



EAST DEVON LOCAL PLAN 2020 TO 2040
REPRESENTATION ON THE PREFERRED OPTIONS REG.18
CONSULTATION DRAFT PLAN

On behalf of

Mosaic (Exeter) Ltd

Dated 13 January 2023



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Local Plan Representation has been prepared on behalf of Mosaic Exeter (Ltd) in respect of the emerging East Devon Local Plan.
- 1.2 At present, within the winter 2022/2023 consultation draft of the East Devon Local Plan, it is considered the Council have failed to take full account of growth needs and allocate sufficient land for development and, as part of reassessing this, consideration should be given to land previously presented by our clients and which is recorded in the HELAA as site Upto_04.

2.0 HOUSNG AND EMPLOYMENT NEED

Housing Need

- 2.1 Policy 3 of the draft Local Plan states in branch 1 that ‘at least’ 18,920 dwellings will be delivered, with provision made for a headroom of approximately 10% to provide housing supply flexibility, which equates to provision of 20,800 dwellings. We agree with this approach in principle which complies with the Framework and at face value is a positive and pragmatic response to housing delivery.
- 2.2 However, Policy 2 – Housing Distribution sets out clearly within the accompanying table to the policy that 18,167 dwellings (908 dwellings) will be delivered over the new plan period – with additional windfalls totalling 2,335 dwellings (117 per annum), giving a total of 20,502 dwellings. Therefore, whilst this exceeds the standard method requirement, it does not meet the 10% headroom to ensure flexibility, choice and competition in the market required by the NPPF and falls short of the Policy 3 figure by 465 dwellings.
- 2.3 Paragraph 3.17 of the draft Local Plan then goes onto state that:
- ‘The policy requirement for provision of at least 18,920 dwellings in the district in the plan period is justified by evidence of local housing need based on the Standard Method, using the latest ONS statistics. To be sufficiently flexible and provide ‘headroom’, forecast supply in East Devon should be 10% above that figure. That equates to about 20,800 dwellings. At this time, we forecast that there is potential to deliver approximately 20,441 dwellings in the plan period from the supply categories we count towards meeting the requirement plus headroom. This includes the potential sites being considered in policies 8, 17, and 19 – 26 in this draft plan. The forecast potential supply meets the minimum housing requirement of 18,920 dwellings and would provide about 8% ‘head room’.’*
- 2.4 We note paragraph 6.7 of the Housing Need, Supply and Requirement Paper states ‘the reason for the small differences in completions and commitments in Table 1 compared to Table 2 is because Table 1 uses net supply figures (i.e. demolitions and other losses have been taken into account) whereas Table 2 (from the Strategic Policy in the draft plan) uses gross figures’.
- 2.5 We would suggest in any future iteration of the Local Plan, net figures are used, because gross figures artificially inflate the level of supply that will be achieved and would fail to meet the requirements of paragraph 11b of the Framework which states that ‘strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses...’. It would also fail to meet paragraph 35 of the Framework which requires plans to be positively prepared.

- 2.6 Based on the evidence in the supporting interim paper on housing need, this suggests that at least all 2nd choice sites listed in Policy 2 of the Draft Local Plan need to be allocated as well as including an allowance for windfalls. Given that even then this does still not meet the headroom figure of 10%, we suggest that additional land is required to ensure that choice and flexibility in the supply of housing can be made in East Devon. We would also question the detail of the Council approach as it is considered naming sites as 'second choice' is hardly transparent and members of the public may not recognise that these sites are no different from the first choice sites and are required to deliver the housing numbers required. This may result in reasonable comments not being made and sites that have unknown issues being allocated.
- 2.7 Although East Devon District Council have withdrawn from the wider Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP), paragraph 2.10 of the East Devon Housing Need & Supply Requirement Interim Paper states 'nevertheless, there are times when strategic cross-boundary matters are relevant for plan-making. These can include the issues within the Housing Market Area and the Functional Economic Market Area, to which national guidance in PPGs relates. The Greater Exeter HMA is the same area as the Greater Exeter FEMA.'
- 2.8 We are pleased to see EDDC are considering adjacent authorities' housing requirements within East Devon Housing Need & Supply Requirement Interim Paper. However, whilst we acknowledge the cross-boundary working taking place, having considered the Exeter City Council's draft Local Plan, as part of the recently closed consultation we query the extent of land available to deliver homes in the City. It is therefore our view that EDDC will need to consider an uplift in housing numbers to accommodate some of Exeter's need, or at the very least have a contingency in place to react if that becomes clearer over time – i.e. potentially identify reserve sites to deal with such an outcome.

Economic Need

- 2.10 Work is still being undertaken on the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) and at the time of preparing the Housing Need, Supply and Requirement Paper in November 2022, this assessment had still not been provided.
- 2.11 As such, the Council is not yet clear on whether the results of this assessment will necessitate an increase in employment land delivery and also housing provision. Paragraph 4.10 goes on specifically to state "*The EDNA results will need to be integrated with the LHNA evidence at a later date. This will assess whether there is evidence relating to economic growth and the ability to house the work force to support the forecast number of jobs that would justify a Local Housing Need figure higher than the scale of housing need identified through the Standard Method.*"

- 2.12 Accordingly, we suggest this work is finalised as soon as possible to feed into the overall assessment of employment land provision and housing need. Without this work and the conclusions it will reach, we struggle to see how the Plan can progress any further than this stage given this could have implications for the level of both housing and employment allocations going forwards.

3.0 SPATIAL STRATEGY

- 3.1 We have reviewed the proposed spatial strategy for development and the current strategy for the delivery of housing in the emerging East Devon Local Plan is for a large proportion of the required housing numbers and some of the employment provision to be located at the western end of the district, in particular around Cranbrook and through the provision of a new settlement. Whilst such an approach is appealing at face value we would suggest it is not the easy fix that it may appear and that at present there is insufficient evidence to justify such an approach.
- 3.2 We consider that relying on a new town and major settlement expansion for the delivery of a large proportion of the Districts required housing is not without its risks and challenges. Indeed, East Devon District Council are currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply largely on the basis of the behind schedule delivery of new housing at Cranbrook. We therefore consider that greater consideration needs to be given to meeting growth needs across a wider range of locations and that focusing attention on a new settlement may not result in the delivery of growth that is required to meet needs.
- 3.3 It is also clear that the provision of a new settlement will place a significant burden on infrastructure in both East Devon and adjoining local authority area and, in particular within the Exeter City Council area of administration and we would suggest that greater work needs to be done with regards to impacts on infrastructure beyond East Devon. We also consider that once again allocating major growth to the west of the District will exacerbate an imbalance in the delivery of growth and that allowing for a proportion of growth to the west of Exeter would be an appropriate way to offset this.

