioner (GP) services and a health centre/polyclinic. Contributions towards the improvement of other educational, social and community facilities, for example Topsham Library, will also be sought where no new facility is required on-site.

12.7 Residential densities should reflect site specific characteristics. The development should also provide affordable housing in accordance with adopted policy, and site provision made for Gypsies and Travellers if identified by the ongoing site search process.
12.8 The most appropriate locations for employment land are likely to be to the south of the A379 and along the M5 motorway. Employment development should be well integrated into surrounding development with direct links to the local centre and should benefit from good access onto the strategic road network and high quality telecommunications infrastructure.

12.9 The development of the whole Newcourt area will have a strong regard to the principles of urban design so as to ensure an attractive and locally distinctive environment. High standards of landscaping will be expected and existing trees and important landscape features will be retained. A green infrastructure framework, comprising a range of linked formal and informal open spaces (including parks, playing fields and allotments), will meet local sporting and recreational needs, as well as providing health, social and environmental benefits.

12.10 In order to maximise sustainability it will be important to achieve a modal switch away from the car. Therefore, at the heart of this urban extension there should be a transport hub. The transport hub should focus ideally on a new rail halt on the Exeter to Exmouth line, a site for which has been safeguarded in the existing permission, and should include a bus and rail interchange allowing direct links to the city and wider area. Section 106 contributions will be sought to ensure the delivery of this and other transport infrastructure improvements discussed below.

12.11 Good permeability must be achieved throughout the development area and links to the surrounding urban area established. A green network will radiate from the local centre and will provide convenient and safe walking and cycling routes to link existing and proposed housing, employment and community areas to each other and provide access to existing facilities beyond the development area. The potential for a bus route along Old Rydon Lane and an enhanced public transport system route will be explored fully. Proposals for development in the area must not preclude these options. Further bus priority along Topsham Road is also being investigated. Access onto the A379 has already gained consent and is required to serve existing development proposals. Improvements to the strategic road network may also be required, particularly at Countess Wear roundabout.

12.12 The Newcourt area is the subject of various constraints all of which must be considered in bringing development forward. In particular, areas of high flood risk must be avoided, sources of noise and pollution taken into account and biodiversity and landscape features protected.

12.13 The development of this area should have general regard to guidance contained within the Newcourt Masterplanning Study.
12.14 The Monkerton/Hill Barton area should accommodate around 2,500 dwellings and about 5 hectares of employment land (in addition to 3 hectares with permission) set in a green infrastructure framework. The residential development should be integrated closely with adjoining housing and be within convenient walking distance of a primary school and community centre, and a local centre comprising a doctors surgery/polyclinic, local shops, and other appropriate facilities to meet skills, special educational and community needs. Contributions towards the improvement of existing educational, social and community facilities, will also be sought where no facility is required on site. Contributions may be sought for the expansion of St Luke’s Secondary School and Pinhoe Library. The employment land should have good road links to the M5 junction 29, which do not pass through residential areas. The open space framework should comprise a range of linked formal and informal open areas (including parks, playing fields and allotments) meeting local sporting and recreational needs; keeping development away from natural habitats, areas of high flood risk and important landscape features; and screening housing from the motorway, busy roads and employment areas.

12.15 A comprehensive footpath and cycleway network is required. This should link existing and proposed housing and employment areas to each other; to the proposed local centre, and to existing schools, shops, public transport connections, employment opportunities and community facilities in adjoining areas. Specifically this should include links to the major developments proposed to the east and to open countryside via a proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge over the motorway.

12.16 New development will also need to facilitate and contribute towards the improvement of transport infrastructure in the area. All dwellings should be within easy walking distance of frequent public transport services linking the neighbourhood to local facilities and employment, to the City Centre, and to existing and proposed residential and employment areas to the south and east. The route of a new road link from Cumberland Way to the motorway (which leads on to the A30 to the east) should be safeguarded. A proposed enhanced public transport service linking the city with new development in East Devon could also follow this route. Improvements to the motorway crossing may be required to accommodate the resulting additional traffic. A new rail halt on the Exeter to Exmouth line should also be sought to the south of the area.

