

Response to Examiner question how and why the wording of policy Coly8 was modified between the Regulation 14 version of the plan and the Regulation 16 version of the plan.

I am writing on behalf of the Colyton Parish Council who are the Qualifying body and to whom the Steering Group report to.

Having consulted with the chair of the Steering Group, who has also consulted with the consultant Mr Paul Weston, I am able to provide the following explanation.

When the Plan went out to Regulation 14, it had the following policy:

**Policy No. Coly8. Exception Site Housing Development**

Proposals for housing development outside the built-up area boundary will only be supported if it is demonstrated that:

- i. it is on a small site and would provide affordable housing for local need, that is evidenced in accordance with Local Plan Strategy 35.

One of the comments received was from East Devon District Council, stating they felt the original policy wording which allowed for a “small site” to be developed under Coly 8 gave insufficient clarification on scale. The suggestion of clarifying this through the number of dwellings and to use the parameter of “up to 15” was because this reflects the Local Plan policy for exceptions schemes (Strategy 35) which allows for up to or around 15 homes to be developed under this policy, and as a strategic policy of the Local Plan, the neighbourhood plan is expected to broadly conform. Furthermore, the supporting text of Policy Coly8 at Pre-Submission Regulation 14 stage stated this was the intention, but did not make it a requirement of the policy, saying, “Policy Coly8 is supportive of such initiatives if the development is small (up to 15 dwellings)”. Its insertion was therefore proposed to address the risk of not giving a definition of scale within the policy and to align to the statement in the supporting text and Local Plan.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 all members of the Steering Group were sent a schedule of the Reg. 14 comments which was compiled by Mr Weston, which included his analysis and interpretation of all points made by respondents and his suggestions as to how the Steering Group might wish to respond to each suggestion. One of the criteria he used in formulating his suggestions was to accept *“the proposed policy wording amendments suggested by the local planning authority, unless they are contrary to the known position/opinion of the SG”*

Following feedback from all Steering Group members, he produced a Schedule of recommendations on changes to the Plan for the Parish Council to consider, which captured the collective views of the Steering Group. He also produced a draft revised Plan to ‘illustrate’ the effect of the Steering Group’s recommendations, which they had 7 days to review from 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021. The recommendations included an amendment to policy Coly8 and revisions to the supporting text.

The Parish Council met with the Steering Group on 1<sup>st</sup> March to discuss all the comments and any changes. This was an informal meeting and was not open to the public due to the amount of comments to discuss and the impracticality of going through line by line in a public meeting. Then on the 8<sup>th</sup> March the revised Plan was considered and approved in a Full Council meeting. The Plan was then sent to East Devon to begin the process of Regulation 16 containing the following policy:

**Policy No. Coly8 Exception Site Housing Development**

Proposals for housing development outside the built-up area boundary will only be supported if it is demonstrated that:

A small number of market homes may be permitted where this is essential to enable the delivery of affordable units.

Proposals for housing development outside the built-up area boundary will only be supported if it is demonstrated that:

- i. it is a small development of up to 15 dwellings, to provide affordable housing for local need, that is evidenced in accordance with Local Plan Strategy 35.

We now see that there are some residents who feel that the maximum number of 15 dwellings stated in the plan is too high. A number was added to cap the amount of houses as it was felt the original policy of 'a small number of dwellings' was too open to interpretation.