4.0 OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET GROWTH NEEDS

- 5.1 Our clients are the owners of Land at Cowley Barton Barton Farm which was most recently presented to the Council in the 2021 HELAA and considered as site Upto_04 in the *Call for Sites 2021 (all) and 2017 (non-strategic sites)* part of the LPR evidence base. Whilst the site was considered as available and potentially suitable it was judged to be unachievable on grounds of access and the likely costs of improving this rendering any development unviable.
- 5.2 The Mosaic Exeter (Ltd) land is being promoted by a party actively involved in the development sector and with a track record of bringing forward other sites which have resulted in housing delivery. As Appendix 1 we enclose a concept proposal document which has been previously submitted to the Council as part of earlier local plan representations and which contains a summary of a range of preliminary but detailed investigations which have been carried out and have informed the masterplan concept proposed. These investigations have included more detailed work on highway matters and relevant constraints have been taken in to account in when setting out proposals for the site. An initial viability exercise has been undertaken and this indicates a scheme could be deliverable with appropriate levels of enabling development and at the same time delivering a range of highway and other improvements and we would contend the Council have discounted the site without giving it full and appropriate consideration.
- 5.4 Since the time of the last representations our client has engaged through their highway consultant further with Devon County Council and they have expressed positivity toward a cycle interchange, additional highway/transport improvements and a mixed use space. It was further confirmed in these discussions that a development along the lines of that indicated could make a meaningful contribution to delivering these infrastructure benefits. Our client would reiterate that they consider this can all be delivered viably with accompanying housing delivery in the region of 150 homes, all of which could be delivered on land over which they own or have an agreement to promote.
- 5.4 Given our comments in respect of housing and employment need we consider the Plan will need to provide for greater housing and employment growth than it presently does. Further to this if it is considered an alternative approach to a new settlement is required as we consider might be appropriate then a greater 'step change' will be necessary. On this basis we contend the Council should give serious consideration to allocating land to the western side of Exeter to help meet the needs of both East Devon and Exeter City and we maintain site Upto_04 is a suitable, achievable location for this growth.
- 5.5 In considering the benefits that development on the western side of Exeter might hold we would also point to the fact that Teignbridge District Council have looked to allocate land at Attwells Farm (site EE4) on the north western side of Exeter for circa 300 homes in the currently emerging draft Local Plan Review. With regard to transport connectivity the Sustainability Appraisal underpinning the LPR states as follows:

Site EE4 is more than 1km from a railway station but within 500m of a bus stop served by frequent services. Policies CC2 and CC4 will help to promote energy efficiency and low carbon modes of transport including cycling, walking and public transport. In addition, policy EE4 requires the provision of a mobility hub, which at a minimum should provide space to enable buses to turn and wait and space for a new public stop. It should also consider incorporating secure and covered bicycle parking, car club space, and e-bike/e-scooter hire. This could have a potential significant positive effect in relation to connectivity and transport.

- 5.6 Whilst accepting these comments relate to different site it should be noted the sustainability appraisal recognised the benefits of a location on the western side of Exeter and that considered that a mobility hub would be an appropriate way to further enhance the sustainability credentials of the location. We would contend that there are notable parallels between these sites and in fact Upto_04 is more well located than TDC site EE4 and better placed to deliver a range of benefits and whilst clearly they are in different LPA areas EDDC should give serious consideration to balancing growth at Exeter and in effect following the approach taken by TDC with regard to the western side of Exeter.

Appendix 1 – Site promotion pack



LDĀ DESIGN

ISSUES &
OPTIONS:
COWLEY, EXETER

PROPOSAL FOR RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT WITH
MOBILITY HUB

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document promotes the advantages for development of land around Cowley. The site is located on approximately 9.9 Hectares of land adjoining the west and south sides of the existing hamlet of Cowley and the west side of Cowley Hill. It concludes that the land at Cowley offers an excellent opportunity to contribute sustainably to housing and the planned growth of East Devon in the form of a mobility hub with associated service functions and infrastructure.

Site location: ■ Cowley, Exeter EX5 5EN

Area: ■ 9.9 hectares

Land uses: ■ 150 residential dwellings
(Approximate ■ 4500 sqm mixed-use facility
figures): ■ 10000 sqm mobility hub
■ 10000 sqm community open space

Infrastructure: ■ Existing road into Cowley Village
converted into residents only access
■ New junction onto Cowley Hill
■ Repurposing of St Andrews Road into
shared pedestrian and cycleway