12.17 Densities should be appropriate to the location. The highest densities should be close to the new local centre, existing facilities and along public transport corridors. Affordable housing should be provided in accordance with adopted policy, and site provision for Gypsies and Travellers, if identified by the site search process. Development should utilise the principles of good urban design to ensure that the resulting development is both attractive and locally distinctive.

12.18 The development of this area should have general regard to guidance contained within the Monkerton and Hill Barton Masterplanning Study.
South of Alphington

12.19 South of Alphington, between the urban area and the city boundary, there is capacity for around 500 dwellings. The area would deliver a compact urban extension with associated infrastructure.

12.20 The area consists of a number of fields with mature boundary hedges that rise gently to the south to a ridge. This prominent ridge forms the city’s administrative boundary and proposals should respond sensitively to this feature.

12.21 The development form would be expected to relate well to adjoining housing. Densities should be appropriate to the location and it will be important to ensure that the amenity of existing residents is protected. The development should follow the principles of good urban design to ensure that the resulting development is both attractive and locally distinctive.

12.22 The development must have good permeability for pedestrians and cyclists throughout, with links to surrounding areas. The development would also be expected to contribute to enhanced transport infrastructure within the area. Improvements to the Alphington Road Corridor will be required, a proposed enhanced public transport service could link this development to the City Centre, and a new rail halt at Matford on the Exeter to Plymouth line is proposed.

12.23 The development of 500 new dwellings would result in significant additional pressure on existing facilities. Contributions towards the improvement of existing educational, social and community facilities, will be sought where no facility is required on site.

12.24 Whilst the capacity of the land within the city is for around 500 dwellings, the Regional Spatial Strategy Proposed Changes proposed an urban extension to the south west of the city of around 2,500 dwellings that would include the dwellings within the city and approximately 2,000 dwellings in Teignbridge.

12.25 The prospect of a larger urban extension offers both challenges and potential opportunities. The larger urban extension could support its own local centre, on-site community facilities, including a new secondary school, a new park and ride, significant green infrastructure and improvements in the movement network giving access to surrounding countryside. Teignbridge and Exeter will work closely together to ensure a comprehensive masterplan guides development of the area.

Successful infrastructure delivery

12.26 The successful delivery of a strategy that accommodates significant new residential and employment development will be dependent upon the necessary infrastructure being provided in the right place and at the right time. All new development, to varying degrees, creates additional demands on existing infrastructure and in many instances existing infrastructure will be insufficient to accommodate new development. Acting as a ‘ringmaster’ the local authority must ensure that all the necessary infrastructure is put in place.

12.27 In order to facilitate this delivery, the City Council is working closely with infrastructure partners in undertaking an infrastructure planning process, the details of which are given in section 11. This work has already identified, in broad terms, the key infrastructure requirements for the proposed strategic allocations referred to in the preceding paragraphs.
CP19: The following areas are proposed as strategic allocations:

The Newcourt area (identified on plan 1, page 100) is proposed for around 3500 dwellings (including 1176 with planning permission), around 16 hectares of employment land and all associated infrastructure including:

- local centre to provide shops and community facilities including a health centre;
- two new primary schools;
- gypsy and traveller site provision if necessary;
- green infrastructure framework;
- low and zero carbon infrastructure;
- new pedestrian and cycle crossings of the A379 and the railway line;
- transport hub to include rail halt and bus interchange;
- new link road through the development with access onto the A379;
- improvements to the strategic road network particularly at Countess Wear roundabout; and
- contributions towards other educational, social and community facilities.

The Monkerton/Hill Barton area (identified on plan 2, page 101) is proposed for around 2500 dwellings, around 5 hectares of employment land and all associated infrastructure including:

- local centre to provide shops, doctors surgery and community facilities
- a primary school;
- green infrastructure framework;
- low and zero carbon infrastructure;
- gypsy and traveller site provision if necessary;
- new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the motorway;
- new link road from Cumberland Way to the motorway to provide vehicular access;
- safeguarding the new rail halt on the Exeter to Exmouth line;
- A new training and educational facility by Exeter College; and
- contributions towards other educational, social and community facilities.

The area south of Alphington (identified on plan 3, page 102) is proposed for around 500 dwellings and all associated infrastructure including:

- green infrastructure framework
- low and zero carbon infrastructure;
- enhancements to transport infrastructure in particular the strategic road network; and
- contributions towards other educational, social and community facilities.