EXMO20: the wrong place for 700 homes

East Devon's draft Local Plan includes **EXMO20**: about 700 homes on farmland at St John's, between Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton, right next to the internationally protected Pebblebed Heaths.

Failed
the council's own first site assessment

"No"
officers' recommendation, August 2024

1,672
of 3,114 consultation responses were on EXMO20

Not yet submitted
the plan still needs a decision by full Council

What the experts say

> "*The Plan remains unsound until this uncertainty is resolved, the mitigation is secured, and the policy wording is updated accordingly.*"
> Natural England, January 2026

> "*Devon Wildlife Trust considers the inclusion of this site for development is unacceptable and we object in the strongest possible terms.*"
> Devon Wildlife Trust, March 2025

> "*in its current form we consider Exmo_20 fails the NPPF tests of soundness*"
> Historic England, March 2025

> "*the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment*"
> East Devon District Council's own screening decision, July 2026

Why it should come out

1. **The protected Heaths.** Harm from traffic pollution hasn't been ruled out. The law says avoid harm first.
2. **It failed the test.** It was a rejected site, added by committee members before the evidence was in.
3. **Alternatives.** Replacements were only looked for in Exmouth.
4. **Access.** The main access road would have to cross the 400 m protection zone around the Heaths.
5. **Not needed.** The council's own study puts the plan's housing figure 40% above the demographic trend.
6. **Heritage.** It would surround the grade II* Church of St John in the Wilderness.

What you can do

- **Sign the petition:** openpetition.org/vkcjc
- **Write to your district councillors**: find them at eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/who-is-my-councillor
- **Come along:** Strategic Planning Committee, Tuesday 1 December, 10am; full Council, Wednesday 9 December, 6pm. Both are open to the public; check the venue and register to speak at democracy.eastdevon.gov.uk.

Every quote comes from public council meetings and documents, with links to the sources on our website: **stopexmo20.co.uk** · Facebook: Stop Exmo.20 · Run by local residents.