Availability: ■ Site Available immediately



COWLEY

VILLAGE FOCAL POINT

MOBILITY HUB

NEW ST ANDREWS ROAD JUNCTION

ST ANDREWS RD

A377

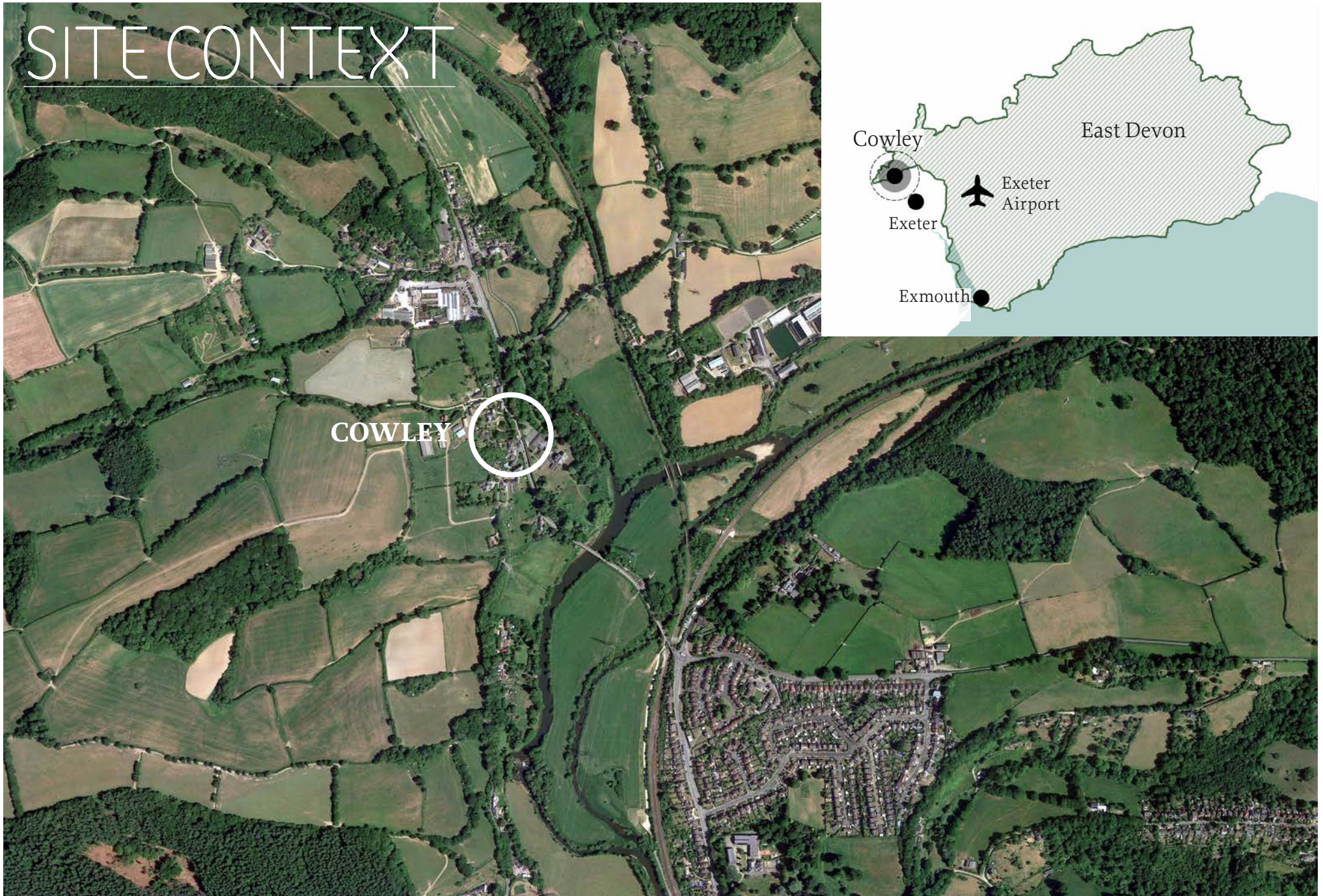
COWLEY HILL

EXE VALLEY CORRIDOR

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SITE CONTEXT



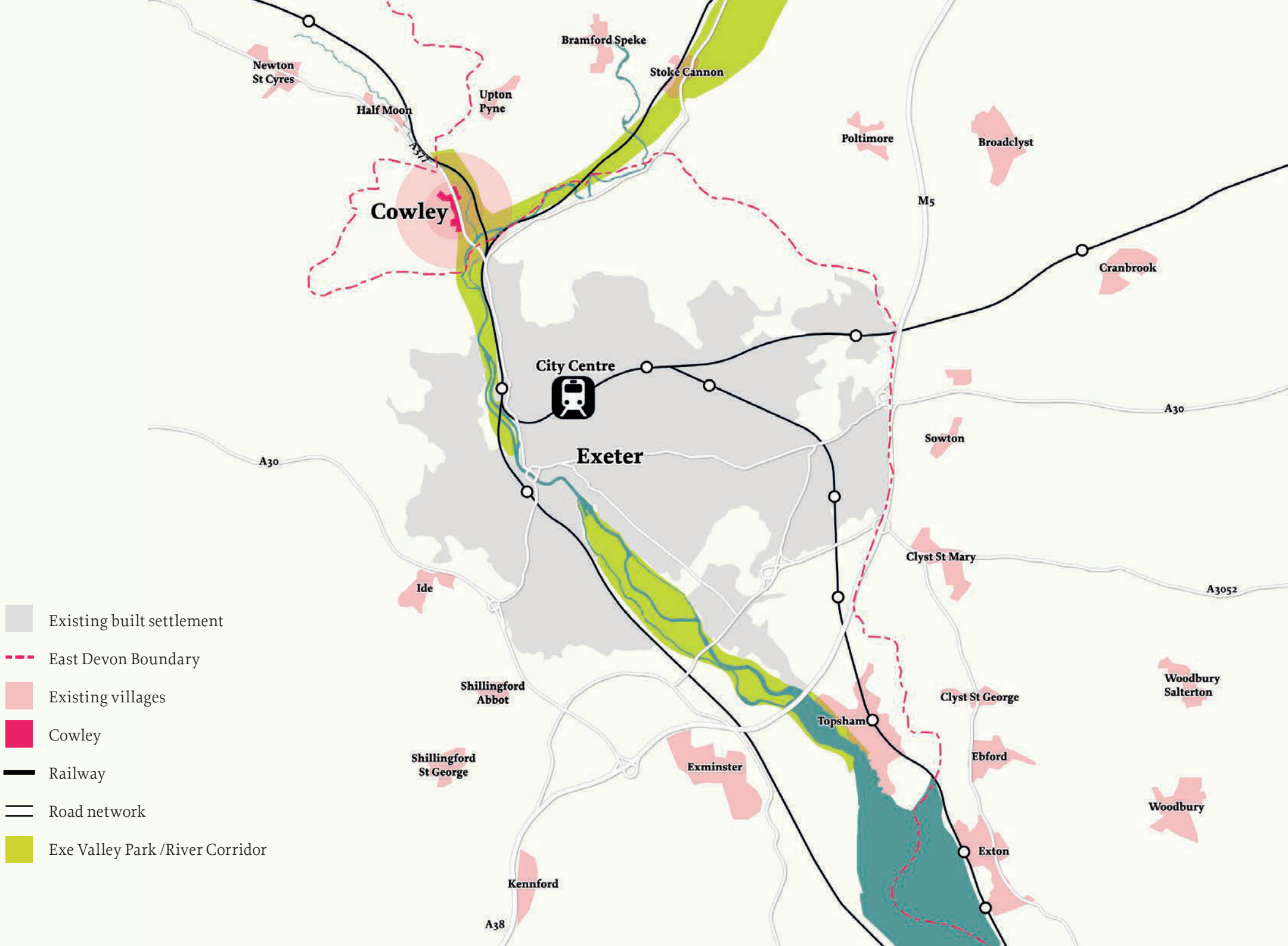
INTRODUCTION

■ The land around Cowley Village can provide great potential in realising East Devon's Housing and Employment Land and provide suitable land to form part of the new draft Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal scoping report to support the emerging Local Plan which addresses social, environmental and economic considerations.

This document sets out to meet the demands of the emerging Local plan 2021-2040:

- Have a joined-up vision and aspirations for the area
- Meet the area's housing needs in the right locations
- Secure economic growth and increased prosperity
- Provide transport and infrastructure improvements needed to support sustainable growth
- Celebrate and enhance the area's unique environment and green context

The plan will set out a proposal for the development of land adjacent to Cowley Village, strategically located to the north-west of Exeter, at the western extremity of the East Devon Authority Area. Specific issues are summarised in the next chapter, which highlight key challenges, and will need to be addressed to meet the overall purpose of the plan successfully.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The relationship of the built environment to its surrounding countryside, coast and village communities is a defining characteristic of Devon's quality of life and identity.

This relationship is rooted in the physical development of Devon over several centuries. The historic crossing at Exe Bridges linking directly up Fore Street to the Cathedral, High Street and Exeter Castle is the origin of the historic street pattern radiating out to the surrounding countryside. The river Exe with the historic quayside and canal underpins Exeter's commercial significance in the region. The combination of the river, the crossing and the pattern of routes has created a city, which has a strong cultural and commercial relationship with its surrounding village communities and hamlets set in productive countryside.

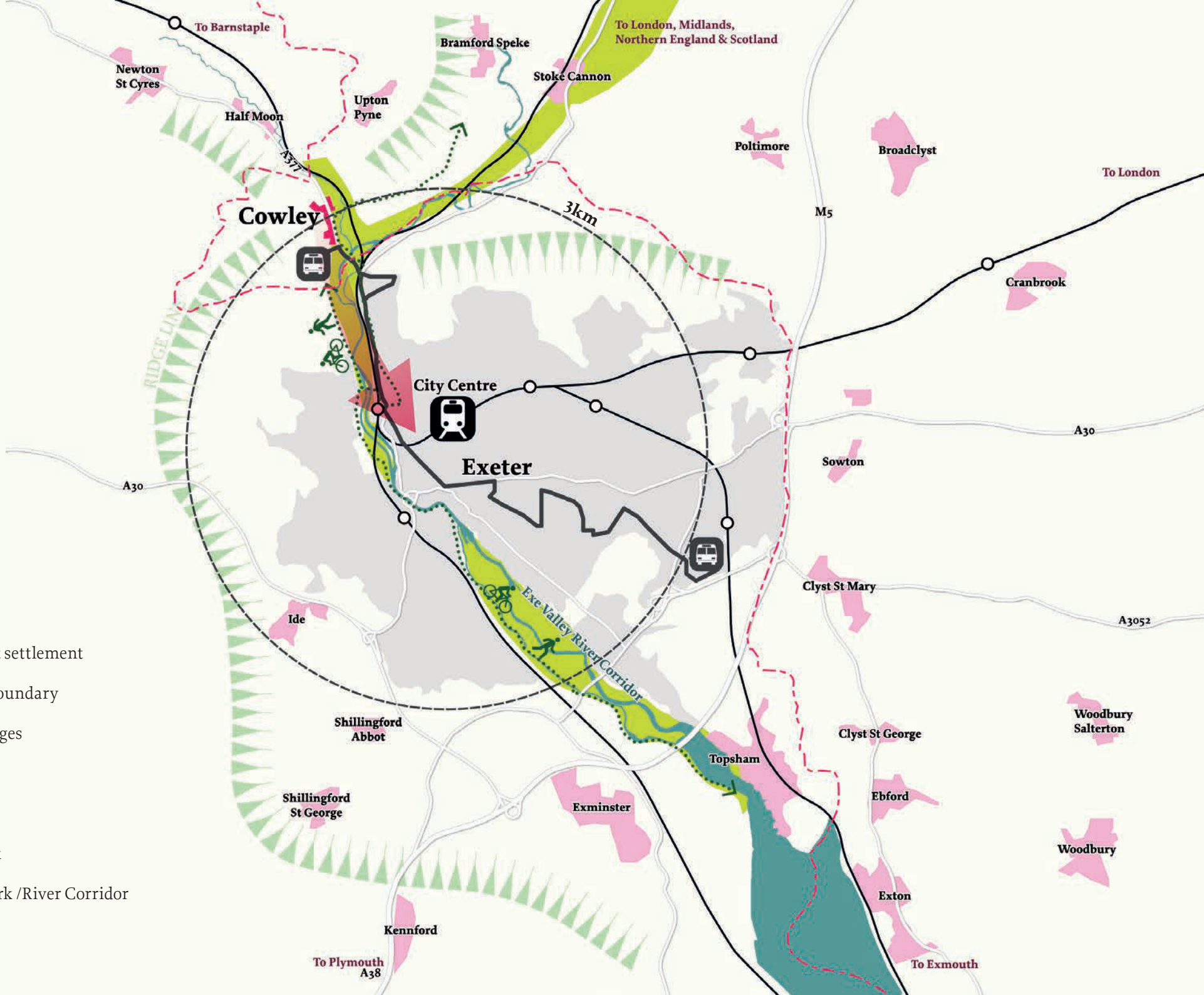
The local settlements close to the city of Exeter identify both with the countryside setting in which they are located, but also see the city as their cultural and commercial centre. Whilst the nature of the flow of social and economic activity may have changed with time, the importance of this reciprocal relationship between Exeter and its surrounding villages endures.

New development will need to be supported by development in the surrounding area with high quality sustainable connections back to the city. It is clear that the key factors that will determine the success of future development in meeting these objectives are site location and access.

Cowley is one of the closest settlements within Exeter's immediate vicinity to the city itself. The settlement has direct access onto one of the main arteries in and out of the city and possesses great public transport transit into Exeter's most significant green infrastructure corridor, Exe Valley Park.

It is therefore well located for strategic growth and also complements the historic settlement pattern of Exeter

- Existing built settlement
- East Devon Boundary
- Existing villages
- Cowley
- Railway
- Road network
- Exe Valley Park /River Corridor



SUSTAINABLE GATEWAY LINK INTO EXETER

Exeter has many attractive qualities that give it a distinctive character and quality of life recognised across the south west of England. Development to the west, north and south of the city has been traditionally constrained by the local topography, with a ring of green ridges and hills that are now synonymous with Exeter's compact form and identity. Growth from the Roman through to the Edwardian period made it a compact 'walkable city' made up of a series of neighbourhoods situated around the city centre.

As the importance of the River Exe and canal declined as a commercial artery, the railway network replaced it. Exeter continues to be a vital rail hub connecting the region with the major urban centres across the country.

The current growth pattern of the city has come about as a result of the ease of development on flatter land to the east, triggered by bouts of development pressure through the 20th Century and the construction of the M5. The 20th Century growth and road infrastructure created a dependency on the private car.

As a result of new infrastructure in and around Exeter, patterns of growth have had a number of important consequences:

- Exeter has taken on an asymmetric form with development in the east of the city being beyond a reasonable walking or cycling distance from the centre.
- It has led to increased road infrastructure and capacity enhancement to the A30, A38 junctions with the M5, as the private car continues to be the main form of transport.
- While investment in public transport and cycle network improvements can offset some of the effects of these developments, the capacity of the historic arterial routes into the city is finite. Significant investment in sustainable transport that delivers genuine, and attractive, alternatives to the private car will be required, to maintain the accessibility between the city and its surrounding communities.

THE ADVANTAGE OF SUSTAINABLE ACCESS

The Exe Valley river corridor has an extensive network of pedestrian and strategic cycle routes that connect it to the settlements and countryside to the south of the city on both sides of the Exe estuary. The corridor from Exe Bridges to Countess Wear and beyond to Topsham and Exmouth to the east and Starcross and Dawlish to the south, has become an exemplar cycle corridor. This network also provides sustainable links to The University of Exeter, Exeter College, the diverse range of attractions in the city centre and existing riverside neighbourhoods.

This network also provides access to a significant outdoor amenity and green space serving the city and an opportunity for the creation of improved cycle and walking links to the local and mainline railway infrastructure. This infrastructure is being improved locally. The role of the Exe Valley in providing connections to local stations at Marsh Barton and St. Thomas will increase in importance and Exeter St. David's also provides a link to city bus services.

The principle of an improved cycle link into the Exeter from the north has already been considered in some detail through the Boniface Trail Association and proposals supporting the provision of a new cycle link between Crediton and Exeter. The trail has received County and District Councillor support. Progress has also been made in the past 12 months in getting support from local landowners to provide land to deliver the link.

The proposed Land at Cowley is one of the few large development locations within 3km of the city centre. It offers an opportunity to balance the eastward growth of Exeter through the creation of an attractive and sustainable contemporary village on the north-western side of the city.

-  Existing built area
-  Potential development area
-  Railway
-  Road network
-  Existing woodland
-  Significant hedgerows/treebelts
-  Listed building/structures
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  SSSI
-  Priority Habitat Inventory
-  Flood zone2



KEY FEATURES

■ The land around Cowley is ideally situated along the western side of the A377 and the existing hamlet of Cowley and extending south along the line of St. Andrews Road. A desktop review of publicly available baseline data has been undertaken, to identify existing and future challenges.

The main local characteristics that have been considered in defining the development capacity of the site is:

- Topography;
- Settlement Pattern;
- Cultural Heritage Features;
- Floodplain;
- Landscape, Visibility & Ecology;

TOPOGRAPHY

The landform surrounding the proposal site is the northern end of the ridge of high ground that wraps around Exeter's western and northern edges. A series of steep sided valleys extending west and north weave a rich pattern of landform down to the confluence of the river Creedy and Exe. Local high points extend from 156m and 121m around the west to 105 along the local ridge at Duryardwood Copse to the north. This ridge to the north is a locally distinctive feature that defines the northern edge of the existing settlement. The existing hamlets of Cowley and Three Horse Shoes are nestled on the relatively level land between the western slopes and the river Creedy below to the east. These hamlets and the proposal site are on land at between 20m to 35m. The gradient of the land rises to the west at various degrees, with relatively benign slopes in the northern end of the proposal site near Bernaville Nurseries and along the western side of St. Andrews Road. The landform then rises more rapidly to the west. The river Exe extends to the east of Cowley, splitting the main northern ridge that contains Exeter with Upton Pyne Hill to the north and Stoke Hill to the east.

With development set along the lower laying and relatively level land adjacent to the A377, the existing settlement and St. Andrews Road, topography would not prevent development of the site.



VIEW LOOKING WEST FROM UPTON PYNE HILL TO DURYARDWOOD HILL

SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The existing built form in this locality comprises two separate hamlets on the A377, Cowley to the south and Three Horse Shoes to the north. A cluster of three small agricultural fields separates these hamlets. Both settlements are linear in their form and straddle the A377. Apart from the row of semi-detached homes on the east side of the road at the northern end of Three Horse Shoes, the existing dwellings do not address the A377. The existing dwellings are arranged in a random pattern, driven more by the opportunities to build on the available relatively level land and access to the minor lanes and roads of Duryardwood Lane, Star Barton Lane and St. Andrews Road.

Both settlements comprise a mix of residential dwellings from various periods. At Three Horse Shoes, larger farmhouses and barns are situated to the west set within the agricultural land. Smaller individual cottages and houses are set along the lanes and adjacent to the A377. The settlement at Cowley Hill is more recent and comprised more of Victorian detached and semi-detached homes. Apart from the cluster of buildings around the St. Andrews Road junction with the A377, the existing buildings are set back from the roads.

A well designed development on the Land at Cowley could provide a structure with facilities and amenities that unify the existing settlement and support the creation of a sustainable and distinctive neighbourhood.

CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES

In terms of significance, there is an earthwork enclosure 300m southwest of Three Horse Shoes listed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) (Ref. No. 1002645). The exact date and function of the enclosure is unknown, but it has been interpreted as a medieval moated site. This is a constraint to development to the west of the existing Bernaville Nurseries site.

To the east of the proposal site on the A377 there is Cowley Bridge, also a SAM (Ref. No. 33044). The monument includes an early 19th century stone bridge spanning the River Exe. It is located on the site of a succession of bridges at this spot, the earliest recorded, dates to 1286. The bridge here currently carries the road (A377) connecting Exeter with Crediton and North Devon and it is Listed Grade II*. This is an important consideration for the transport strategy for the proposal site and strategically for Exeter connecting to communities in the north.

There are four Grade 2 listed buildings and one Grade 2 listed structure within the existing settlement of Cowley. There is one Grade 2 Listed Building in Three Horse Shoes.

The SAM and Listed Buildings and Structures are not considered to pose a significant constraint to development of the proposal site.

FLOOD PLAIN

The floodplain of the Exe and Creedy rivers lays to the east of the existing settlement and is classed as Flood Zone 2 (East Devon District Council Local Plan 2013; Interactive Map). Whilst the proposal site is outside this floodzone, the hydrology of the site has three separate water courses that flow east down to the Creedy and Exe floodplain.

The land at Cowley is not in the floodplain. A baseline study of these aquifers on the site and their relationship to the Creedy and Exe rivers would be required to inform a sustainable drainage strategy for development of the site.

With appropriate mitigation incorporated into design to satisfy the local flood authority, it is not expected that the local hydrology would prevent development of the site.



VIEW LOOKING SOUTH ALONG THE A377 AT BERNAVILLE NURSERIES

-  Existing built area
-  Most visible extents
-  Moderate visible extents
-  Least visible extents
-  Railway
-  Road network
-  Existing woodland
-  Significant hedgerows/treebelts
-  SSSI
-  Priority Habitat Inventory
-  Grassland

*View Points 1-4 on this diagram are shown on pages 16-17.



LANDSCAPE, VISIBILITY AND ECOLOGY

The ridges and hills that define the western and northern edges of Exeter are a characteristic feature of the city. The visibility of these features from various points within the city itself reinforces the sense of connection between the city and its surrounding landscape, which is valued by the residents and visitors to Exeter.

The proposal site is within the East Devon District Council Area, but emphasizes its proximity to the city of Exeter whilst respecting the aim of the current Core Strategy (2012-2026) document that seeks to steer development away from these hills. Keeping the proposals to the lower lying land will protect the green ridge and hills as the dominant characteristic feature in the landscape.

The complex topography combined with established hedgerows, woodland and tree belts that characterise the landscape, create a sense of enclosure at the lower levels locally around Cowley and Three Horse Shoes.

The more distant views of the proposal site are restricted to locations to the east. Typical viewpoint locations are:

- Wrefords Lane from Barton Place Farm down to the Junction with Cowley Bridge Road;
- The north end of Cowley Bridge Road after the row of existing dwellings on the west side of the road ends;
- Upton Pyne Hill road east of the railway line up to the Pyneshill Cottages.

Whilst the proposal site is visible from these locations, the existing built form and associated belts of mature trees within the properties of Cowley and along the roads between the viewpoints restrict them to partial views of the site.

The Land at Cowley is on the lower lying land along the west side of St Andrew's Road and the existing settlement of Cowley. The continuous mature trees and vegetation along St. Andrews Road is a significant screen to the lower parts of the site. The field pattern of the site and the surrounding area is comprised of smaller regular fields on the lower lying land, defined by established hedgerows with some mature trees.

The upper slopes have larger fields with a backdrop of mature mixed native woodland plantations. The retention of the hedgerows features will mitigate the landscape effects as part of a well designed development.

A landscape and visual appraisal will be helpful to informing the design of proposals at Cowley and confirm that development could be acceptable with appropriate mitigation by design.

Whilst Phase 1 Habitat Survey has not been undertaken yet, an initial desktop check of the area has been done using publicly accessible online data sources.

There are no designated landscapes or habitats within the proposed development area. The Stoke Wood SSSI is located about 1.3km to the east of the site. There are also areas of Ancient Woodland to the south at Exwick Wood and the north at Duryardwood. There are additional existing Broadleaf woodland areas identified as Priority Habitats on the slopes to the west of the proposal site.

The land of the site has been in agricultural use as semi-improved grassland for grazing. There are some existing barns and structures on the site that may provide habitat or roosting sites.

The lowland along the Exe Valley corridor is a Priority Habitat; Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh.

An ecological appraisal will be required to understand the significance of local habitats site and any appropriate mitigation that may be required. Ecology is not expected to pose a significant constraint to the development of the site.



VIEWPOINT 1: LOOKING WEST TOWARDS THE LAND AT COWLEY FROM WREFORDS LANE NEAR BARTON PLACE FARM



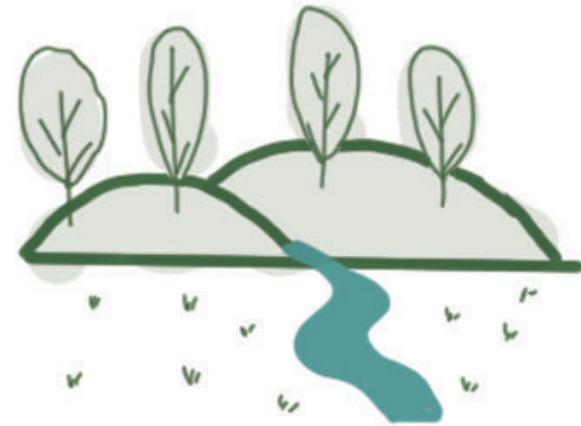
VIEWPOINT 2: LOOKING WEST TOWARDS THE LAND AT COWLEY FROM WREFORDS DRIVE NEAR WREFORDS CLOSE



VIEWPOINT 3: LOOKING WEST TOWARDS THE LAND AT COWLEY FROM THE NORTH END OF COWLEY BRIDGE ROAD



VIEWPOINT 4: LOOKING WEST TOWARDS THE LAND AT COWLEY FROM UPTON PYNE HILL ROAD NEAR UPTON PYNE COTTAGES



VILLAGE

NATURE

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The land around Cowley Village will be based on an approach of complete integration between village and nature. The development will be a merge of the natural landscape and a wide range of available infrastructure, a village hub with associated community greenspaces and a mobility hub with service functions.

The main elements that could be delivered as part of Cowley Village are described in this section and build upon the 10 objectives set out within the Issues and Options Consultation:

1. Designing for health and wellbeing

To encourage healthy lifestyles and living environments for all East Devon residents.

2. Tackling the climate emergency

To ensure all new development moves the district towards delivering net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 and that we adapt to the impacts of climate change.

3. Meeting future housing needs

To provide high quality new homes to meet people's needs.

4. Supporting jobs and the economy

To support business investment and job creation opportunities within East Devon and support a resilient economy.

5. Promoting vibrant town centres

To promote the vitality of our town centres, encourage investment, greater flexibility and a wider range of activities to increase footfall and spend.

6. Designing beautiful and healthy spaces and buildings

To promote high quality beautiful development that is designed and constructed to meet 21st century needs.

7. Our outstanding built heritage

To conserve and enhance our outstanding built heritage.

8. Our outstanding natural environment

To protect and enhance our outstanding natural environment and support an increase in biodiversity.

9. Promoting sustainable transport

To prioritise walking, cycling and public transport and make provision for charging electric vehicles, whilst reducing reliance on fossil fuelled vehicles.

10. Connections and infrastructure

To secure infrastructure needs at an appropriate time to support new development

The defining characteristics of land around Cowley Village will seek to enhance these 10 objectives which will be to provide a quality residential environment, containing a vibrant centre to reduce out commuting, a mobility hub to promote active travel and an integrated network of green spaces and infrastructure.



A VILLAGE CENTRE

The development of the land at Cowley offers an opportunity to create a focal point for the village, and provide a heart for the new neighbourhood for the benefit of the existing and new residents. The village centre could provide a range of co-located facilities and services to support community and enterprise.

Such facilities could include community space and potentially a primary school, a work hub and space to support sustainable active travel. A work hub located near the main access to the site from the A377, could provide flexible workspace for innovative and creative start up businesses, with support space and shared office facilities for individuals.

The A377 is a popular commuter route from Crediton and the greater North and West Devon area. Commuters typically drive to work in Exeter, contributing to the congestion often experienced in the city centre. The closure of Paris Street will affect commuting from Crediton and the A377, which is also likely to exacerbate congestion in the city.

All these potential uses could support a vibrant place that works alongside the existing businesses in the Cowley and Three Horse Shoes area.

There is an opportunity to take advantage of the site location at the interface between the fringe of the city and the wider countryside communities. The village centre could incorporate facilities that support a sustainable active travel strategy, including the mobility hub linking to frequent public transport already passing through.

There is also the opportunity to provide dedicated cycling facilities. The location makes the 'last, or first mile of travel' easy to key destinations along the Exe Valley corridor, such as University of Exeter, Exeter College, St David's Station and the City centre. Parking in the interchange and using the existing bus services to the City will have environmental, social and health benefits.

The village centre could be a busy local destination tapping into the passing trade. At the same time, it could support the enterprise within the Cowley Village community itself, acting as a shop window for the community and a source of pride.

CONNECTED GREEN SPACE

Cowley Village could create a place rooted in its landscape with a structure that draws on the opportunities to connect with nearby green space. Exe Valley Park is the primary piece of strategic green infrastructure for the city. The close proximity Cowley Village offers has obvious benefits for the existing and future residents in terms of access to nature and healthy living.










Development at Cowley Village could act as a catalyst for the enhancement of Exe Valley Park between Cowley and St. David's Station with the aim of combining access to attractive landscape with safe pedestrian and cycle routes. A range of options could be considered with one or more being adopted.

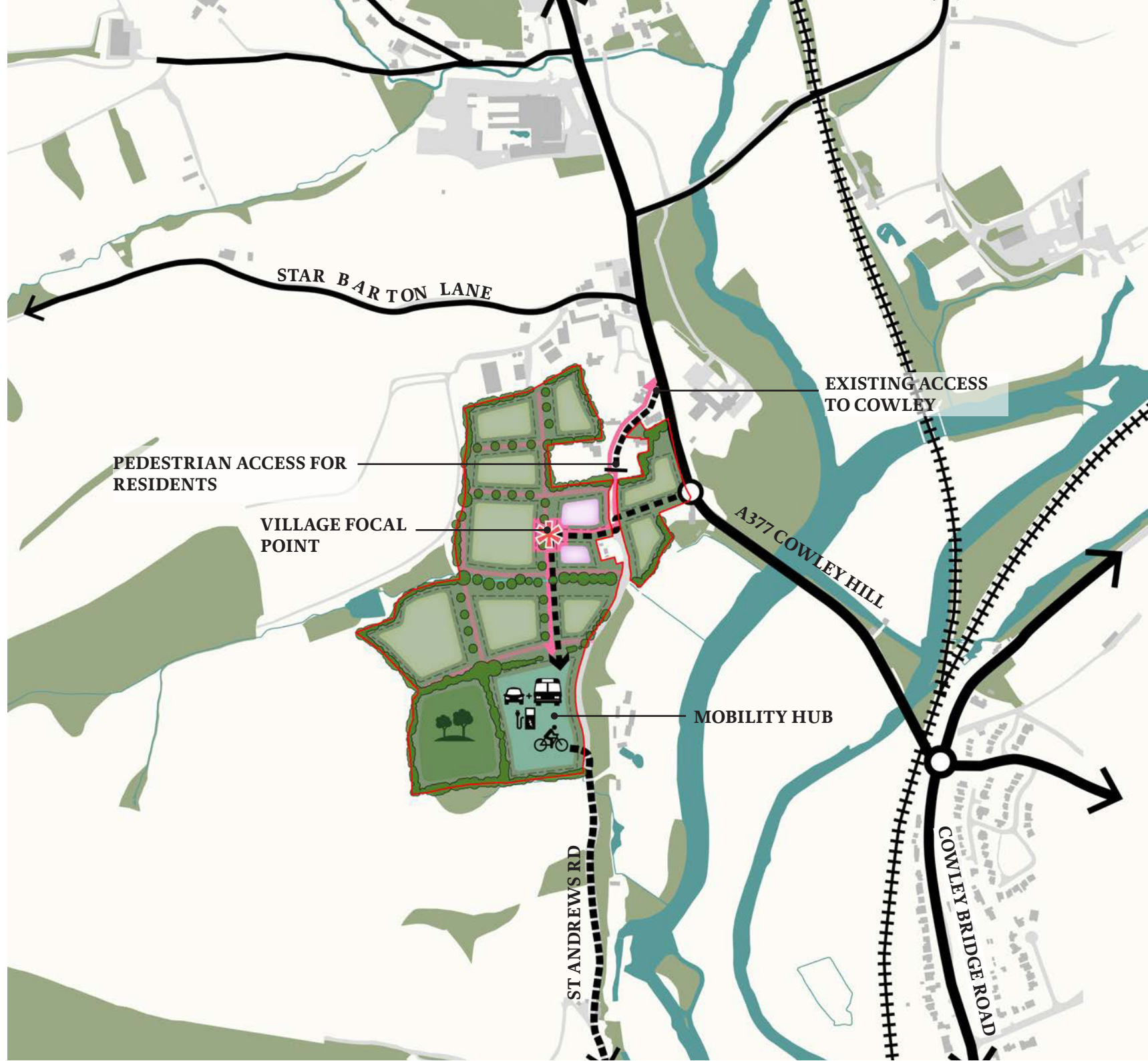
There is potential to link infrastructure and/or improve existing links along St Andrew's Road and Cowley Bridge Road. St. Andrew's Road currently facilitates local access to a small number of residencies and businesses but does act as a rat-run during the peak periods. Discouraging and/or restricting the use of the route as a rat-run, offers the potential to improve and promote it as a quiet lane. This could then facilitate local access alongside a pedestrian and cycle link to the City.

Other options also include an extension of the Exe Valley Cycle Trail along the Exe river valley with new infrastructure, including bridges over the River Exe providing an active travel link and better access in general to the river and countryside. A route that runs through managed coastal grazing marsh of the Exe Valley from Cowley to St. David could be a stunning addition to the amenity offered by this significant open space asset.

The greater proportion of the landownership for the Cowley Village site also includes an extensive area of the existing agricultural land and woodland plantations on the slopes to the west. This could provide local green space for the community at Cowley Village.

In the context of an improved green infrastructure network, this land could also support a strategic green infrastructure plan. This support could be in the form of SANGS and/or bio-diversity offsetting to alleviate pressure on ecological assets that may arise from potential development elsewhere.

-  Existing buildings
-  Site boundary
-  Railway
-  Road network
-  St Andrews Rd alignment
-  Local centre
-  Mixed use
-  Mobility Hub
-  Woodland
-  Indicative movement



DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

■ The main residential community will be arranged around a small village centre with routes leading through to the mobility hub to the south. This could be a structuring device to organise and integrate the existing and new communities. With strong internal pedestrian and cycle routes, it could enable a more intimate set of spaces to develop that supports community interaction. The new development can provide an alternative sustainable link from a Work Hub, through the village and on to Exeter via an improved and extended pedestrian/cycle network along St Andrews Road.

A finer grain network of east/west green links could connect the existing residential area with the development, through to the green slopes to the west of the proposal site.

The land could support a development of approximately 150 homes, with a community green space, and a village centre that includes associated service functions, and/or a work hub facility to support sustainable transport. The total number of homes is subject to the number and size of other uses that could be provided on the site. Further technical studies and consultations that may be required as part of taking the site forward to delivery, will also be taken into consideration.

Cowley Village could be ambitious in its aim to embrace the technological advances of the future to support a sustainable high quality of life. This could provide an opportunity to develop more spatially efficient residential development typologies, which are highly adaptable to the changing demands and requirements of the residents as they move through their lives. A development of this type will

appeal to a broad range of ages and socio-economic groups in Exeter, which is important to support a well-balanced community.

The conceptual approach to Cowley Village, also works with the existing characteristics of the site including the lay of the land, streams, drains, hedgerows and mature trees.



STAR BARTON LANE

200m

EXISTING ACCESS TO COWLEY

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FOR RESIDENTS








NEW ST ANDREWS ROAD JUNCTION

A377 COWLEY HILL

SHARED PEDESTRIAN/ CYCLEWAY

ST ANDREWS RD

COWLEY BRIDGE ROAD

-  Existing road
-  New Junction design
-  St Andrews road re-alignment
-  Bus route
-  Rail line
-  Internal acces
-  Modal change facility

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

■ The proposal offers a unique opportunity to develop a new garden community in a location that has the potential for excellent access to Exeter, including exceptional and contemporary active and shared travel connections, whilst creating a community that supports local living at its heart.

The site proposals will include active travel at its core, capitalising on the short distance to the city, key travel nodes, and destinations for commerce and work that are all within an easy cycle from the site. St Andrews Road will be repurposed as an active travel super corridor, restricting all but local traffic access and ending the blight of excessive rat-running along the corridor.

Alongside this will be an E-mobility hub or E-Hub. This will be an opportunity for residents of Cowley to access a comprehensive range of contemporary mobility options from e-bike, e-scooter, EV car share, traditional bike share and a delivery consolidation point amongst other facilities.

Cowley has historically suffered from congestion and queuing from commuting from Crediton and the rural hinterland, which converges at the Cowley Hill and Cowley Bridge roundabout. The site is uniquely located to capture this traffic, removing it from the highway and offering last mile travel options into the city that are direct and attractive. The E-hub will sit alongside the future Crediton to Exeter cycle route (Boniface Trail) and will both facilitate part of that longer journey routing, or capture car tips, offering an opportunity for commuters into Exeter to access zero carbon mobility for the last mile of travel. These proposals are already being developed in consultation with Devon County Council aligned with the aspirations to deliver a continuous cycle link between Exeter and Crediton, alongside a local park and change facility.

There is the potential to focus complementary land uses around the E-Hub including local retail, café, work hub etc. The site will be connected to the village through links to Star Barton Lane, with new pedestrian crossings near to the site access and/or Star Barton Lane for routes to the garden centre (with shop and café/restaurant), The Stables restaurant and bus stops on Cowley Hill.

The site will be accessed from a new junction onto Cowley Hill with a design compliant layout and visibility, offering the potential for active frontage that can reinforce the 30mph limit which is currently in place. Based on recent surveys, speeding is not an issue however, the road dominates and divides the village and development offers the potential to create an active frontage that refocuses the village environment and creates a stronger sense of place, which in turn will improve pedestrian safety and passage across Cowley Hill, improving connectivity and community cohesion.

These proposals offer the potential to close the existing St Andrews Lane junction onto Cowley Hill which currently suffers from poor alignment and visibility, with limited potential to improve given the property constraints at the junction. This link can be re-purposed as a local access link to the existing properties, potentially with geometries potentially being reduced to provide a low trafficked route for pedestrians and cyclists. Vehicular access into the site can then be achieved through a new and re-aligned section of St Andrews Lane.



CONCLUSION

■ The focus for growth has been oriented to the east and south of Exeter for some time. This has resulted in an asymmetric city, which requires significant investment on infrastructure to ensure adequate connectivity between the growth areas and the city.

Development to the west and north of Exeter has been constrained by the green slopes and hills that define the edge of the city. However, this proposal shows how it is possible to provide some balance to the inevitable growth to the east.

Development of the Land at Cowley can maximise the opportunity for sustainable place making that its environment and close proximity to Exeter offers. The initial assessment of the site characteristics suggests that a well designed development proposal could address technical issues of the site successfully. However, it can exceed this to create a highly attractive contemporary village that is focused on quality of life that will deliver the Objectives set out by East Devon Council within the emerging local plan 2021-2040.

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